Steeped in Atlanta History

BY KATE COPSEY

Atlanta is one of the largest cities in the south and like many, has a checkered history. Much of that history is preserved in the Atlanta History Center. Among its assets: the magnificent Swan House that dates back to the Roaring Twenties (1928); and the Goizueta Gardens, which includes the Smith Family Farm Gardens, the Swan House Gardens and Grounds, the Mary Howard Gilbert Memorial Quarry Gardens, the Cherry Sims Asian American Garden and the Frank A. Smith Rhododendron Garden.

TERRACES AND ROSES

The site is dominated by the classically designed Swan House, which was built in 1928 by the heirs to a cotton broker. Standing regally at a local high point, Swan House is probably the most photographed building in Atlanta. The terraced garden gracefully descends with lawns and waterfalls toward...
EDITOR’S NOTE

On the QT has changed its policy regarding payment for articles. Stories used to run 1,000 to 1,200 words for $300. We now ask that articles be in the 500 to 750 word range, unless special arrangements have been made for longer pieces. The pay is $250 for the article and when possible, one photo.

With the reduced word count, the pay per word is roughly the same. Because of the cost reduction, we’ve been able pay for the photographer’s column, which always had been done gratis. We’ve also been able to hire a copy editor, graphic designer and editor and still reduce the 2016 budget by about $2,500 from the 2015 budget.

As you can see, we’ve expanded the types of articles we are running to include food gardening, writing, marketing, social media, profiles and other topics, along with sustainability and photograph columns, written by GWA members. We also include information about GWA events, the books you publish, pertinent industry news and obituaries of members, former members and other significant contributors to our craft.

If you have ideas for these articles, please let me know at jemsharp@sbcglobal.net. And, thank you for reading On the QT.

Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp
Editor
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE  KIRK R. BROWN

Share the Love

GWA needs you to Share, Like, Friend, Tweet, Post, Email, Link, Badge, Host, Enter, Register, Connect, and Volunteer. Right now. These responses need to become the answer to the question, “What have you done for your association lately?”

GWA needs you. I am depending on you to connect GWA with all of your communication outlets. I need you to share with every one of your nonmember friends and business associates all of the new and improved things that GWA is doing: new newsletter, new member/vendor database, new website, new regional meeting formats, new association outreach opportunities, new blog, new committees, and New Routes to Horticulture on Aug. 6, at Longwood Gardens.

GWA wants to expand your return on investment by introducing the opportunities for new free plant trials, new free admissions and registrations to gardens and green-industry events, and interaction with our terrific new staff. We are improving day-by-day and meeting-to-meeting. But you need to be involved to understand the depth and breadth of the many opportunities.

Our strength rests on the commitment of volunteers from all of our diverse membership categories. Our future success depends on engaging new members in even broader categories. We can invent our future one new member and new association at a time.

I just returned from a meeting of CAPS: The Coalition of American Plant Societies. This is a recently organized confederation of 13 nonprofits whose goal is to give renewed purpose and appeal to plant-specific, special interest groups. Collectively, they represent nearly 100,000 active members.

The associations that make up CAPS share many of the same problems: decreasing membership, dwindling resources in the face of rising costs, lack of a new generation of volunteers, failure to develop programs that encourage registration at scheduled events. We all face incredible challenges for change in the face of digital competition. I look to the groups that are making real strides in overcoming obstacles in order to implement our own best practices and brightest ideas.

This edition of the newsletter brings you facts that demonstrate our many attempts to engage, deepen, and renew your perception of what GWA is becoming. Somewhere in its many pages you will find an article, opinion, meeting announcement or photograph that resonates with your professional life. Something will strike you as relevant to your career goals. I ask that you pick up that single element and share it, like it, tweet it, post it, link it and/or email it to a friend.

GWA needs you to advance your career and open the doors to your future. Our corporate success rises or falls on the success of each of our members. How can we better serve your needs? I welcome your thoughts and contributions to our growth and development.

Lastly! Register for the Atlanta Expo. The tours are awesome. The education committee has an incredible line up of world-renown experts. The networking will be like no other opportunity you can experience in this industry. And this year: Karaoke’s back! We’re going to have a blast in a peachy-keen city!
As most of you know, the 68th annual GWA Conference & Expo will be in Atlanta, Sept. 16-19. With insightful education delivered by the best in the green industry, tours of Atlanta and Athens’ best public and private gardens and many opportunities to network, GWA Annual Conference and Expo is a unique opportunity to Connect, Learn and Grow.

Here are a few reasons you should attend:

1. **Connect:** Make connections and network with your colleagues and peers – individuals who are as passionate about the garden industry as you. Whether this is your first show or 68th show, there are ample opportunities to network during learning sessions, garden tours, breaks and receptions.

   In addition to networking with your peers, take advantage of the GWA Expo Hall to network with our sponsors and exhibitors. We have a great list of companies who will be joining us, and they are looking forward to meeting you.

2. **Learn:** This year’s education schedule is jam-packed with insightful and dynamic sessions from leaders in the industry, focusing on horticulture, writing, technology, business, publishing and much more! Who wouldn’t want to eavesdrop on their editor, or entice the next generation of gardener. You could even learn how to publish your own book!

   GWA is honored to bring exceptional keynote speakers to you this year:
   - Vince Dooley, former University of Georgia head football coach, who recently has gained recognition as one of the region’s finest gardeners.
   - Michael A. Dirr, a legend in the horticultural world and retired professor at the University of Georgia and woody plants guru.
   - Maria LaRosa, meteorologist and co-host *Weekend Recharge*, The Weather Channel.

   We hope you will walk away from these keynotes with a renewed energy for the green industry and your work.

3. **Grow:** Be inspired by the incredible gardens Georgia has to offer. This year’s tour line-up will feature a fantastic group of gardens, covering a wide array of techniques and trends, including public gardens, the Atlanta Botanical Garden, where 20 spectacular installations by Chihuly will be on display, Gibbs Garden and the Carter Center, as well as private gardens, such as the homes of The Home Depot co-founder, Arthur Blank, Vince Dooley, Michael Dirr, among many more. Consider staying an extra day for a special visit to Athens, Georgia, and the State Botanical Gardens of Georgia.

#GWA2016 is going to be an exciting four days in the green industry. I look forward to seeing you in Atlanta, and the chance to meet each of you. For registration and additional information about the event, please visit gardenwriters.org.

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Kate Copsey is head of the local organizing committee for the Atlanta Conference and Expo.
Social media campaign seeks to #plantsomething

BY MARIA ZAMPINI

“You’ve heard at least one or more of these successful marketing slogans. You may also wonder why there isn’t a national marketing campaign for the green industry. Well, it’s a long story—more than I can explain here. But I can assure you it’s not been for a lack of trying on both a national, and even the state level.

However, there is a grassroots marketing campaign happening that I think you’ll find of interest: Plant Something. I challenge garden writers to take part in this coordinated effort to educate consumers on the benefits of gardening and encourage more people to Plant Something.

Founded in Arizona by the Arizona Nursery Association, the Plant Something campaign is now going national. It is built around the health, environmental and monetary benefits of all kinds of plants. There are 22 partners from the U.S. and Canada representing green industry associations that have committed their support at some level to this marketing effort. The campaign messaging is all built around an easy, friendly tone especially targeted for millennials.

For those of you who attended the 2014 GWA Annual Symposium in Pittsburgh, you’ll recall that we had a GWA flash mob, where we promoted Plant Something by handing out brochures with All-America Selections seed packets. Or perhaps you saw the Plant Something Massachusetts music video featuring GWA’s own C.L. Fornari?

I contacted Plant Something and requested some of their brochures and plant stakes. Every time I do a book signing I use the #PlantSomething hashtag in my signature and include the brochure and the plant stake as a bookmark.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

• Visit the Plant Something website and reach out to the local association carrying the torch in your state. Connect with them. And if your state association is not yet on board, encourage it to become a part of the movement.

• Use the #PlantSomething hash tag on social media and tag your state association, local retailers and nurseries in your posts.

