



On the



GARDENCOMM

Garden Communicators International



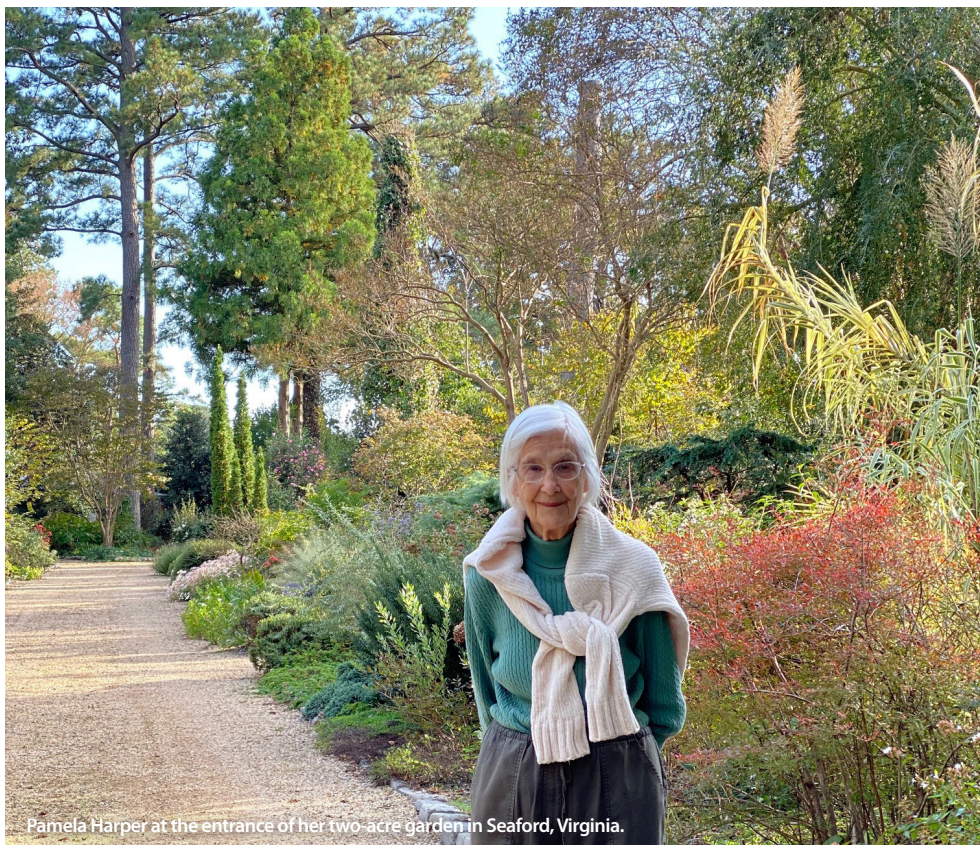
National Federation of Press Women
2019 National Award Newsletter,
On the QT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Director's Message	2
Upcoming GardenComm Events	4
President's Message	4
Why Go to #GardenComm2020	5
Member Profile/Laura Burchfield.	6
New Members/Helping Us Grow	7
Green Industry News	7
Sustainability	8
Region 3 Meeting Update	9
Marla Schrager	10
Hot Off the Press	11
Business.	12
Media Awards Deadline	13
Member News	14
Regional Events.	15
New & Noteworthy	16

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Pamela Harper at the entrance of her two-acre garden in Seaford, Virginia.

COURTESY MARIANNE WILLBURN

A 30-Year Garden, 20 Years on

BY MARIANNE WILLBURN



She has written five books and hundreds of articles for some of the best gardening periodicals in both the United States and the United Kingdom.

She lectured internationally with Beth Chatto, Christopher Lloyd and Rosemary Verey during the grand old days of book tours with budgets. She speaks fondly of a time when she and **Derek Fell** could capitalize on a photo-hungry, 35mm market that needed good pics of great plants – and photographers who knew what they were.

In a quiet, older subdivision in the small town of Seaford, Virginia, this remarkable woman has been gardening her 2-acre property for almost 50 years and sharing her extensive knowledge with the public. She is Pamela Harper and GardenComm is thrilled to be touring her fascinating garden this August, during our symposium in Williamsburg.

— Continues on page 3



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DIRECTORS

N = National Director • R = Regional Director • Date = Term Expires

REGION 1

Sally Cunningham (2022 N)
AAA Garden Discovery Tours
Charlie Nardozi (2021 R)
Gardening with Charlie Nardozi
Ellen Ecker Ogden (2020 R)
Kitchen Garden Designs

REGION 2

Kathy Jentz (2021 N)
Washington Gardener
Louise Clarke (2020 R)
The Morris Arboretum
Teresa Speight (2019 R)
Cottage in the Court

REGION 3

Diane Blazek (2022 N)
All-America Selections/
National Garden Bureau
Beth Botts (2020 R)
Morton Arboretum
Alicia Rittenhouse (2021 R)
HYR BRIX Fertilizer

REGION 4

Kate Copsey (2021 N)
Freelancer
Helen Newling Lawson (2021 R)
Spot On Communications
Marie Mims Butler (2020 R)
Garden Speaker

REGION 5

Bill Johnson (2022 N)
Bill Johnson Nature Stock
Photography Inc.
Rita Perea (2020 R-North)
International Contemplative
Garden Association
Dee Nash (2020 R-South)
Red Dirt Ramblings
Shelley Cramm (2021 R-South)
Garden in Delight

REGION 6

Mary-Kate Mackey (2020 N)
Freelance
Anne Reeves (2020 R-North)
Moment of Delight
Jacqueline Soule (2020 R-South)
Gardening with Soule
Chris Sabbarese (2021 R-South)
Corona

REGION 7

Ken Brown (2021 N)
gardening-enjoyed.com
Andrea Whitely (2020 R)
Andrea Whitely Garden Consultant
Rob Howard (2021 R)
The Hamilton Spectator

New Beginnings for a New Year



I couldn't think of a better way to start 2020 than being named Executive Director of GardenComm. I'm excited and honored for the opportunity to serve in this role and be part of GardenComm's next decade of success and beyond. Thank you to the Board and especially President, **Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp**, and Vice President, **Maria Zampini**, for their time and careful consideration in leading the Board on this important decision. I appreciate your trust in Kellen and me.

A week before Thanksgiving, an article published by Inc.com popped up on my Facebook feed titled: [Harvard Scientists Now Say Mr. Rogers Was Right: People are Fundamentally Kind and Decent](#). I never had a doubt about this and have lived my life and equate my success in association management based on this belief—now proven by science.

