

MARKETPLACE



Staff photo — Bobby Sanchez

David Bush of Bush Landscaping recently completed a huge landscaping project at Providence Hospital.

Landscaper turns bare land into botanical attraction

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Corporations and institutions spend a lot of money on their image — because image can make or break their reputation.

Part of that image involves the landscape surrounding the buildings of that institution.

Some of the major landscapes in the area include the tree-lined greens of M&M/Mars in the Texas Central Industrial Park, the ordered oak-and-pecan Baylor University campus, the bucolic Texas Farm Bureau, the woods-along-the-river McLennan Community College campus and the downtown city park of NCNB-Texas.

An addition to that lineup will be the landscaping job recently completed by 29-year-old David Bush, who directed the planting of one of the city's largest single landscaping contracts.

That contract involved taking the barren land around the new \$28 million Providence Hospital at 420 West State Highway 6 and turning the 20-acre site into a botanical attraction.

For starters, the job took about two football fields of St. Augustine grass.

Another 130 live oak trees dot

the grounds, and Bush believes there will be some spectacular sights when the 100 red crepe myrtle trees bloom this year. While Bush declined to release the actual amount of the contract, it was in the six-figure range.

Other trees scattered throughout the grounds include purple leaf plum, yaupon holly, and like many local institutions landscapes, Southern magnolia.

Bush landed the contract as a subcontractor Aug. 15 to execute the landscape architect's plans, and has since completed the project.

But the Providence project was just one of several projects that has been the culmination of several years work. Bush started his 11-year-old firm in Wichita Falls.

"I rototilled gardens in high school and one thing led to another," he said. "I went to college for it and then technical school for horticulture — Texas Tech and TSTI."

Bush did some work in Dallas, but he has been based out of Waco for five years.

Part of Bush's sales pitch, and Providence's investment, is that landscape investments increase with value every year, provided a

severe freeze or drought doesn't wither the investment.

Besides the Providence project, Bush has done the Temple Industrial park, several retirement centers and a number of hotels. He also landed the contract to plant the grass on Sematech Inc.'s grounds in Austin, as well as several commercial lawn projects ranging from \$500 to \$10,000.

"We like adding beauty to a building and in different places," he said. "It can make a firm look like a different place. Plus every dollar added landscaping raises the value much more than a dollar."

"We're hoping the local economy will get better," Bush said. "The last 12 months most of our jobs have been out of town."

Bush's landscaping business, which goes by the moniker of Bush Landscaping, has been a profitable one. But Bush hopes to make his fortune by franchising his lawn care business, called Lawn Pro.

"It's a chemical lawn company," Bush said.

He has been working out the kinks in the business and hopes to put it on the market in the near future.