• Customize the #PlantSomething hashtag: #PlantSomethingforPollinators or #PlantSomethingforDad or #PlantSomethingWaterWise. The list is endless.

• C.L. Fornari has done a #PlantSomethingSunday, asking her followers across social media to post what they’ve planted and to use the hash tag. I’m trying to follow her lead, but if I miss Sunday, then I simply use #PlantSomething, and ask the same question on a different day of the week.

• C.L. also suggests #PlantSomethingGood be used when you talk about community projects you’re involved in.

• The Plant Something partnership is primarily using its plantsomething.org website and Facebook page to engage consumers. Please visit both to learn more about it. Consider liking their Facebook page; include a link to their website on your social media sites to introduce the campaign to consumers.

Join the movement and embrace the mission, which supports GWA’s goals and initiatives. Don’t just sit there, Plant Something! For more information, or to request brochures or plant stakes, contact Cheryl Goar, Arizona Nursery Association, cgoar@azna.org.

Maria Zampini is a National Director and co-chair of GWA’s Outreach Task Force.
The look of horror on my wife Shelley's face said it all. I suspect the look on my own face wasn't much different. Despite the trappings of a gourmet meal—red wine, candles and béchamel sauce—my attempt at cooking cardoon was a dismal failure. It stands out in my mind as one of the most revolting mouthfuls of food that I've ever ungracefully returned to my plate.

When I called back the woman who left a message about my cardoon plants, we didn't talk about the revolting taste. "Mr. Biggs, you don't know me, but I know you," began the message, rather ominously. She went on to say that when she knocked on my door and nobody answered, she asked my neighbor Stephen for my telephone number. "I must know the name of that Promethean plant in your front yard," she declared.

What a gratifying message! As a writer, I was delighted to learn a new word: Promethean (bold and daring.) As a gardener, I was heartened to think my garden delighted her.

Her message touched me for another reason: In removing my front lawn to plant a garden full of edibles, I had worried that I — the new guy on the block — would offend the suburban sensibilities of my neighbors in our shrub-lawn-driveway shrouded neighborhood. Her message dispelled any remaining worry.

I suspected right away she meant my cardoons. The 4-foot-high, gray-leaved beauties arched over my driveway like sentries standing on guard.

FRONT-YARD CONTROVERSY
I was inspired to make a front-yard garden full of edibles after I attended a local meeting about turning a vacant, overgrown, city-owned lot into a community vegetable garden. There was much enthusiasm...yet there were a couple of neighbors adamantly opposed to the idea. They contended that vegetables are ugly and might affect property values.

Alarmed at this foolish opposition, I wondered what I could do. My initial response was that, as a writer, I should write an article about such folly. But then I had a vision of removing my front lawn and planting edibles. An attractive front yard full of edibles would be my statement against this silly notion that veggies should be banished to the backyard.

I was slow to start sod busting. I pondered it at length. I was still pondering it when Shelley put her hand on my shoulder and said, "Honey, I think the neighbors know you’re eccentric, so you might as well make that veggie garden out front.”
GRASS TO GARDEN

With her encouragement, the transformation began. As I dug, grass gave way to garlic. When I got tired of removing sod, lasagne-like layers of cardboard and compost hid the remaining patches of turf. For aesthetics, I added a flagstone pathway, boulders, and some split-rail fence... wouldn’t want the neighbors to mistake me for a hipster.

The grass-to-garden transformation didn’t cause a single complaint, at least not to my face. Passersby stopped to look. The garden thrived. We sautéed the Trombetta summer squash that slithered up the spruce tree, munched on Malabar spinach and snacked on sunflower seeds. And you already know about our encounter with the cardoon.

There were people on my street with whom I had never chatted, people reluctant to make eye contact and stop and yak. Yet, while I was out front gardening, they stopped and we chatted.

CARDOON LEGACY

I have grown cardoon every year since. I often mention it in my talks. Once, after a talk, a man came up to me and said, “I’m a chef—I can help you!” He advised changing the water part way through boiling—and salting the water to pull out bitterness. I still don’t care for boiled cardoon. However, deep frying remedies many foul flavors. I’ve found that serving it along with a garlicky dip helps cardoon.

That vacant, overgrown, city-owned lot became the Parkview Neighborhood Garden, a neighborhood market garden. The City of Toronto and the community worked together to nurture involvement, and a volunteer board soon took over. The gardeners sell produce to themselves and to neighbors. Proceeds go toward garden expenses, with remaining money and produce going to charity.

Have values changed since that initial, opposition-tinged meeting about the community vegetable garden? I suspect they have, because in 2013 the city bought an adjacent house on that not-so-inexpensive street. Once the house was demolished, the Parkview Neighborhood Garden doubled in size.

Steven Biggs is a writer, journalist and speaker who explores the food chain: farm, food and garden.

FARWEST
PORTLAND 2016

Garden writers receive special benefits at Farwest Show

The GWA Outreach Task Force has an exciting lineup of special offers and events at the Farwest Show, Aug. 25-27 in Portland, Oregon. GWA members receive special access to the trade show, education sessions and other valuable networking opportunities. For more information about the show, please visit www.farwestshow.com.

KEY TIMES AND DATES
 • Thursday, Aug. 25: Tradeshows, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 • Friday, Aug. 26: Garden Writers Day. Tradeshows, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 • Saturday, Aug. 27: Tradeshows, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

REGISTRATION
Expo: All GWA members receive a complimentary three-day Expo Pass code. Please visit gardenwriters.org for discount code.
Press Pass: Press Passes will be available to all qualified media. The Press Pass is our All Access Pass, which provides entrance into the Expo, all seminars and pesticide classes. (Does not include bus tours). Qualified media can contact Allan Niemi at OAN (aniemi@oan.org) to submit a request.

HOTEL
Attendees can reserve rooms through the Farwest housing portal.

EXPO FLOOR
GWA will have a booth on the trade show floor, and anyone willing to volunteer to work the booth for an hour or two should email Diane Blazek by August 15 with your schedule of availability. Working the booth is a great way to meet growers, garden centers and others who could use your skills.

The presence of GWA at the Farwest Show will serve two primary purposes:
#1. Expose our members and their talents to potential clients.
#2. Explain the value of GWA membership to potential new members.
This is an extremely valuable networking opportunity that you should not miss.

GARDEN WRITERS DAY
In honor of GWA, OAN and the Farwest Show have declared Friday, August 26 as “Garden Writers Day.” Join us for GWA-tastic activities and events, culminating in the GWA Connect meeting following the trade show.

GWA CONNECT MEETING
The GWA Connect meeting immediately follows the tradeshow, Friday, August 26, 5PM-6PM. Registration is free; nonmembers and visitors are welcome to attend! Location and additional details information will be coming soon.

The GWA AOTF Committee and the Farwest Show are proud to provide you with one of the best educational and networking opportunities in the country—a value of $199 (including the educational sessions and trade show).
Copying from others: a shortcut to structure

Y
ears ago, an editor at Sunset gave me my first big writing break. I was terrified. I felt like the dog that had chased the car and actually caught it. Now what would I do? My writing chops were woefully inadequate. So, to figure out how I would write the assigned piece, I copied.

In our culture, copying gets a bad rap. From the moment a first grader hollers, “Teacher, he’s copying me!” everyone knows it’s a terrible thing to do. Our society values unique ideas and puts down anything derivative.

And yet, it all depends on how and what you copy. I’m not talking about stealing answers to test questions or plagiarizing someone else’s writing. Like art students in a museum copying a painting, if you look at how the writing is constructed, you’ll find the quickest way to teach yourself what you need to know.

Back then I scrambled through many issues of Sunset, desperately hunting for clues from the writers and editors. How were the titles and subtitles set up? Sunset, I noticed, had a way with commas for clues from the writers and editors. The text was explained in the subheads, “Five Winners Turn Your Backyard into a Tropical Retreat.” Ok, so they address the reader—second person—I could do that. I looked at how they captioned the photos. I marked verbs and other words. “Dreamy” came up more than once. It wasn’t a word I would have used, but what the heck—I was copying.