Since beginning my career in 2007, I have partnered with nearly 20 presidents, boards of directors and thousands of members. The latter have all been non-paid volunteers filled with passion and talent ready and willing to give back to their communities. Along the way, I have been inspired professionally and grown personally by cultivating trust in new relationships, many of which have lasted to this day, by recognizing the good in people.

My strength is having really strong relationships and people skills by practicing a similar philosophy: That they have good intentions and will do their best when they feel supported and valued. I think it is because of this approach, one board member (and now a close friend), complimented me by saying I was like a submarine: Calm and steady, but very powerful and impactful. I strive to understand and seek answers before reacting. As you get to know me, I hope you will find I am collaborative, organized, driven and bring out the skills and talents of those around me to give them the tools they need to flourish.

Soliciting honest feedback is my first priority. You are the experts in your field and within the organization. I can't learn without you, so I am coordinating one-on-one conversations with the Board, committee leaders and staff to hear first hand about GardenComm's strengths, areas of improvement and growth opportunities. Your perspectives are the foundation I need to be successful in sharing my strengths, including strategy, communication and positivity. Once I have this information, the staff and I will collaborate and develop a list of priorities aligned with the organization's mission and strategic plans to help me lead the organization in this ever-changing landscape.

Last winter, the GardenComm leadership shared that they evaluated the existing strategic goals and where necessary, made adjustments to progress. I was pleased to see the outcome focused on these topics: Membership, branding and communications, education, volunteer management and finance. In my one-on-one discussions, I will ask more about these topics, particularly those that impact the finances, which is a big concern of the leadership and me. I applaud the current Board for making some tough decisions incorporating changes in the 2020 budget, including an increase for annual dues to help get to a balanced budget.

I look forward to meeting and learning from all of you, particularly about the horticulture world. You and my predecessors have built an incredible community for the green industry, making this an important and powerful organization.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if I can help you, or if you have something to share that will help me do a great job. I'm always here to listen. 🌱

All the best,

Marla Schrager, CAE
mschrager@kellencompany.com

—Harper Garden continued from page 1

FROM ORDINARY TO MASTERPIECE

Harper's neighbors are, by this point, quite used to tour buses coming throughout the growing season and depositing camera-toting visitors from all over the globe. They mill outside the split-rail fence, which separates an ordinary street from her botanical masterpiece.

For a short moment, the Harper garden is still a mystery, hidden behind an artful mix of tall shrubs and unusual trees. In another moment, the quiet figure of Pam Harper will be seen walking down the wide gravel drive that bisects the garden, ready to tour the group through groves of camellias and dogwoods, lush shaded stands of *Arisaema ringens* and exuberant opium poppies soaking up the sun. There will be something for everyone, from plant collector to enthusiastic novice. Lens caps off everyone. Let's go!

Harper, her husband and young son moved to the property from the United Kingdom in 1970, and were drawn to it for its frontage along Chisman Creek, a gentle, wide waterway, which eventually empties into the Chesapeake Bay. Early on, they chose to leave the water views intact from the back porch of the house. Instead, they created a garden entirely in the front portion of the property, using the sides of the house for cold frames, holding beds and potting sheds.

STILL GETS HER HANDS DIRTY

Her first book, *The Story of a Garden*, was written in America shortly after the couple moved here. It centered around the creation of her first garden in England. "The writing of it helped the grieving process of leaving it," she told me over breakfast. We sit in a perfectly preserved mid-century modern room and watch the occasional sailboat move through the water directly outside. The genius loci of home, garden and water permeates all with a deep sense of timelessness and perfect restfulness.

Outside the small front courtyard, where tender clivias and giant ligularias spend their summer vacation, a small white truck sits filled with a week's worth of compost from the local municipal department. I have never seen it empty in all my visits to her garden. Harper faithfully top dresses her sandy coastal soils continuously, and still does much of this work herself at age 89.

It was Harper's book, *Perennials: How to Select, Grow and Enjoy*, co-authored with Fred McGourty of Hillside Gardens, that truly launched her career as a garden writer in 1982. The book went into seven printings and was used in colleges and for Master Gardener



Dappled light briefly illuminates a lush grouping of hydrangea, hellebores and *Arisaema ringens* in a shady corner of Pamela Harper's garden in July.

COURTESY MARIANNE WILLBURN

programs for years afterward. She published *Designing with Perennials* 10 years later. Also well received, it gave her the opportunity to showcase her talent not only as a photographer and plantswoman, but as a designer with an excellent eye for harmonizing color.

TIME-TESTED KNOWLEDGE

She began lecturing even farther afield, and the publication of *Color Echoes* followed in 1994. This beautiful book explored the complex relationships of color in the garden, and is still bedtime reading for many garden designers looking for inspiration and guidance.

Readers knew that even as she was writing, Harper was gardening, and the publishers knew it too. In 2000, Timber published *Time-Tested Plants—Thirty Years in a Four Season Garden*, giving gardeners a trusted resource to consult for perennials that the author had

spent thirty years growing and testing in a hot and humid USDA Zone 7b/8.

Quite possibly the best thing about Harper's garden is the juxtaposition of rare with common—unusual plants sharing space with trusted home garden favorites in energetic pairings that delight the senses and make the garden feel exotic, yet accessible. She has had 50 years to perfect that look, though she tells me she would happily do it for 50 more. Join us in Williamsburg in 2020 to meet this incredible gardener and be inspired by the Eden she has created. 🌿

Marianne Willburn is a columnist, blogger and the author of *Big Dreams, Small Garden*. Read more at www.smalltowngardener.com or follow @smalltowngardener on Facebook and Instagram.



Upcoming GardenComm EVENTS

ALL TIMES LOCAL

Please share info with colleagues, friends and family interested in these topics.

Region 7 Connect Landscape Ontario's Congress Meeting

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

10 a.m., Tuesday, January 7

The meeting will be in the Safdie Room, Toronto Congress Centre, with treats provided by Landscape Ontario, giving everyone time to catch up with one another and learn about industry news. Afterwards, members are free to explore the trade show and attend any of the educational sessions.

Region 2 MANTS Connect Meeting

Baltimore, Maryland

5 to 7 p.m., Wednesday, January 8

When you RSVP for this Connect Meeting, you are only signing up to gather with us at the Lord Baltimore Hotel lobby bar on Wednesday, January 8, 5 to 7 p.m. Drinks/foods on your own tab. Afterward, you may wish to remain at the hotel for dinner or form a group to eat elsewhere. GardenComm will be in booth 2776 in Hall A at the MANTS show.

