In a continuing effort to promote the production, sale and use of superior Florida-grown plants, the Florida Nurserymen & Growers Association has announced the 2003 selections of the Florida Plants of the Year. This program was launched to promote under-utilized, but proven Florida plant material. This effort has led to increased retail and wholesale demand since the program was launched with the 1998 selections. These proven ornamentals are selected on an annual basis by a group of growers, horticulturists, retailers, landscape professionals and University of Florida faculty. For a plant to be considered a Plant of the Year, plants have good pest resistance, require reasonable care and be fairly easy to propagate and grow. The award-winning plants must also exhibit some superior quality, improved performance or unique characteristic that sets it apart from others in its class.

Here are the details on two; the others will be presented throughout the year.

**Common Name:** Beautyberry  
**Botanical Name:** Callicarpa Americana  
**Hardiness:** Zones 7-10  
**Mature Height and Spread:** 4-7 feet tall and wide  
**Classification:** Native deciduous shrub  
**Landscape Use:** Accent or massed in partial or full shade  
**Characteristics:** The small pinkish white flowers appear at leaf axils and are attractive to butterflies. Showers are the clusters of brilliant violet to magenta fruits that replace them and encircle the stems at 3-6-inch intervals. This deciduous native thrives in shade, but flowers and fruits abundantly in more sun. Stems with berries are good as a cut flower in arrangements.

**Common Name:** Evergreen Paspalum  
**Botanical Name:** Paspalum quadrifarium  
**Hardiness:** Zones 7-10  
**Mature Height and Spread:** 3-4 feet tall and wide  
**Classification:** Ornamental grass  
**Landscape Use:** Accent, tall groundcover, masses  
**Characteristics:** This attractive bunch grass maintains a dark green color all year and is moderately salt tolerant. Blades are broad when under irrigation and roll up when dry. If grown on the dry side foliage takes on a blue-green appearance. For best results in massing plant four feet apart.

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Scott Zakany, CGCS, IGM executive vice president, presents $10,000 check to Teri Harris, GCSAA Foundation director of development.

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