Finally, I had a template I could follow. Even though my subject differed, I’d figured out the pattern. I soon absorbed the Sunset style and wrote many articles over the years without thinking about it. But when I wanted to pitch to other publications, I relied on the same copying techniques to figure out their formats.

To an outsider, all garden magazines and blogs look alike. But we garden writers know they’re distinctive. Birds and Blooms is not the same as Country Gardens, Garden Rant, Garden Design or Horticulture. Exactly how they differ becomes apparent with deconstruction. So, if you’re in the position of pursuing a new venue or simply want to figure out how a writer you admire does it—and I have studied many great garden writers over the years—here are the copying tips that will give you your marching orders.

#1. THE OPENING

The best start tells the reader something about what is to follow. Is it a quote, an anecdote or a description? Obviously, in the same publication or website, you’ll find a variety, but keep track of how many of each kind. Mark the ones that appeal to you. Then open yours that way.

#2. WORD COUNT

This is so basic it’s often overlooked. If you already have a contract, you’ll know your count. But if you’re auditioning in a new arena, it’s good to replicate the number of words. Knowing the word count also brings order to your thinking. An overall garden profile will not fit into 400 words. Find one area to focus on. On the other hand, if you’re lucky enough to hit the long form, you’ll know exactly how many words you’ll have to play with.

With digital copy, you can easily get a word count. But here’s a trick for any print paper copy. Assume, give or take, that the top joint on your thumb is an approximate inch. Count the words in a thumb’s inch of copy where the margin widths don’t change. Then, measure down the rest of the copy, one thumb length at a time and multiply that number by the number of words in the first inch. That gives you an approximation of how many words are in the copy. Obviously, if the margins change—say, around a photo—you’ll have to recount another inch in that new place and then measure on for the new size.

#3. TITLES, SUBTITLES AND SUBHEADS

All of these allow readers to skim over material without having to read every word. They also work as the alluring hook that pulls readers in. Check whether your piece uses subtitles—the words after the main title—or subheads—those short phrases or sentences that break up articles into sections. Look at how all three—if you have them—are conveying information. How many words are included in each? How frequently do they appear?

Even if an editor ends up changing them, creating your own titles, subtitles and subheads can help you organize your material.

#4. PARAGRAPHS

Notice how the writing you’re copying handles paragraphs. Are they short or long? Are there any single-sentence paragraphs? Blog posts lean toward shorter paragraphs for readability on devices. Other writing allows for more sentences in each paragraph, perhaps as many as six or eight.

Recognizing paragraph length tells you how to build your own. It also shows you how much information is packed into each one, which becomes a roadmap for your own thinking.
#5. SIGNPOST SENTENCES
Study the first sentence of each paragraph. I like to think of these sentences as signposts. Do the sentences function like that in your example? You should be able to skim through a piece, reading only the signposts, and understand where the writing is headed. The signpost sentences you create can do the same.

#6. WORD CHOICE
The easiest way to get inside a style? Study the verbs. Go through and highlight or underline every verb you can find. Verbs characterize a piece. Are there lots of “to be” verbs—is, are or were—which give a leveled tone to the writing? How many syllables appear in the verbs says much about the presentation. Does the writing have one-syllable examples—grab, throw, tweak, raid, sweep? Or three- or more syllable verbs like rectify, attenuate, elucidate, incentivize, incapacitate or anthropomorphize? Or perhaps you’ll see jargon verbs used only among serious hort-heads. Copy what you find.

Be aware of how plant names are handled. Publications vary on their style sheets. Some italicize the Latin, some don’t. Some put the punctuation outside the single quotes of plant names—in my opinion the correct way, since the single quote is part of the name—and others don’t. This isn’t about right or wrong, it’s about copying.

#7. THE ENDING
In your example, how does the piece end? Is there is some kind of narrative completed or a directive given? Is there a summation or a reference to the whole theme? Or does the writing go down to the nuts-and-bolts information and simply stop? You get to do the same.

These deconstruction steps can give you the specific road map you need to go forward. You’ll be able to apply your good garden ideas to any venue you’d like to tackle.

This article is based on an excerpt from GWA member Mary-Kate Mackey’s forthcoming book, Write Better Right Now—The Reluctant Writer’s Guide to Confident Communication and Self-assured Style, due out late 2016 from Career Press. Find out more at marykatemackey.com.
REGION I
THOMAS MICKEY

Kathy Connolly presented “Grow Your Own Meadow, Large or Small” and “Low-Impact Site Preparation for New Meadows and Groundcovers” in May at the Connecticut Forest and Park Association in Rockfall. She presented the same talks in June at New England Wildflower Society’s Nasami Farm in Whately, Massachusetts. Kathy gave her talk, “Waterside Landscaping for Healthy Lakes and Rivers,” June 14, at the Lyme (Connecticut) Fire Station 213, sponsored by the Lyme Garden Club.

Karen Bussolini presented “Jazzing Up the Garden With Color, Contrast and Movement,” May 24, at Elm Bank, the home of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society in Wellesley. On June 9, her lecture was “Opening Eyes and Doors: Gardening with Kids” at the Florence Griswold Art Museum in Old Lyme, Connecticut.

GWA members Arabella Dane, Julie Moir Messervy and Hilda M. Morrill serve on the honorary committee for the Massachusetts Horticultural Society’s 20th anniversary at Elm Bank in Wellesley, Massachusetts. MHS hosted a Twilight Garden Party, June 2. The Gardens at Elm Bank are 12 separate gardens on a 36-acre historic estate on the banks of the Charles River in the heart of Boston’s Metro-West Region. For more information, visit MassHort.org.

On June 18, Lorraine Ballato greeted the public at a Low Toxic Booth at the 14th annual Master Gardener Garden Fair in Bethel, Connecticut. For details: bethelgardenterminal.org/. On June 25, she is conducting her popular “Fool-Proof Hydrangea” class at the New York Botanic Garden. For more information: nybg.org

Andrea Carneiro sends word that Rhode Island’s Newport Flower Show will take place, June 24-26. New England’s only outdoor flower show returns to its historic mansion setting at Rosecliff. Judged floral arrangements and lectures, along with shopping opportunities, take place in the elegant reception rooms and on the seaside lawn of this Gilded Age mansion. Designer and author Bunny Williams and floral artist Bruno Duarte are special guests. For more information: NewportFlowerShow.org.

Charlie Nardozzi is coordinating a bus tour to the Newport Flower Show, June 24-26. He is leading the Gardens and Castles Tour of England and Wales, July 9-19.

On June 25 in Phillipston, New York, Diana K. Weiner is teaching a free class, “Gardening Techniques with Hands-on Experience,” for new gardeners to encourage them to volunteer for local community gardens. At her Summer Gardening Seminar, July 6, residents from around the county can learn more about “Maintaining Containers and Hanging Baskets.” On July 9, the Sullivan ARC Garden Tour is featuring gardens of the Neversink Area. Diana and her husband John Story will have their greenhouse, raised vegetable beds, orchard, blueberry and raspberry ranges, as well as their sun and shade gardens ready for visitors. For more information: sullivanrenaissance.org

C. L. Fornari invites GWA members to the Cape Cod Hydrangea Festival, which features a tour of more than 90 private gardens, July 8-17 for the benefit of local non-profit organizations. Special events include Hydrangea University on July 8. GWA members are invited for cocktails in C.L.’s gardens. For more information visit capecodhydrangeafest.com/

REGION II
DENISE SCHREIBER

Ruth Rogers Clausen spoke at the Easton (Maryland) Library May 26 about “Essential Perennials for Terraces, Patios, & Small Spaces.”

REGION III
SUSAN MARTIN

Purdue University Extension Educator Kris Medic led a delegation of Indiana farmers and Extension educators visiting urban and biodynamic farms in Wisconsin for a week in June. Funded by a USDA SARE grant, the trip helped selected Indiana farmers understand and adopt sustainable practices as they apply to their small operations. Milwaukee’s Growing Power was on the itinerary.