Region 4 TPIE Connect (& MORE) Meeting

Ft. Lauderdale, Florida

Tuesday, January 21 – Wednesday January 22

Meet new friends and reconnect with old ones, as GardenComm members gather for TPIE 2020. As a GardenComm member, you will receive complimentary admission to TPIE Road Shows and the expo, VIP seating at TPIE's Opening Session, VIP tour of the show and access to education sessions. A GardenComm Connect Meeting and networking will take place Wednesday, January 21 (time & location TBD). Registration for TPIE is FREE. For registration, please use the promo code "GWAT1"

#GardenComm2020

Williamsburg, Virginia

August 9-12

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE JO ELLEN MEYERS SHARP

Let's Make This a Great, New Year



At this time of year, we think about all we are grateful for, the people who enrich our lives and the opportunities that keep us moving forward. Thanks to GardenComm's members for making this a wonderful organization, focused on helping us succeed in our endeavors.

We also look forward to all the possibilities for the New Year. Your leadership team is ready for the opportunities the New Year presents. Of course, finances and education hold spots 1 and 2 on our to-do list, and here's how you can help.

FINANCES

- Encourage colleagues to join. Bloggers, photographers, speakers, educators and marketers are members along with writers, authors, podcasters, radio and TV talent, illustrators, designers, garden center staffers and others. Members are the lifeblood of GardenComm. The more we have, the better we are at operating our organization and providing the services you want and need.
- Attend [#GardenComm2020](#) in Williamsburg, Virginia, August 9-12. If membership is GardenComm's lifeblood, the conference is its financial core. Conference attendees, [sponsors](#) and [exhibitors](#) infuse our organization with the funds needed for operations, scholarships and education programs that members want.
- Enter your best work in the [GardenComm Media Award](#) and encourage your colleagues to do so. We've instituted a reduced rate for those who enter three or more pieces of their work. All of the judges are in place, according to **Dee Nash** and **Carol Michel**, co-chairs of the Media Awards Committee.

Save \$\$

If you attended the GardenComm Annual Symposium & Expo in Chicago (2018) or Salt Lake City (2019) you can save \$25 by registering for #GardenComm2020 before January 31. We call it the Loyalty Reward and it rewards previous conference attendance with a reduced rate.

When you refer someone to join GardenComm, ask them to put your name down on the [membership application form](#) and you will get a \$20 credit towards your 2021 dues. Some members have waived their dues completely by referring lots of new members.

EDUCATION

- The [application deadline for speakers](#) to present programs for #GardenComm2020 is January 15. Consider submitting a proposal yourself or encourage someone you know to submit one. We're looking for speakers to present on writing, photography, speaking, digital media, broadcast media, horticulture, publishers, producer and trade, among other topics. **Maria Zampini** and **Kim Toscano** are co-chairs this year for the Williamsburg programs.
- Be on the lookout for a membership survey that asks us about our membership structure, education programs and more.

Happy New Year! Feel free to contact me with any comments, ideas, questions or suggestions about how we can make GardenComm a better organization for us all. 🌱

Jo Ellen
jemsharp46@gmail.com



Why go to #GardenComm2020? To Light Your Fire

BY ERICA BROWNE GRIVAS



I had no intention of going to #GardenComm2019 last year. The first time I heard about it, I immediately dismissed it because our family had so many planned trips this year (our eldest son was off to college). Nonetheless, this summer in Salt Lake City became my first Annual Symposium & Expo.

My husband gets credit for the switch. He had just attended a conference and was so inspired; he's now getting an Ed.D. So when GardenComm's reminder email hit my inbox the next week, I was ready to pull the trigger.

Some background: I am a lifelong journalist who dove into gardening to de-stress after covering the O.J. trial for *Inside Edition*. I earned a certificate in Landscape Design, and today work in an upscale garden store in Seattle while writing gardening and lifestyle features and marketing copy for entrepreneurs. I joined GardenComm two years ago in hopes of making new connections and expanding my freelance work.

CONFERENCE REALITY BETTER THAN IMAGINED

Members say the more active you are the more you'll get out of your membership, so I went all in.

The 2019 GardenComm Symposium & Expo was my first sleep-away-with-nametags business trip. I wasn't sure what to expect, but the reality was far better than I even imagined. The cooperative culture impressed me—from that first newbie "speed date" meeting with mentors to the Awards Banquet—people went out of their way to be helpful, supportive and welcoming.

To borrow a term from psychologist Carol Dweck, I enjoyed the "growth mindset" built into the culture. Several people recommended maximizing your exposure on the tours with the rule, "Never sit with the same person on the bus." (Luckily no one suggested this *while I was sitting with them*.) Thanks to that, I met



Erick Browne Grivas, a first-timer at #GardenComm2019 in Salt Lake City, was inspired by **Grace Hensley's** (dark shirt, standing) roundtable discussion about Instagram.

people from around the country and in every niche of our industry—and it stretched my introvert shell a little more with each ride.

But just by being there, the simple act of steeping yourself in that community of ideas and enthusiastic people who share your passions—it changes you. You literally can't help but grow.

DIVERSE, FRIENDLY MEMBERSHIP

One minute you're talking with an author, then a marketer, a plant breeder, an inventor, a student and then a photographer. You are seeing and hearing in countless ways how people are succeeding in garden communication.

Maybe it's mirror neurons, maybe it's just the gift of seeing someone do what you dream of doing that enables you to imagine yourself in the place of the speaker on stage, or leading a garden tour or a workshop.

Have you ever plunge watered a thirsty plant? If not, it's when you dunk a plant into a bucket and completely submerge the root ball until bubbles stop forming at the surface. That's how you know every cell is full up. At the Expo I felt like that plant—inspiration and information rushing in from every direction until I was so saturated, something had to

happen with that energy. And it did.

When I got home, I:

- Spent two weeks pitching and writing
- Achieved four new pieces in the *Seattle Times* (I'd only had my first one before that)
- Wrote and sent my first humor piece to a new GardenComm contact
- Began creating Instagram posts for the nursery, inspired by social media workshops at the meeting by **Grace Hensley** and **Summer Rayne Oakes**.
- Started work on ideas sown at the editor/publisher pitches

Finally, I got around to writing a thank-you note to someone at GardenComm, and she suggested this article. Have I ever written a personal experience piece for a business newsletter? Nope.

