**A Time to Plant III**

In the first article of this series we establish some great reasons *why* to plant. Last week we wrote about *when* to plant and this week we will address the *how o*f planting. Sometimes the best way to learn something new is to study what not to do and in tree planting there are many. I have a very limited space to write on such a broad topic, so I can only address a small number. Here are a few of my top *do not*. First off *do not* just pick your tree on the branch structure alone. Consider you are planting something that will be growing, and you will be pruning to deliberately form a better crown. More important than the shape of the crown is making sure you select a tree that is not root bound. This may require asking how long the tree has been in its container and even pulling it out of the pot slightly to check for twisting roots. When you do get your tree home and are ready to plant, make sure you *do not* plant it too deep. Many people think putting a tree in deep will prevent it from having surface roots. This is just not true and will lead to many problems ending in a dead tree. If you have purchased a larger tree in a clay root-ball, *do not* break it all apart. This will most likely result with air pockets, root dieback and a dead tree in the end. Adversely, if your tree is in a pot, *do not* plant it straight out of the container without breaking apart the soil and roots. *Do not* let the grass grow in around your planting circle in the weeks after planting. Grass will only compete for water and nutrients. Instead, keep a two-inch deep mulch ring around the tree. This also keeps the mower and string trimmer from damaging the trunk. *Do not* assume the sprinklers are keeping your tree watered. Sprinklers are for lawns. Instead check by hand for proper moisture and use a hose to properly deep water your tree. Again, these are just a few pitfalls to avoid.

Next week we will finish with *where* to plant.

For further questions, quotes and consultations, give us a call today!