REGION III
SUSAN MARTIN

Erin McKeon from Chanticleer Garden spoke about “America’s Garden Capital” at the American Public Gardens Association annual conference, June 8, in Miami.

Bill Thomas spoke June 16 at the Connecticut Horticultural Society.

Kirk R. Brown continues traveling the country to many conferences this summer as a variety of personalities. Both John Bartram and Kirk appear at the Minnesota Master Gardeners conference on June 24. He is giving the keynote address as well as “Water-wise Gardening.” On June 25, John is with the Pennsylvania Master Gardeners at their state gathering in Concordville. The Fourth of July weekend finds Frederick Law Olmsted at the Magnolia Plantations History Festival in Charleston, South Carolina. Between July 13 and 15, Kirk, John Bartram and Sara Brown appear with a diverse program at the Montevalle Sunday School Assembly in Monteagle, Tennessee. This is a historic district placed on the National Register of Historic Places for its continuously operating Chautauqua-like summer-long programming. Kirk and Sara are performing a duet based on a collection of letters from his mother’s correspondence with GI’s serving around the world during WWII. The hour-long dramatic program is called “On the Homefront.”

Chanticleer is co-hosting the Woody Plant Conference, June 29th, at Swarthmore College. For information: woodyplantconference.org.
Maria Zampini was the keynote speaker at the Oklahoma Master Gardening State Conference, June 3, at Langston University in Langston, Oklahoma. She spoke on “2016 Gardening Trends for your Outdoor Space.” Additionally, she did two breakout sessions on “Garden-pedia: I Didn’t Know That!” On June 8, Maria spoke again on Garden-pedia, at the Northwest Horticultural Society Lecture Series in Seattle, Washington.

Kathie VanDevere was involved with the Midwest Garden History and Design Symposium: Fields, Forests, Farms and Gardens, June 9, in Bath, Ohio. The symposium included lectures, lunch at the 200-year-old restored Hale Farm and Village. The event focused on the research, restoration, documentation and archival issues of historic properties.

The 2016 Purdue Master Gardener State Conference was held in West Lafayette, Indiana, June 16-18. This year’s conference featured talks by several GWA members: Sharon Collman of Region VI; Nicholas Staddon of Region VI and Steve Foltz, Beth Botts and Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp of Region III.

Michigan State University is sponsoring the 2016 Michigan Master Gardener College at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, June 17-18. The event includes a keynote by GWA Region VII member Paul Zammit of the Toronto Botanical Garden along with 15 additional sessions, a full day bus tour and a Green Marketplace. bit.ly/1TjXcGY

Susan Martin invites her fellow GWA members to attend the 34th annual Perennial Plant Association Symposium in Minneapolis, August 1-5. Susan is speaking on “Perennials with Bonus Points,” a talk that encourages retailers to rethink how they select, merchandise and sell perennials, on August 4. perennialplant.org

GWA members are invited to attend the AAS Summer Summit, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., August 25, in Madison, Wisconsin. A GWA Connect meeting is being held during the event. Tours include Epic Systems and A. Whaley Seeds, with a complimentary lunch for GWA members. Please call Diane Blazek, 630-963-0770 if you wish to attend. For info: all-americaselections.org/meetings

Bill Johnson’s “The Amazing World of Moths” photo exhibit is at the Como Park Zoo & Conservatory through June 30. “Butterflies of North America” photo exhibit runs from July 1 through September 7. In addition his “Meet the Beetles” photo exhibit shows at the Missouri Botanical Gardens’ Sophie B. Sachs Butterfly House through June 30, followed by “Insect Pollinators” photo exhibit at the same place, July 1 through July 31.

Long Creek Herb Farm hosted the 29th annual Open House, June 18 near Blue Eye, Missouri. Tours of Jim Long’s culinary herb collection, rare vegetables and native medicinal herbs, photo opportunities and tastes from the garden round out the day. For more information: LongCreekHerbs.com/want-to-visit or email for directions: Longcreekherbs@yahoo.com.

Benjamin Vogt gives a keynote address at the Midwest Native Plant Conference, July 8-10, in Dayton, Ohio.

Debra Prinzing of Slowflowers.com announced the 2nd annual American Flowers Week, June 28-July 4. Flower farmers, florists, wholesalers, retailers and gardeners are encouraged to take part by using the free resources at Americanflowersweek.com and going to social media to post photos of their red-white-and-blue flowers or bouquets with the #americanflowersweek #slowflowers hash-tags. In 2015, the awareness campaign generated 400,000 impressions on social media and Prinzing expects even more impact this year.

Robert Kourik is teaching “Happy Soil, Happy Roots,” based in part on his new book, Understanding Roots, for the Community Education program at the Santa Rosa Junior College, Santa Rosa, California, July 9. To enroll: 707-527-4372.

Nan Sterman is pleased to announce that six more episodes of her TV show, A Growing Passion, are now available online at AGrowingPassion.com. She is taking a group to visit Rancho La Puerta Resort and Spa in Tecate, Mexico, September 21-24. The ranch features extensive water-wise gardens and a fantastic organic farm, Tres Estrellas, which supplies produce for the Ranch’s renowned cuisine. For information about space availability, NSterman@Plant-soup.com.
You might say that we have no idea where life will take us. No. Idea. Daniel Mount, of Mount Gardens, Carnation, Washington, has had a colorful gardening career path—one that has spanned a couple of continents.

“I started out as an art major in college. I didn’t want to get dirty or be a farmer type. I had high ideals.” Those are the words of Daniel Mount.

When he went to college, Daniel was very much in love with art. “I loved art so much. At some point, I found botany and switched majors. Art is always in the background. I did collage for many years, before becoming a full-time garden designer. It really helped my design skills,” he said. “I went to the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, graduated with a degree in botany, a fine arts minor, did a stint as an intern and employee at the Missouri Botanical Garden and later discovered the forgiving gardening climate of the Pacific Northwest.”

He now gardens—as in getting dirty and being a farmer—and personally cares for seven acres of land just a stone’s throw from downtown Seattle. In the last year, the property—part of a designated marsh—has flooded seven times, and he has been forced to don chest waders to walk out and get to town.

**Vacation Job to Full-Time Gig**

Daniel comes from a big family where everyone gardens—some more famously than others. His great uncle was the head gardener at Casa Rosada, the Presidential Palace in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in the 1930s.

At one time, Daniel was a gardener on the Isle of Elba, Napoleon’s Mediterranean island of exile. He told the story of living, gardening and bartending in Cologne, Germany. It was there that he came across a copy of Gardens Illustrated, which had an article on the gardens of the Eremo di Santa Caterina, off the coast of Tuscany.

“I wrote the garden manager a letter, offering to garden in exchange for a place to vacation. I went, I gardened, I was there for a week and then Hans Berger offered me a job. How could I refuse? I was wearing rose-colored gardening glasses,” he said. “I thought, ‘Wow, I can live on an island—an island in Italy.’ ” The original idea was to create a garden representing the native and endemic plants as well as heirloom crops of the Tuscan Archipelago. Daniel explains, “We wanted to create a preserve, as well as a public garden for education. I spent the better part of a year there. I have been back several times in the last decade to help with collecting plants and design ideas, and recently, two essays I wrote about that garden were published in Berlin in the book Giardini dell’Eremo.”

**World of Color**

On this side of the world, Daniel is known for his award-winning essays on color. Last year he picked up a GWA Gold Media Award for his magazine article “Over and Under the Rainbow: A Gardener Comes to Terms with Red” and a Silver Award for the magazine article “Over and Under the Rainbow: A Gardener Comes to Terms with Blue.”

“The color series started with a garden design class I was teaching for the Northwest Horticultural Society,” Daniel said. “At the same time, I was doing an article for the quarterly magazine of the Pacific Horticulture Society on species tulips for Northwest gardens. After spending a year doing the research, I realized they were not especially good plants for the Northwest garden. At the last minute I asked my editor, Lorene Edwards Forkner, if I could switch to an article about color in the garden. She let me run with it.”