Sneaky, right? I see what you did there, GardenComm. 🌱

Erica Browne Grivas gardens in Seattle (shout-out to Region 6). Her writing has appeared in the *Seattle Times*, *Real Simple*, and the *New York Post* among other publications. She is a regular contributor on gardening and lifestyles for SeattleGreenlaker news blog. [You can read her blog here.](#)

Laura Burchfield's Circuitous Path to GardenComm



Like the Grateful Dead song, "What a Long Strange Trip It's Been," the same can be said for **Laura Burchfield**, whose trip may be stranger than most. Laura started off with a Bachelor of Science in animal

science at Ohio State University. Then she thought she would get a Juris Doctorate (law) degree—just because she could.

After graduation, she worked for an attorney who specialized in real estate work (although she is convinced that he really hired her because she had the animal science degree and he had cows). After a while, Laura moved into her family's general law practice and specialized in workers compensation issues, which she ultimately discovered she absolutely hated.

While talking to a girlfriend who told her about a Master Gardener class that was starting, Laura thought that might be interesting, so she signed up for it. Intrigued by the classes, she headed back to OSU, where she took all the horticulture classes she could. She took so many classes that the professors encouraged her to pursue a horticulture degree. She says she is bored easily, which explains why she decided to simultaneously pursue a double Masters degree—in horticulture and landscape architecture.

FIGHT FOR EQUAL PAY

Laura thrives on being an overachiever. While doing her graduate work at OSU, she also began teaching a few horticulture classes, as well including plant ID, landscape design, theme gardens, management and introduction to horticulture. To supplement her income, Laura worked on the grounds crew at OSU and mowed lawns. Eventually she was teaching full time and stayed there for almost 20 years.

Of course the path of life and love (work) never runs smoothly and she complained several times that her pay was not equal to that of the male staff. Laura finally put her concerns about gender bias in a letter to the university. "Pay me the same as my male colleagues or consider this my two-week notice," she wrote. The university met her request and paid her the same as other teachers. It wasn't long after that she left Ohio State and started her own landscape design

and installation business, HRH Landscaping. It can't be said that she doesn't have a sense of humor because HRH stands for Her Royal Highness, although there are no real claims to royalty in her background. Her company covers historic garden and residential design, and she encourages her clients to garden with the environment in mind. She even teaches interested clients how to care for their gardens, as well.

BOOK PUBLISHED

"Initially **Denise Adams** and I were writing a book together and (GardenComm) seemed like a great group of people to learn from and grow. The education was the initial motivator and now it's also about good friendships." Their book, *American Home Landscapes: A Design Guide to Creating Period Garden Styles*, was published in 2013. And because Laura spends time in Charleston, South Carolina, she volunteered to work on the Local Arrangements Committee for #GardenComm2021 there.

Her design work is wide and varied. She recreated the private garden of Dawes Arboretum, known as Daweswood, in Newark, Ohio, by submerging herself in the diaries of Bertie Dawes, one of the original owners of the property. Even though it wasn't specified in the diaries, Laura managed to plant hollyhocks in the exact same location as Bertie Dawes had, according to her granddaughters. She worked at the Robbins Hunter Museum in Granville, Ohio. This property has had several identities over different eras, so gardens were created to reflect each of those time periods, including the daffodil displays that dot the spring landscape.

Laura also designed and implemented a green roof and garden at Ohio State's Horticultural Science Building.

TROPICAL GARDEN IN HER FUTURE

She volunteers for the Garden Club of



PHOTO COURTESY JOAN McDONALD

Laura Burchfield at Joseph Manigault House in Charleston, South Carolina, where she will begin restoration work on the garden this spring with the Garden Club of Charleston.

Charleston and is working with members this spring to refurbish and design the garden at the Joseph Manigault House there. "It has long been neglected and will be a labor of love," she said.

So what is in the future for Laura Burchfield? She just finished a weeklong propagation class at Great Dixter in England, something she had wanted to do for a long time. In between mowing lawns and teaching classes at OSU, she also worked in a wine store. Since she has a low threshold for boredom, there is an "introduction to be a sommelier" class on her radar.

There are plans to put in a tropical garden at their home in Charleston and, of course, she would like to write more. Laura enjoys her life living on their farm in Circleville, Ohio, with her husband and animals. Her daughter, Ruby, is studying nutrition at OSU, and her son, James, and his wife live in the Washington, D.C. area along with her first grandchild, Dorothy Rose. 🌱

Denise Schreiber is Secretary of GardenComm, author of *Eat Your Roses, Pansies and Lavender and 49 Other Delicious Flowers*, a speaker, a certified arborist, an All-America Selections trial judge and Mrs. Know It All on KDKA-AM's *The Organic Gardeners*.

Welcome NEW GARDEN COMM MEMBERS

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NGB Celebrates 100th Anniversary

A century ago, [National Garden Bureau](#) (NGB) was conceived by James Burdett in the wake of World War I. Because of his unique background both as a former journalist and as a seed company's advertising manager, he appreciated the role of the media in public education. He pioneered the idea of enlisting horticultural writers and broadcasters in the noble effort of mass education to create a population of gardeners.

The bureau really came of age during World War II when the government encouraged homeowners to grow Victory Gardens. By means of posters espousing "Beauty and Abundance in Your Garden" and other materials, NGB promoted gardening on the home front.

The postwar years saw an emphasis on community beautification and the bureau responded with a film, brochures, programs and information sheets to help gardening communicators further this cause with the public. Incorporation as a not-for-profit organization soon followed.

FAST FORWARD TO 2020

Much of what Burdett put in place 100 years ago remains. Today, National Garden Bureau continues to work with horticulture writers and broadcasters—now called garden communicators. The promotion of gardening takes place primarily in the digital realm and in the world of social media, but also at events such as industry trade shows and consumer flower shows. Educating and inspiring consumers to indulge in all types of gardening endeavors remains a top priority for NGB. NGB members range from seed breeding companies to individual garden book authors and the number of members continues to grow.

As 2020 marks NGB's 100th year, they invite the entire industry to help them celebrate all year with fun, educational and inspirational activities. Here's a peek at some of what is planned:

- January – member stories and profiles in trade publications
- February – special anniversary event at the American Seed Trade Association Flower and Vegetable Conference
- March – opportunities to "See the Future" at California Spring Trials
- June – promotion at the American Public Gardens Association Annual Symposium
- July – 100th anniversary feature at Cultivate'20
- August – promotion at the 2020 GardenComm Conference and Expo
- September – a 1920s-themed banquet at the AAS-HGSA-NGB Summer Summit
- All year – special Social Media campaigns

For more information about NGB, please contact [Diane Blazek](#).



