



Interiorscape Hall of Fame



Dr. Bill Wolverton *2010 Allied Trade Professional*



Dr. Bill Wolverton has made a significant mark on not just our industry, but all of horticulture and those interested in the benefits of plants.

As a scientist for NASA in the 80s, Wolverton researched the use of live plants to clean the air and how plants could be used to treat waste for the Space Station.

He graduated from Mississippi College with a degree in chemistry. He did graduate work in microbiology and biochemistry, marine biology, environmental engineering, and earned his Ph.D. in environmental engineering from the Institute of Advanced Studies. He did post-doctoral work in Engineering Design Studies at the Mississippi State University.

He received numerous awards for the research he conducted at NASA and at the US Department of Defense.

As he continued to explore the use of plants to treat waste and filter air the data was so positive that it was covered not only in the scientific journals but also the by popular press. This led to the now conventional wisdom and catch phrase that "Plants Clean the Air."

Dr. Wolverton's main project was a 2 year study conducted in grow chambers and labs. Wolverton tested the ability of 12 common interior plants to remove volatile organic compounds from sealed chambers. His work was reported not just here in the US but Internationally.

Hearing of his work and realizing just how important it was for the interiorscape industry, the American Landscape Contractors Association, ALCA (al kuh), proposed that they work together. Dr. Wolverton and Gary Mangum arranged a schedule of media promotions including a day in 1989 in Washington, DC with a "Plants for Clean Air Day" on Capitol Hill and a press conference to release the findings at the National Press Club. It started media frenzy.

The resulting media coverage was outstanding. From the Today Show, International Meetings, TV Interviews, presentations at Industry Conventions, to a nationwide tour of dozens of cities, Wolverton and ALCA spread the word. Among the many well known and well seen programs where Bill has been a guest are CNN Headline News, CNN Network

Earth, National Geographic Explorer, CBS Early Show, BBC Radio, NPR and PBS New Garden. In 1991 Wolverton testified before the Subcommittee on Agricultural Development, the Food and Drug Administration, and before the US Senate, all on the benefits of live plants on indoor air.

He was the first North American Speaker invited to be a presenter at the Aasmeer Flowertrade Exhibition in the Netherlands. He acted as keynote in 1989 and was responsible for a large donation for the Plants for Clean Air Council made by the Flower Council of Holland.

Wolverton's eagerly anticipated book, *How to Grow Fresh Air*, is a fixture on many a horticulturists' bookshelf and has sold thousands and thousands of copies. He has also authored numerous other papers, publications, and books including *Growing Clean Water-Nature's Solution to Water Pollution*.

As the clean air expert, Bill is still in the forefront of the clean air movement and is continually asked for interviews. He acts as a consultant on international projects such as an ecology garden for a hospital in Japan where a tree was planted in his honor, to his latest project a 1.7 million sq ft building complex in India. This huge project is striving to meet LEED Platinum Status and has hired Wolverton as their consultant for plants to impact their interior air quality.

Wolverton's latest accomplishment is the publication of his book, *Plants-Why You Can't Live Without Them*. This, too, is a must for every interiorscaper's book shelf.

Today, in addition to consulting and writing, Bill takes time for his organic garden, fishing in his backyard pond and caring for the other seeds he and wife Yvonne have nurtured; son John, daughter-in-law Deidre and grandchildren, Justin and Emily.

It is a great honor to induct Dr. Bill Wolverton, industry pioneer, to the Interior Plantscape Hall of Fame. Without his research and work spreading the word there would be no Plants for Clean Air, no Green Plants for Green Buildings.

And so we welcome Dr. Bill Wolverton as the 2010 Interior Plantscape Hall of Fame Allied Trade Professional.