**Garden Writing**

When asked how he found his way to GWA, he told of taking a writing class from Debra Prinzing, who was president of the GWA at the time. “She saw something in my early scratchings, considered me a budding garden writer and thought the organization would help me meet my goals as a garden writer. I joined in 2008.”

Debra recalls teaching a half-day “garden writing” workshop in her living room for the Northwest Horticulture Society.
back in 2004 or 2005. At the time, she knew Daniel only as “a fine gardener who managed a big estate landscape in the area.” He surprised Debra and the entire writing class with the language he gave to the flowers being described.

“I always aspire to be more literary in my work and Daniel is one of the best examples of the way I wish I could write,”

— Debra Prinzing

“His prose brings you into his world of color, form, seasons, weather, life and death. In his spareness of storytelling, there is not a single wasted word. He sweeps you up and makes you feel included. There is universality in his writing that connects the reader to his own experience in the garden. I always aspire to be more literary in my work and Daniel is one of the best examples of the way I wish I could write,” Debra said.

Now he designs gardens for others, tends his own, writes about them, and of course, still creates art. A recent exhibition of his photographic prints was titled Willow. “I live in a swamp and grow a lot of different species of willows. I take a lot of pictures of willows and wanted to present them to the public, because I think most people don’t give willows the time of day,” he said. “The series of photographic prints that I produced are influenced as much by Helen Frankenthaler’s abstractions as 19th century botanical prints. I want to keep experimenting with images of willows and the printing process.”

If you’d like to see more of Daniel’s work, he can be contacted through Mount Gardens or by email, daniel@mountgardens.com.

GWA member Mary Ann Newcomer, a native daughter of Idaho, is deeply rooted in the soil of the American West. As a scribe-scout-and-speaker, she blogs at www.gardensofthewildwest.com. The American Horticulture Society profiled her as “A member making a difference” in American Gardener magazine.

GWA Foundation hits the road for GRO1000 programs

BY ASHLEY HODAK SULLIVAN

This spring, the GWA Foundation team has been traveling the country to celebrate the 2016 showcase grant winners of the Scotts Miracle-Gro GRO1000 program.

On May 4, foundation representatives traveled to St. Louis for the dedication of the city’s Riverfront Butterfly Byway. When complete, the project will span approximately 31 acres of monarch butterfly habitat along the northern portion of the 19-mile riverfront. It will be planted with native plants that will also attract pollinators and serve as urban prairie patches for other species. GRO1000 partners and volunteers spent the day creating one of the projects special gardens, along with school children from nearby schools. A very special thank you to GWA Foundation Director Jeff Lowenfels and GWA National Director Linda Nitchman for joining the team for the day’s activities, culminating in a garden dedication by St. Louis Mayor Francis G. Slay.

The following week, the team was at General Street Park in Providence, Rhode Island, where GRO1000 partners and volunteers installed several edible and pollinator gardens. These gardens will support nutrition literacy and food access in this neighborhood park, which is completely surrounded by a low-income housing complex, many parts of which are occupied by families. The May 11 project aims to transform General Street Park into a vibrant, creative and safe place for residents and youth, as well as an opportunity for access to healthful food and environmental education. A very special thank you to GWA member Mort White, who decided to spend his birthday with the GRO1000 partners for the day’s event. During the dedication, he was invited to join the ceremonial planting with several neighborhood children.

The GWA Foundation team will attend garden dedications: June 2 in New York City and June 18 in Atlanta. Be sure to visit the GWA Foundation Facebook page for news and photos of these wonderful community events. Interested in attending? Contact Ashley Hodak Sullivan at asullivan@kellencompany.com.

Ashley Hodak Sullivan is executive director of the Garden Writers Association Foundation.
Rejuvenated SEGreen to meet in Athens

BY BRIE ARTHUR

The Southern Nursery Association has announced details of the SEGreen Plant and Landscape Conference, Aug. 31 to Sept. 1, to be held in conjunction with the Marketplace Trade Show at The Classic Center, Athens, Georgia.

Enabling participants to see more green in their future, this unique forum will provide a platform for learning about and sourcing new and innovative products, gaining knowledge about near and long-term industry dynamics and cultivating new business relationships. SEGreen will attract all industry segments across the Southeast—breeders, growers, landscapers, retailers, researchers, manufacturers, distributors, communicators and service providers. The event is expected to draw more than 2,000 industry professionals.

"SEGreen is truly a vision of the future, offering attendees a new opportunity to see leading “green” people, see the newest and most innovative “green” products and see more “green” in their bottom line,” said Karen Summers, SNA Executive Vice President. "And Athens has a lot to offer—from art, shopping, dining and nightlife to gardens, local nurseries and retail garden centers. It has the vibe and energy to attract a large audience and build a fresh, new regional event.”

Additionally, the SEGreen VISION Talks will showcase industry leaders through innovative technology. Hosted by GWA Region IV Director Brie Arthur, Vision Talks will feature four experts fielding live questions from young professionals. Through the new series “Emergent Live Blab,” the SEGreen experience will be available to horticulture professionals around the world.

AmericanHort names Ken Fisher as president, CEO

The AmericanHort Board of Directors has named Ken Fisher as the company’s next president and chief executive officer, effective immediately. Fisher has 20 years of experience leading public and privately-held companies, including iconic consumer brands Coleman and Elmer’s Products Inc. Fisher’s diverse business experience will further the vision and strategy of AmericanHort, while bringing proven organizational management to achieve the desired results.

“We know the industry values our advocacy work and educational programs, especially Cultivate. Ken’s expertise will assist us in enhancing existing offerings, while adding new value that will broaden our membership,” said Dale Deppe, AmericanHort Board Chairman. “The pace of change in our industry is rapid, and he has experience successfully leading organizations through both business and regulatory cycles. Ken’s business growth track record is exactly what AmericanHort needs, as we enter our next chapter, which I am confident will be even more impactful and exciting than our last.”

Fisher said near-term objectives will be to examine AmericanHort’s value proposition to ensure it provides substantial benefit to growers, retailers, installers, and industry suppliers. “Additional focus will be on meeting the unique needs of nursery and landscape members. We will align resources to enhance our ability to create value and as a result grow our member base,” he said.

Fisher succeeds Michael Geary, who resigned last year to be chief executive officer at the Society for Market Professional Services.

Go-forward strategies identified include:

- Help to develop prosperous businesses in current and future economic and market conditions
- Position horticulture to be a relevant and thriving industry where more individuals and future generations will consider it a desirable career
- Promote the benefits of plants to be valued and sought after for their health/wellness and economic benefits in communities

Source: AmericanHort
Two GWA members made Greenhouse Product News 40 under 40 class of 2016: Region IV National Director Brie Arthur, and Jared Barnes, assistant professor of horticulture at Stephen F. Austin University, Nacogdoches, Texas.

Mason Day, co-founder of the GrowIt! App, reports that GrowIt! has surpassed 150,000 users nationwide. Users have generated more than 1 million plant ratings. The company is excited to be rapidly increasing its audience. See it at growitmobile.com

Mariana Greene has retired as garden editor at The Dallas Morning News. She continues to write garden features and her Gardening Fool column as a very happy freelancer. Reach her at mggardenfool@gmail.com.

Jenny Peterson has been named the Susan G. Komen Austin 2016 Race for the Cure Ambassador. Jenny was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2012 and benefitted from Komen Austin’s services. As a part of her role, she participates in media appearances including radio spots, TV commercials, public appearances and keynote speaking, to uplift the services of Komen Austin, particularly the Race for the Cure event. She is the author of The Cancer Survivor’s Garden Companion (2016 St. Lynn’s Press), a body-mind-spirit publication that helps cancer survivors and those experiencing life challenges to seek healing and balance through the garden.

Randy Schultz has launched a new business venture called Safe Cloud Now, which offers easy-to-use, security-protected private email accounts for individuals and families. Unlike “free” email service from Google or Yahoo, emails sent using a secure email account can’t be scanned by corporations for information that can be sold to advertisers. His first pitch about the new service resulted in a story entitled “Why Your Free Email Account Isn’t Really Free” in GRAND magazine. GWA members can get a free 30-day trial at SafeCloudNow.com.