Thanks to these GardenComm members for helping to grow the organization in 2019. For every new member you bring in this year, you'll save \$20 on your 2021 membership dues.

ONE MEMBER

Liz Ball, Randi Baker, Katie Elzer-Peters, Charleston Horticulture Society, Sylvia Gordon, Grace Hensley, Peggy Hill, Kate Jerome, Jennifer Jewell, Mary-Kate Mackey, Susan Martin, Carol Michel, Eva Monheim, Kelly Norris, Red Butte Garden, Sharon Richardson, Denise Schreiber, Sharon Solow, Nan Sterman, Betsy Williams

TWO MEMBERS

Abra Lee, Jeff Lowenfels, Sue Markgraf, Shannon McCabe, Andrea Whitely, Lisa Mason Ziegler



GardenComm's Blog

Want to learn more about GardenComm or do you have an interesting, timely topic to share with other members of GardenComm? Check out the [GardenComm blog](#) for weekly features by members. If you'd like to contribute a post, please contact Carol Michel at indygardener@gmail.com

Plants as Environmental Remedies



When spoken, the term phytoremediation sounds like a way to settle pub brawls. But looking deeper into phyto, from the Greek *phyton*, meaning plant, and you know phytoremediation is all

about plants.

"It's using plants to clean up or restore sites that have been negatively impacted by any number of things," said Timothy A. Volk, Senior Research Associate and Associate Chair SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry.

Phytoremediation is used on brownfields (former industrial or commercial sites affected by real or perceived environmental damage) to clean up contaminated soil, to remove pollutants from groundwater systems and to filter pollutants from the air.

"The low-hanging fruit is to create really simple buffers for particulate matter in air," said landscape architect Kate Kennen, owner of the Boston design firm Offshoots Inc. Offshoots does this by selecting street trees with particular characteristics. "We have street trees with stickier, waxier leaves with more hair that acts as a screen, and it helps scrub some of the air."

PLANTS AT WORK

Approximately 720 species of plants are used globally for brownfield or groundwater remediation. Some uptake and sequester heavy metals; others gulp groundwater, degrade the pollutants and release about 25% of the extracted water through the leaves using evapotranspiration.

Although the study of plants as a remedy grew up in the 1970s and 80s, observant Siberian prospectors in the 1930s had already noticed that the presence of certain plants indicated areas rich in certain minerals. Subsequent research proved that particular plants, sometimes called hyperaccumulators, can extract and retain unusual quantities of heavy metals and minerals such as lead, arsenic, cadmium, selenium and more. But it wasn't until the turn of this century that phytotechnology as a means of environmental cleanup began to leach into the mainstream.

While earning her masters at Harvard Graduate School of Design in 2004, Kennen



For the PlantWorks project, a former gas station in Hyannis, Massachusetts, Offshoots selected plant species to mitigate soil contaminates.

took a course in brownfield remediation from Prof. Niall Kirkwood. Though he spent only one class on phytoremediation, it impressed her.

SMELLY SITE

"My very first project was a gas station site down on the Cape," she said. "The town was going to use the site for stormwater infiltration and I could smell petroleum on the site and asked Niall what we could do."

Despite the smell, soil and water tests proved that contamination levels there were below standards requiring remediation. "A lot had been taken care of with natural attenuation," Kennen said.

Incorporating phytoremediation into a design is complex. The remediation objectives, the site's topography, its soil characteristics, the contaminants and the climate all play a role.

"Every site's a little different," said Volk, the research associate at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. "To make it successful, you have to understand that site and design the plant-based system to take up those contaminants."

"People [also] need to understand... what the capabilities of the system are," said Edward Gatliff, president of Applied Natural Sciences Inc., in Hamilton, Ohio, which uses TreeWell technology—a means of deep planting certain species to remediate water systems. But Gatliff emphasized that you can't just plunk in hyperaccumulator trees and expect it to work.

CANOPY CALCULATIONS

"People think: A tree can pump 20 gallons of water a day, so we'll plant 200 trees per acre." But the calculations must also include canopy and air flow. "If it's too crowded, air's not moving through, and you get a one- or two-dimensional evapotranspiration surface where you can get a three-dimensional surface area with proper spacing," Gatliff said. "There isn't a one-size-fits-all solution to the problems," Volk said. "And there's a huge array of different plants that can do different things. It takes extra effort to find people with the expertise of the plants, the site, the site's needs and bringing those pieces together to make it successful."

— Continues on page 9

—Sustainability, continued from page 8

The obvious benefits of phytoremediation are its much lower cost and smaller carbon footprint. A drawback is that it takes longer. “You can put plants on a site to take up the lead,” Volk said. “But it will be a multi-year process. If a town or village is under an order to clean up by a certain date, phytoremediation is challenging unless you can persuade the oversight agency to stretch the deadline. More recently, the lower costs and environmental benefits are helping to persuade regulating agencies to be more flexible on timing,” he added.

“You’re also creating habitat and foraging and adding a diversity of species,” Kennen said. Slightly less measurable but just as significant are the very real human-societal benefits accruing from the natural beauty in reclaimed green space. 🌱

RESOURCES:

Phyto: Principles and Resources for Site Remediation and Landscape Design by Kate Kennen and Niall Kirkwood (Routledge, 2015)

[International Phytotechnology Society](#)

[Soil Science Society of America, Phytoremediation](#)

[Applied Natural Sciences, Inc.](#)

7355 Dixon Drive
Hamilton, OH 45011
513-895-6061

[Offshoots: Productive Landscapes, Inc.](#)

547 Rutherford Ave.
Charlestown, MA 02129
617-500-6530

[How Baltimore Is Saving Urban Forests – and Its City](#)

Nancy Taylor Robson grows vegetables, fruit, perennials and whatever else she can manage on two acres on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Her garden articles have appeared in *The Baltimore Sun*, *House Beautiful* and other publications. She is the author of four books. A member of the GardenComm Sustainability Committee, Nancy is also a Master Gardener and Bay-Wise gardening certifier.



On December 6, 19 GardenComm members and guests learned how an Indianapolis garden center attracts customers year-round and how a winter light show thrills visitors at Newfields.

The day started at Sullivan Hardware and Garden, one of Indianapolis’ largest independent garden centers. During the holidays, the garden center becomes Santa Central with four Sullivan Express trains that carry visitors to one of two North Poles where Santa receives visitors.

Pat Sullivan owns this and two other Do-It Best stores in the Indianapolis area. He shared that he loved visiting downtown Indianapolis as a child to ride the train to see Santa at the department stores. He said he marveled at the festive, animated windows the department stores had during the holiday season. That’s what he strives to recreate at the largest of his three stores on Indianapolis’ north side.

After riding on his Sullivan Express, the group headed to Newfields, formerly the Indianapolis Museum of Art. There, we got a behind-the-scenes look at Winterlights, Newfields display of more than 1.5 million lights amid the grounds’ trees and gardens.

Jonathan Wright presented a program on why and how Winterlights was created and gave a glimpse or two of what’s on the drawing board for Newfields, including restoration of historic gardens and opening views to and from the campus.

GardenComm thanks Pat and his crew for the cute glasses in the swag bag and for sharing his story about his 60-year-old family business. And thanks to Jonathan Wright and the Newfields crew for their hospitality, including vouchers for sandwiches, soup and cookies, a bag of sparkling bulbs and book about the campus.

*Surround yourself with people who
are only going to lift you higher.*

— Oprah Winfrey

Clearly, Oprah must have heard about GardenComm...

...Sometimes all it takes is a personal invitation.

Know a garden communicator who isn’t a GardenComm member?
Invite them to join #TeamHorticulture

Marla Schrager Credits Listening Skills for Her Growth in Management Field

BY JO ELLEN MEYERS SHARP



Marla Schrager found her calling after exploring several interests, volunteering and going through professional education and training.

A member of the Kellen team, Marla officially becomes

Executive Director of GardenComm: Garden Communicators International on January 1, after serving in that capacity behind the scene for several weeks.

Like a lot of us, Marla explored work in other areas. At first, the Chicago-area native wanted to work in the hospitality industry, so she moved to Nevada for schooling. That didn't satisfy her, so she left school, returned to Illinois and enrolled to study art history to become a liberal arts graduate.

After college, at the encouragement of her boss, she started volunteering with the Business Marketing Association of Chicago (now part of a unit of the Association of National Advertisers). She began with the organization's annual fundraiser, was asked to chair the committee, which included a seat on the board, and eventually was hired by the board to fill the executive director's chair.

VOLUNTEERING LED TO NEW PATH

She's an example of how many of us start volunteering and begin to create a whole new path in life. She has helped manage about 20 different boards, and has been with Kellen for five years. She started there when one of her organizations became a Kellen client.

At Kellen, she has worked with the Society of American Travel Writers, part of the management company's communications unit, which includes GardenComm, American Society of Journalists and Authors (ASJA), Council of Science Editors, College Media Association, New York Women in Communication and others.

"I also see cross promotions of webinars and sponsorships between organizations as other avenues to offer more to members and drive revenue," Marla said.



PHOTO COURTESY C.L. FORNARI

Marla is a Certified Association Executive (CAE), which entails training and experience, and recognizes that she has demonstrated the wide range of knowledge essential to manage an association in today's challenging environment. Administered by the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE), this credential is only held by approximately 4,400 executive professionals.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

With fresh eyes, she sees challenges and opportunities with GardenComm. "I'm working

closely with the Board, committee leads and staff to understand the organization's history with a goal of appreciating what is working and recognizing what is not. Three areas on my radar are:

- Financials: The Board has approved a budget with a deficit for the past few years. That is not sustainable, so I will be looking closely at both revenue and expenses.
- Technology: Changes in technology are inevitable. Assessing these tools to ensure they are nimble and create efficiencies is a

— Continues on page 11

—Marla Schrager, continued from page 10

critical part of an association's success.

- Activities: GardenComm is fortunate to have a lot of programs and benefits available to members. As a new leader, I want to understand if the offerings are appropriate and meeting member needs.

"I'm thrilled to take the reins from Holly Koenig, the interim Executive Director. Holly, one of our senior vice presidents in New York City, isn't going away. Her main priority is overseeing all our media-related clients, and she remains a great resource to me," said Marla, who is based in Kellen's Chicago office.

Marla credits her family status for much of her success. "I'm the middle child of five, so I have always been the peacekeeper, which requires more listening than talking. My grandfather used to say, 'You are the master of the unspoken word' and I always took that to heart. Later, I learned this was actually part of a quote from Winston Churchill.

"By listening to the needs of members and staff, I'm able to build strong, trusting relationships, hear different viewpoints, identify commonalities and get to know people to determine the best way to help them. Bringing all this together is the most vital part of my job and an association's success."

ENJOYS FLOWERS, TRAVELING

Part of her interest in hospitality was fueled by her passions for traveling, entertaining and wine, loves that continue today. She said, "I was fortunate to go to Paris and Bordeaux last summer and experience all of the above with several friends. It was an amazing experience that gave me the opportunity to visit historic chateaus with beautiful gardens, delish wines and even watched a wine barrel transfer for the first time."

She said she always has a vase of fresh-cut flowers on her dining room table. "One of my sisters moved to Washington State from Chicago to become an organic farmer when she graduated college. I visited her many times and gained a true appreciation for nature's beauty from plants to flowers to vegetables, which continues today. I'm looking forward to expanding my horticulture knowledge as an added benefit of leading the charge (and keeping my hibiscus alive and blooming over the winter). 🌱

Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp is the Editor of *On the QT*.

HOT OFF the press



KIM EIERMAN

The Pollinator Victory Garden: Win the War on Pollinator Decline with Ecological Gardening

Quarry Books

160 pages, \$26.99, Paperback

To be published January 7, 2020

The passion and urgency that inspired WWI and WWII Victory Gardens is needed today to meet another threat to our food supply and our environment – the steep decline of pollinators. *The Pollinator Victory Garden* offers practical solutions for winning the war against the demise of these essential animals. Environmental horticulturist and ecological designer, **Kim Eierman**, shares information on the major pollinator types and how to attract and support each one with the habitat and the resources they need. The book includes tips on selecting the most appropriate plants to boost your local ecosystem and its pollinators, creating pollinator habitat and achieving biodiversity while providing sufficient plant targets for pollinators. Also included are tips on site assessment, garden planning and tracking success. Garden project ideas are offered for both small and large landscapes, such as pollinator islands, enriched landscape edges, revamped foundation plantings, meadowscapes and container gardens.