Teresa Woodard is serving as a judge this summer for America in Bloom. She will travel to four of the 40 communities participating in this year’s national awards program. Communities are judged in the areas of overall impression, environmental efforts, heritage, landscaped areas, urban forestry, floral displays, and community involvement in the municipal, commercial and residential sectors. Awards will be announced on October 6-8 at AIB’s National Symposium and Awards in Arroyo Grande, California.

This column replaces the former “On the QT.” It includes non-time-sensitive member news, awards, job changes and anything else that does not fit into “Regional News & Notes” or “Hot Off the Press.” Please submit news items and high-resolution photos to jemsharp@sbcglobal.net. On the QT deadlines: May 10, July 10, September 10 and November 10, 2016.

Longwood Gardens was named the 2016 recipient of The Garden Club of America’s Eloise Payne Luquer Medal. This prestigious honor is awarded for special achievement in the field of botany, which may include medical research, the fine arts or education. Longwood Executive Director, Paul B. Redman accepted the award May 22, during the GCA’s annual meeting in Minneapolis.

Hailing Longwood as an extraordinary public garden, the GCA observed, “The horticultural advances of Longwood Gardens go far beyond the pleasure provided to visitors who see outstanding plant material and garden design. Longwood is setting a gold standard for education of individuals at all ages.”

In accepting the award, Redman said, “We are honored to receive the Eloise Payne Luquer Medal in recognition of our rich education programs. Education is integral to our mission at Longwood. For more than 60 years, our varied programs have been transforming ordinary gardeners into extraordinary gardeners and preparing the next generation of professional horticulturists for leadership positions in our industry.”

Wildflower artist Eloise Payne Luquer (1862-1947) was a member of the Bedford Garden Club in Bedford Hills, New York, which endowed the namesake medal in 1949.
I came back to Toronto and the media world had changed,” says Susan Poizner as she talks about becoming a garden writer. She had been living in the United Kingdom, writing about Russia and international relations, doing feature stories, and working in radio. Poizner’s passion is telling stories. “I’m a journalist. I’m a filmmaker. I’m a communicator. And I’m a radio producer.” But the changes in the media industry and her newfound interest in gardening steered her away from journalism and storytelling. After she helped start a community group that hosted gardening talks and events, she studied landscape design and began work as a gardener.

STORIES OF ORCHARDS AND PEOPLE
Today, through her business Orchard People, Poizner has combined her love of telling stories with gardening. Her focus is fruit tree care, education, and consulting.

As we speak, it’s spring, her busy season for in-person training, teaching and consulting. The in-person work includes site visits, consulting and workshops. Teaching in person is just one part of what she does. The other part is online communications through her website orchardpeople.com. She writes blogs, produces videos and creates online training.

Poizner feels that an informative blog and website—with videos and podcasts—is the way to convert browsers into buyers of her online training. “My goal is to make sure that there is free content for people who can’t afford my training or who aren’t yet convinced that I have good stuff to offer.”

Poizner is very excited about using radio to tell gardening stories. “One of my loves when it comes to journalism is radio. When I lived in the UK I worked for the BBC World Service and I love radio,” she says. She now has her own program, Urban Forestry Radio, which runs online live on the last Tuesday of the month on RealityRadio101.com. “The fun part of this show is that I get to interview anybody I want—all these fabulous experts who can teach me more and more and more about fruit trees,” she says. For Poizner, the radio show is a powerful networking tool to connect with home and community orchardists from across North America.

FINDING A NICHE
When Poizner came back to Toronto from the UK, she didn’t anticipate working in garden communications. One project—to turn an underused local park into a community orchard—changed that. Through research, and with the help of extension and industry experts, Poizner and the other project members learned about winter and summer pruning, pests, diseases, soil management and tree selection. “It took me three years of caring for these trees in our local park to figure out the answer to this one question: What is the minimum that I need to do in order to grow fruit trees successfully?” she explains. “Once I understood it for myself, I was very easily able to communicate that using all of these skills that I had developed over my lifetime. As a journalist, I find the best way to learn is to write things down in a simple way that I can understand,” she adds. Those notes were the starting point for her book, Growing Urban Orchards: The Ups, Downs and How-tos of Fruit Tree Care in the City.

GWA AND THE BUSINESS OF COMMUNICATING
“I joined GWA when I started realizing that my fruit tree work was bringing me back to my passion of communications,” says Poizner. She considers the GWA Media Awards to be a very useful benefit. “It’s wonderful to be able to put on my website that my stuff is award winning,” she says, adding, “That’s a very valuable thing that the GWA offers.”

GWA helps her meet subjects for storytelling too. “I love meeting the people and sharing our stories and inspiring each other.”

Steven Biggs is a writer, journalist and speaker who explores the food chain: farm, food and garden.

Susan Poizner won a 2015 GWA Silver Award for Orchard People Winter and Summer Fruit Tree Pruning Online Workshop (orchardpeople.com); a 2014 Silver Award for her book, Growing Urban Orchards: The Ups, Downs and How-Tos of Fruit Tree Care in the City, and for Online Fruit Tree Care Education for the New Urban Orchardist.

“I joined GWA when I started realizing that my fruit tree work was bringing me back to my passion of communications.”

— Susan Poizner
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Kathryn Aalto
The Natural World of Winnie-the-Pooh: A Walk through the Forest that Inspired the Hundred Acre Wood
Timber Press
308 Pages, 178 Photos, 44 illustrations, $24.95
Published September 2015

This visually rich journey into one of the most beloved settings in children’s literature, The Hundred Acre Wood, as featured in A. A. Milne’s Winnie-the-Pooh (1926) and The House at Pooh Corner (1928). This year marks the 90th anniversary of the world’s most beloved bear. Described as a field guide, travelogue, well-informed biography and love letter to the English countryside, the book is a New York Times Bestseller, a People magazine Best New Book Pick and the subject of many glowing critical and media reviews.

Kate Copsey
The Downsized Veggie Garden: How to Garden Small Wherever You Live, Whatever Your Space
St. Lynn’s Press
192 Pages, $19.95
Published Feb. 15, 2016

The Downsized Veggie Garden shows how to successfully grow some veggies at home, even if you only have a patio or small garden. Crop rotation and succession planting, as well as seasonal planting ideas, are all included in the book. The book is fully illustrated to show exactly how to grow and care for your small garden veggies.

Early Registration Closes July 15
4 DAYS
11 GARDENS
27 EDUCATION SESSIONS
50+ VENDORS
UNLIMITED OPPORTUNITIES
GWA 2016
69th Annual Conference & Expo
Atlanta, GA • Sept. 16-19
Learn more and register today at gardenwriters.org
Getting your first book published is every writer’s dream. To reach this important milestone, you can find an agent to present your work to traditional publishing houses, or you can venture into the self-publishing world using Amazon’s Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP) CreateSpace platform or one of the myriad book publishers listed when you search self-publishing online.

Either way, you’ll need to market yourself as an author. That means creating your own website, developing an audience and favorable reputation, and acquiring a range of social media skills. For authors of nonfiction books that require illustrations, it’s also extremely valuable to be able to produce your own professional-quality drawings or high-resolution photographs.

But first, of course, you must come up with a book idea, preferably an idea that in some way hasn’t already been developed. Say you want to write about growing vegetables. You could begin by looking at books on this subject and deciding what your niche within this field might be. That niche can’t be too small or your book will appeal only to a limited number of people. On the other hand, if you find a topic that seems wide open, with virtually no books on it at all, you should ask yourself why nobody else is interested in the subject. Your most marketable choice will generally be a topic that already has books published about it but for which you can find your own unique angle that will interest many people.

While you’re researching your topic, be sure to identify your book’s closest competitors. Make a list that includes each book’s title, author, publisher, copyright date, page count, number and type of illustrations, trim size, price and ISBN, which may help you obtain very valuable BookScan sales figures. You might also write a descriptive paragraph about each competitor, explaining how your book will differ from it.