EVA MONHEIM

Shrubs & Hedges

Cool Springs Press

224 pages, \$30, paperback

To be published March 3

Shrubs are everywhere in the landscape, from streamsides and woodland edges to suburban front gardens and small city lots. Despite their common presence, selecting and maintaining shrubs remain a mystery to many. In *Shrubs & Hedges*, **Eva Monheim** helps readers discover all the know-how needed to choose the best flowering, evergreen and deciduous shrubs for their growing conditions and how to care for them properly. Shrubs have so much to offer. Whether stabilizing soils, increasing privacy, providing resources for wildlife, masking a home's foundation, marking a property line or adding beauty and interest to your surroundings, shrubs are long-lived workhorses that seldom gain the praise they deserve.

TARA NOLAN

Gardening Your Front Yard: Projects and Ideas for Big & Small Spaces



Cool Springs Press

240 pages, \$30, hardcover

To be published March 10

On the heels of her first book, the best-selling *Raised Bed Revolution*, comes **Tara**

Nolan's second, *Gardening Your Front Yard: Projects and Ideas for Big & Small Spaces*. With her unique combination of DIY and gardening expertise, Tara (one-third of SavvyGardening.com), weaves you past the main pitfalls of trying to fit a garden between your home and the street. This beautiful and comprehensive book shows how to accomplish easy hard-scaping projects; presents the possibilities of sustainable concepts, such as rain gardens; inspires readers to plant for pollinators; demonstrates how to plant a sedum carpet on a driveway; how to make your own raised beds and more—all custom-designed for the rigors of front-yard gardening.



CHRISTY WILHELMI

Gardening for Geeks: All the Science You Need for Successful Organic Gardening

Fox Chapel/Companion House

248 pages, paperback, \$19.99

To be published February 11

This updated edition of *Gardening for Geeks: All the Science You Need for Successful Organic Gardening* is the perfect resource for anyone with a curiosity for the world of soil biology, botany and horticulture. Providing the basics on how to design and build the garden of your dreams—even small space and urban gardens—you'll also learn about in-depth concepts, such as how plants work, how soil lives, how bugs help and more. Loaded with tons of step-by-step processes, helpful diagrams, expert tips and nerdy details, Christy Wilhelmi's book is a comprehensive beginner's guide to understanding the science behind your favorite hobby. This newly designed edition includes additional plant profiles, the latest research and terminology, and more photographs and illustrations. 🌱

Do You Rent or Own?



I'll be the first to admit that I am a social media addict. Managing social media for my clients and my own business is a full-time job, though it is just one of many services I offer. It's a never-ending race

to gain the most followers, engage the most people, garner the most comments to prove the content I created resonated with followers. Are you tired of that rat race yet? I'm getting there.

Imagine a world where 1.6 billion people no longer logged in to Facebook daily, where 25-34 year-olds didn't constantly post Instagram-worthy stories and scenes from their lives, or where three quarters of its users didn't catch up the day's news in 2.7 minutes on Twitter. Imagine a world where you no longer had social media followers because those platforms either made it too costly to participate or they simply no longer existed. What would happen if you lost all of your social media content and followers? Would you be out of business?

This question echoed in the halls of Cobo Center in downtown Detroit, Michigan, at the [Digital Summit conference](#) I recently attended. Professional marketers from many industries gathered there to gain insight into the latest digital marketing trends from thought leader Seth Godin and marketing managers from companies like Facebook, LinkedIn, Pandora, Ford Motor Company, Quicken Loans and Merrell. Here are a few of the points that have stuck with me since the conference.

RENTED VS. OWNED CONTENT AND FOLLOWERS

More than once, the presenters reminded us that our social media accounts exist in rented space. The content we've gathered on our pages, in our groups, stories and videos are being housed in rented property. If that rented property burned down tomorrow, our content and followers would be lost. Facebook is not going to mail us a thumb drive postmortem with all the names and contact information of our followers and all of the content we have posted on our pages.

Conversely, our email list, website, blog, newsletters, podcasts, photos and printed



materials are owned content. If you personally own these assets and ever decided to sell your business, these items would be assigned a monetary value in the sale.

Consider the pool of content you have developed and followers you have amassed over the years. How much of that is rented vs. owned? You can't build a mansion on rented land.

YOUR WEBSITE IS YOUR HUB

Your website—your owned asset of your website—should be the central hub where all of your evergreen content resides, where your blog lives, where your newsletters connect, where your speaking and consulting services are described and where your books are listed. This rich resource should project your personal brand image and contain content that remains consistent to your core message. Consistency is critical. It is the place from which a foundation of trust with your customers and followers is built.

During the Q&A portion of Seth Godin's presentation, a member of the audience asked how to focus her message because she was writing for millions of people. His answer was simple: "Don't write for millions of people." Godin went on to explain that the mission of his daily blog is "to get people to agree and pass the message along." He strives to serve the smallest viable audience something they will want to talk about. These people will tell the others and become your brand ambassadors.

Who is the audience you most wish to serve with your specific message? Does the content you are creating serve that audience?

GETTING EYES ON YOUR CONTENT

"Average is full. Aim for the edges instead," was one of my favorite quotes from Godin that day. His idea illustrates the challenges of Google search today.

— Continues on page 13

My eyes were opened when I learned that Google's primary goal is to keep searchers from ever having to leave Google to get their answer. When someone performs a search, Google automatically displays what it thinks is the best answer at the top of the page followed by additional answers to similar questions in the People Also Ask box. Today, more than half of all Google searches end without a click away from Google, thus they are sending less organic traffic to websites. Nearly 100 percent (96%) of click-thrus come from the top four search results.

Google search is trying to mimic the human brain. The good news: It can't completely replace experienced gardeners, yet.

One key to getting your content discovered in Google search results is aiming for the edges, as Godin advised. Instead of titling your article "Native Perennials"—a broad topic that Google has many of its own answers for—title it something more specific like "20 Native Perennials for Full Sun Gardens in Michigan." Your content is more likely to be returned near the top of the search results when you use a detailed title.

Be careful with the words you choose for your titles. "Google does not search for journalistic headlines, it only knows semantics," according to Samantha Kermode of Vertical Measures digital marketing agency. She suggests going back through your website and blog to update titles to something more searchable, for example: "Cute Cat Memes" instead of "The Beast Within." Ask yourself, would someone actually search for this title?

In a career where every day is a race to the finish line, focus your energy on what produces results. Build on what you own, strive to add to your email list consistently, and save social media for keeping in touch with followers and driving them back to your website or blog. If Mark Zuckerberg ever decides to retire and close up shop, you'll still be in business. 🌱

Susan Martin is a freelance horticultural marketer, writer and speaker at Gardener Sue's News, and a former Region 3 Regional Director. She is celebrating her 20th year working in the business of horticulture, with a primary focus on marketing since 2003.