TRADITIONAL PUBLISHING

If you opt to approach a traditional publisher with your book proposal and a sample chapter, here are some things to keep in mind about a publishing contract:

Royalty. Traditional publishers offer a royalty, between 5 and 15 percent of the book’s price. Look carefully at the rate being offered. Sometimes the percentage is of the full retail price, whereas other times it’s a percentage of the publisher’s net, meaning the retail price, minus the discount given to the bookstore, which is generally about 50 percent. This distinction is very important. For example, if your book retails for $20 and your royalty is 10 percent of net, you don’t get $2 for each book sold ($20 x 10 percent). Instead you get only $1 per book ($20 x 50 percent x 10 percent).

Advance. A book publisher will estimate the anticipated sales of your book over its first year, and any advance against royalties offered before publication will be based on this estimate. Let’s say that the publisher estimates 5,000 copies to be sold in year one. If your royalty is $2 per book, you might get an advance of $10,000 ($2 x 5,000). But bear in mind that if you’re not well known, you may be offered a significantly smaller advance. And whatever the advanced amount, you won’t see any royalties until after it’s been paid back.

Rights. Today most publishers want all the rights to a book throughout its life, meaning the print rights in every country of the world and the electronic rights as well. But don’t be afraid to negotiate, if you’d like to limit the rights granted because you think that individually selling those rights can maximize your income. Your publisher will always tell you what’s a deal breaker regarding rights.

SELF-PUBLISHING

If you self-publish, you’ll get a far larger royalty, sometimes in the region of 75 percent of the book’s cover price. However, you’ll need to independently do all the things a publisher normally does, including professional editing, handling illustrations, as well as cover and text design, taking care of laying out the book and getting it printed and bound, and undertaking marketing and distribution, too. All this can be very expensive. And, if you don’t do these tasks well, you can end up with a garage full of unsold books on your hands!

GWA member Roger Marshall has written 18 books about boats and gardening. His latest is Garden Projects: 25 Easy to Build Wood Structures and Ornaments, published by Countryman Press, a division of W.W. Norton.
If you are reading this column, you are currently speaking on gardening, nature, communications or social media, and want to grow your business. Or, you are just getting started with speaking gigs. Either way, here are a few things to keep in mind as you grow this portion of your business.

First, evaluate how speaking fits into your overall business plan. Is this a major source of income, or is it a way to promote the sales of products, books and other services? This can help you determine your audience and fee, as you focus your efforts on accomplishing your goals.

BUILDING SKILLS
If you are just starting out, look for opportunities to hone your skills as a speaker. Master gardeners, garden clubs and business groups are always looking for speakers, but they have limited or no budgets.

Though the dollars won't be pouring in, you will be building your skills, reputation and network. This is an investment in your future.

EXPAND YOUR GIGS
If you have some experience as a speaker but want to expand this part of your business, consider a few of these suggestions:

• Let people know you are looking for more opportunities and ask for referrals. Fellow speakers and groups you have presented to are a great place to start. This often happens naturally, when members of the audience approach with future opportunities. Just be sure to follow up. Or, when speakers perform well, they are often asked to recommend others for future events.

• Talk to others in the profession or visit their websites. Find out what they are doing and where they are speaking. Most groups rotate speakers, so you will not be stealing business from your colleague. If they are good, they will be invited back.

• Join several speakers bureaus such as Great Garden Speakers. This is an easy way to let groups looking for a speaker find you. Plus, Great Garden Speakers allows your audience to post comments on your presentations. So when you receive rave reviews in person or writing, don’t be afraid to ask them to submit these comments to your profile.

HIGHLY EXPERIENCED
And for those who have lots of experience but are looking for new opportunities, consider the geographical area you want to target. Can you expand into new areas or find new opportunities within the gardening region you prefer?

Expand your list of topics. Perhaps it is tweaking what you already speak about to add an updated look, a different twist or to fit into current trends.

And consider non-gardening audiences. They often have more money to spend on speakers. Health care, community service organizations, women’s expos and more can increase your opportunities.

DETAILS
Now down to the nitty gritty of setting your fee, promotional expenses and contracts.

This is your business, so you need to cover your time and resources spent in creating the talk, promoting it and traveling. If you are losing money with no plan to turn things around, you need to evaluate how you are doing business and your fee structure.

You also need to know what the market will bear. This does not mean underselling your services, but helping organizations see the added value you provide. Does your appearance provide PR and additional media opportunities, or can you help promote the group or event through your website, Facebook or other outreach efforts?

Despite all the added value, it may still be up to you to help them afford your fee. Is there a local sponsor, or one of your partners that can cover some of your costs? Perhaps the group could sell your books and keep the profits to offset some or all your fees. Some speakers stay at the home of one of the group’s members to save the group travel expenses. Or, offer to speak twice for one and half times your normal fee. This saves them money on a second speaker and you make more money at one location.

And don’t be afraid to put a contract in place. My attorney taught me, “A good contract makes for a good partnership.” Spelling everything out in writing ensures a clear understanding of what each party is responsible for in making the experience successful for all concerned.

So take a bit of time to evaluate how you are currently operating this portion of your business and what you can do to expand your opportunities and enjoyment.

Melinda Myers suggests one way to boost the number of speaking opportunity is to expand or tweak your list of topics.

Former GWA National Director Melinda Myers is horticulturist, award-winning author, television and radio personality and popular speaker.
Imagine you’re about to cycle cross country, but there is just one place—say, an obscure town outside Wichita, Kansas, where you can find food, water and shelter. That’s akin to what a host of species, including birds and key pollinators, face today. Where there once were flourishing corridors of native and naturalized plants that provided habitat for wildlife, there are now fragments hemmed in by cities, highways, paved urban sprawl and suburban developments that are composed primarily of acres of that sterile monoculture—the lawn.

“Our activities, unfortunately, destroy a lot of wildlife habitat,” says David Mizejewski, naturalist for the National Wildlife Federation (NFW). Wildlife needs food, water, cover and a place to raise young. Additionally, it needs connectivity between those nurturing spaces to be able to migrate and move from one gene pool to another, which helps to keep a species healthy and is critical to its survival.

**DISJOINTED BYWAYS**

“Development is segmenting corridors and green spaces,” says Beth Pratt-Bergstrom, the NFW’s California director. “That smashes genetic diversity.” A wildlife ‘island’ that isolates a wild population usually spells its doom, as the isolation causes each generation to diminish. For example, there is a group of 15 mountain lions living in the Santa Monica, California, hills that can’t safely get out to seek new mates. One young male was hit and killed last year while trying to leave. While we may not want mountain lions in our back yards, we do want a healthy, intact food web, which requires a diversity of wildlife. Plants, particularly native and naturalized plants, play a huge role in this.

Gardens comprised of native and related plant communities can go a long way toward meeting the biological needs of wildlife. The NWF’s wildlife habitat program encourages recreating habitat through wildlife friendly gardens, which the organization will certify. Even a patchwork of these gardens in a sea of concrete and lawn benefits wildlife. In 2010, then-graduate student Steffenie Widows visited and surveyed 50 wildlife-certified homes in Orlando, Florida, to get a snapshot of the program’s effectiveness. She discovered that each garden exhibited a much greater diversity of wildlife than its non-certified neighbors. Over the years, the wildlife corridor campaign has been gaining traction, with more than 300,000 acres of wildlife habitat in nearly 200,000 gardens nationwide.

“There are about 4,000 people in Los Angeles, who have signed up,” says Pratt-Bergstrom. This is a good start, but it’s the contiguousness of these gardens that creates a corridor, instead of the equivalent of a waystation.

In the next issue of On the QT, look for Part 2, which examines creating wildlife corridors on larger properties.
“If we all planted for wildlife in our backyards, we would be creating wildlife corridors,” says Robyn Efron, certified horticulturist and master naturalist at Adkins Arboretum, Ridgely, Maryland. “But if you’re going to do it, do it so it truly helps.” For example, Adkins’s monarch butterfly waystation offers native goldenrods (Solidago spp.) and asters (Symphyotrichum spp.)—both late season nectar sources. It also has a large planting of perennial swamp milkweed (Asclepias incarnata), one of the monarchs’ primary host plants.

**MISCONCEPTIONS**

The movement to create wildlife-friendly gardens faces challenges such as preconceived notions that wildlife gardens are by nature untidy. This has led some housing developments and homeowners associations to establish covenants restricting perceived untidiness, while at the same time supporting the use of invasive plants, such as Bradford pears (Pyrus calleryana) and barberries (Berberis spp.). Yet, well-designed, wildlife-friendly spaces can be visually striking, as well as ecologically rich.

“Beauty of all kinds is part of the equation,” says Gregg Tepper, director of horticulture at the evolving 37-acre, Delaware Botanic Garden at Pepper Creek in Dagsboro. “We’ll be focusing on the beauty of the plantings. People will come to see the beautiful flowers and textures, but beauty is also the ability to support life.”

The ability to support life is something that, consciously or unconsciously, human beings crave. The High Line in lower Manhattan, once an empty concrete-and-steel railway trestle slated for demolition, is now a 1.45-mile green space filled with native plants, which support an increasing diversity of birds, insects, pollinators and visiting humans. Not coincidentally, it has also positively impacted local housing prices.

Many people make an effort to support wildlife by maintaining bird feeders or installing bumblebee houses, but these are human-dependent and species-specific stopgaps. It would be more effective for homeowners to consider planting for wildlife—a broader, more self-perpetuating approach that also has a “build-it-and-they-will-come” effect.

“When I first came, it was a very quiet place,” says Alyssa Nyberg, nursery manager and outreach coordinator at Kankakee Sands’ Efroymson Restoration project in Indiana. “You might hear crickets and one or two frogs. But now it’s very noisy. We have 240 different birds, over 70 species of butterflies, including the state-endangered regal fritillary, and 700 species of moths. It’s a very visual and sensual experience.”

**MORE THAN FLYING FAUNA**

“In urban areas, it’s easier to help our flying wildlife—birds and pollinators,” notes Patrick Fitzgerald, NWF senior director of community wildlife. “Hard surface barriers, fences, walls can be a problem for non-flying wildlife.”

Not surprisingly, people are usually much more open to planting for ‘flying wildlife’ than some of the non-flying species, especially since proximity to some of the larger predators offers challenges. P22, a mountain lion in LA’s Griffith Park (who has his own Facebook page!), recently ate a pet koala bear. Another California woman lost one of her backyard goats to a mountain lion, but doesn’t blame the territory-squeezed animal. “She’s one of our best volunteers,” says Pratt-Bergstrom. “She was sad of course, but says it was her fault for not protecting the goats sufficiently.”

Ultimately, we need to know much more than we do about the part each species plays in the environmental tapestry that sustains us all. The National Geographic documentary, How Wolves Change Rivers, offers rich food for thought.

“We’re not putting aside any more national parks but we can create parks by linking these supportive areas together—and a lot of people are willing,” Pratt-Bergstrom says. “I’m envisioning that we’re starting with neighborhood corridors and then citywide and then, who knows?”

GWA member Nancy Taylor Robson lives on the rural Eastern Shore of Maryland, where wildlife both enhances and challenges gardening, as well as other aspects of life.

RESOURCES:

*How Wolves Change Rivers* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysa5OBhXz-Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ysa5OBhXz-Q)

Suggested reading:

- Pratt-Bergstrom, Beth. *When Mountain Lions are Neighbors*. Heyday Books
- Wilcove, David S. *No Way Home*. Island Press


Obituaries

SUZANNE (SUZY) BALES

Suzy died on Wednesday, March 30, 2016 after a valiant struggle with cancer. She was a creative presence, bringing a compelling appreciation for the beauty of nature and gardening to many through the 15 books she authored, the numerous newspaper and magazine articles she penned as well as her lectures on a variety of gardening subjects. She wrote eight books in the Burpee American Gardening series, and is best known for her books Garden Bouquets & Beyond and The Garden in Winter. Over the years she was a regular columnist/contributor to Newsday, The New York Times, Better Homes & Gardens, Family Circle, and the Huffington Post. A former GWA member, Suzy’s work garnered two Quill & Trowel awards.

She and her husband bought a house in Oyster Bay, Long Island in 1978. Over the years, Suzy kept adding and modifying gardens on the six-acre property (from a formal vegetable garden to a Belgian border to a meadow) turning it into a showplace. Most of her books included arrangements. Most of her books included photos she took of her many and varied gardens as well as her artistic flower arrangements.

Suzy was committed to gardening and horticulture on many levels. She served on the boards of the American Horticultural Society and the Garden Conservancy and was a distinguished advisor to the Brooklyn Botanic Garden and Old Westbury Gardens. — Cathy Wilkinson Barash

MEL BARTHOLOMEW

Mel Bartholomew, creator of the revolutionary Square Foot Gardening system, passed away at the age of 84 in La Jolla, California on April 28, 2016. In poor health for a number of years, his son Stephen reported that the cause was liver cancer. Bartholomew’s death was announced by the Square Foot Gardening Foundation, which promised to continue his mission of combating world hunger.

Bartholomew trained as an engineer, and upon his retirement from his engineering and construction company at age 42, turned his attention to gardening. He found traditional gardening both frustrating and wasteful, especially regarding overseeding and then thinning to fit the space. He devised an easy and innovative method of intensively growing vegetables that has revolutionized the way millions grow food.

Bartholomew stated that his square foot garden—growing in a mix of compost, coarse vermiculite and peat moss—required no pesticides or tools, used only 20 percent of the space of a row garden and needed just 10 percent of the water. Plus, there was no weeding required. He emphasized that the grid (which is placed on top of the raised bed) helps gardeners space plants appropriately in order to grow intensively; it is an essential component of square foot gardening.

Bartholomew documented his techniques in his first book Square Foot Gardening (published in 1981 by Rodale), which was soon followed by a public television series “Square Foot Gardening.” An updated edition of his book, All New Square Foot Gardening, was published by Cool Springs Press and updated as a second edition in 2013. The concept has been expanded to include Square Metre Gardening and Square Foot Gardening with Kids. Bartholomew has sold more than 2.5 million books on the subject, making him the bestselling gardening author in North America for more than a generation.

Bartholomew was convinced his methods could end world hunger, and thus, he created the Square Foot Gardening Foundation from the proceeds of his book sales. His work was tireless. Through his books, the PBS television show, innumerable personal appearances, and a wide network of certified instructors, Bartholomew encouraged gardeners all over the world to abandon row gardening and grow vegetables in his densely planted, gridded boxes.

Mel Bartholomew was an original. It is not an overstatement to suggest that his innovative system introduced millions to gardening. His methods have often been copied, but never replaced. — Billie Brownell, editor of Bartholomew’s updated All New Square Foot Gardening.

GENE LOGSDON

On May 31, 2016, we lost a strong advocate for local farm systems and self-sufficiency. Gene Logsdon was born on Nov. 5, 1931, in Tiffin, Ohio, and lived most of his life 25 miles away on his 30-acre Upper Sandusky farm with his wife Carol. But his works and thoughts travelled far beyond the borders of the state. He promoted the idea of small farms, richly biodiverse in resources and products. He was a visionary and a practical man, a voice of reason, a humorist and a Contrary Farmer who didn’t suffer fools easily.

Gene wrote 25 non-fiction books, four fiction, and hundreds of articles for the Progressor Times, Farming Magazine, Draft Horse Journal and more. His writings were a mix of philosophical insights and practical knowledge based on his experiences working his farm. He was a supporter of Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association, and at the annual conference, Gene was often found in the Book and Raffle Room signing his books and connecting with farmers and gardeners. Little did many of us know that February 2016 would be the last time he would grace the book room with his presence.

Although Gene is no longer with us you can still access his wit on his blog at The Contrary Farmer and gather pearls of wisdom, hope and joy from a man who offered us a pragmatic, personal way to live on this earth. — Debra Knapke, The Garden Sage, Columbus, Ohio
The Mary Howard Gilbert Memorial Quarry Garden encompasses 3 acres of plants considered native to pre-settlement Georgia.

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