Media Awards Deadline March 16: Enter Early and Save \$\$

The 2020 GardenComm Media Awards, the only national online media awards program for the gardening communications industry, is open for entries. [Early entry deadline is February 21. All entries must be received no later than March 16.](#)

Held annually for more than 20 years, the GardenComm Media Awards have recognized the top professional horticultural communicators in the areas of writing, photography, speaking, digital media, broadcast media, publisher/producer and trade.

Only works first published and copyrighted between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019 are eligible for entry. The official copyright date will be the eligibility determinant.

This year's program features more than 50 categories across seven disciplines. All works primarily focused on horticulture and gardening topics are eligible. All individuals, companies and publishers may enter. GardenComm membership is not required, but does qualify entrants for discounted entry fees.

NEW THIS YEAR

Four new categories were added: Writing: Marketing, Writing: Trade Column, Writing: Trade Article and Photography: Blogging.

Submit more than two entries and receive \$10 off each additional submission. Discount applies to members and nonmembers. Discount applied at checkout.

A Reliable Resource for Garden Communicators

Founded in 1922, the **American Horticultural Society** (AHS) connects people with plants, and garden communicators with reliable information and valuable opportunities.

AHS member benefits include:

- Our well-respected bimonthly magazine, **THE AMERICAN GARDENER**, which is read and contributed to by leading garden writers
- Special admission privileges/discounts at over 320 participating gardens nationwide via our AHS Reciprocal Admissions Program
- Discounted admission to AHS programming, including our annual Great American Gardeners Award and Book Award ceremony & banquet
- The reward of knowing you're supporting AHS's mission to promote the people-plant connection and environmental stewardship



Join now: www.ahsgardening.org/join

On the QT has changed the format for member news. Rather than list items by regions, we're listing them chronologically.

Events, Talks and Presentations

Joan Calder (Region 6) will present "Amazing Habitats We Can Provide for Mason and Leaf Cutter Bees" at the Master Gardener Workshop, January 5, at the Santa Barbara Public Library, 40 East Anapamu St., Santa Barbara, California. Public is invited.

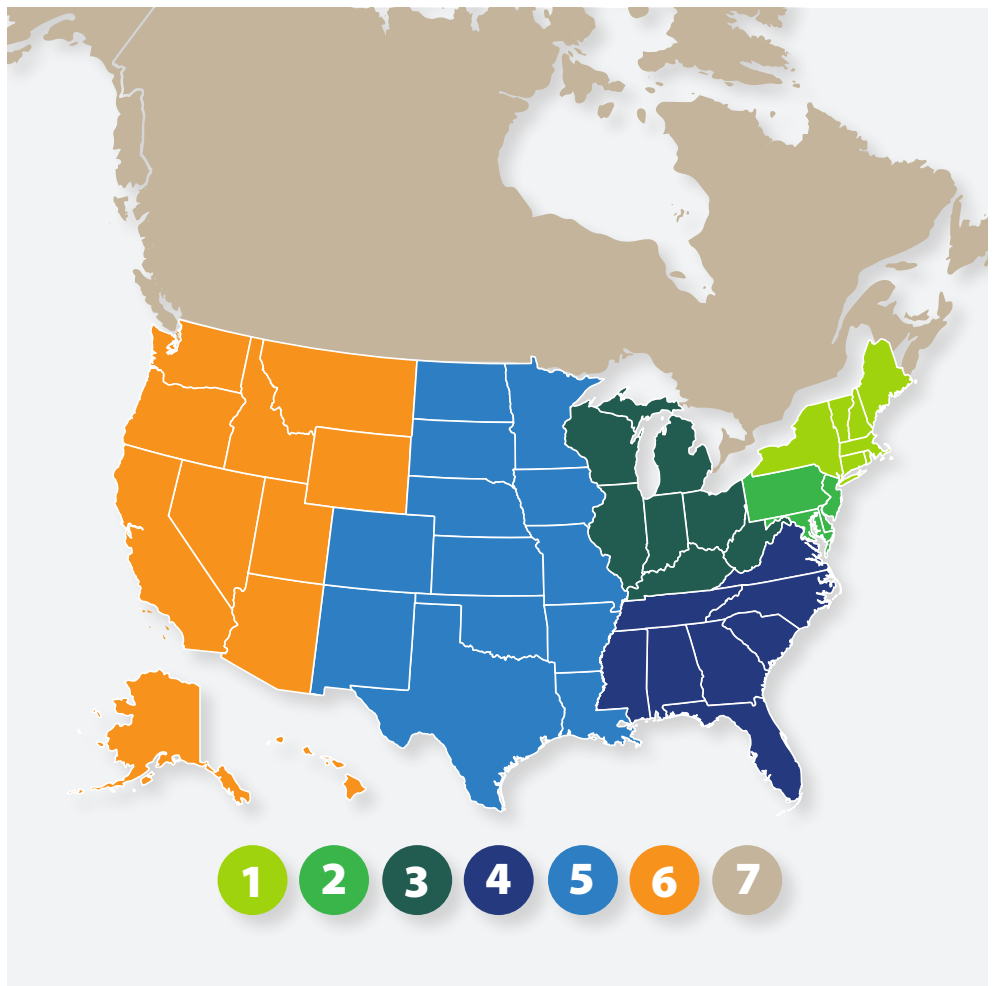
Toni Gattone (Region 6) will present her flagship seminar "You Can Garden for Life," which was the basis of her book *The Lifelong Gardener, Garden with Ease and Joy at Any Age*, published by Timber Press, several times during January and February. In California, she's speaking at the El Cerrito Garden Club, January 9; Orchard Nursery in Lafayette, January 25; South Valley Fleurs Garden Club in Hollister, February 12 and the Garden Guild of Oakland, February 13.

On January 11, **Noelle Johnson** (Region 6) will present a talk on "Desert Gardening Simplified" at the Town Council Chamber of Carefree, Arizona. She is also teaching her class on ["Plant Selection" for the NGC Landscape Design School](#) in Phoenix, January 25. In March, Noelle re-launches her [online class "Desert Gardening 101."](#)

Dan Benarcik (Region 2) will speak at the Mid-Atlantic Horticulture Short Course at the Norfolk (Virginia) Botanic Garden January 14-16. [Register online.](#)

Vanessa Gardner Nagel, (Region 4) FAPLD, award-winning landscape designer and author of *Understanding Garden Design* and *The Professional Designers Guide to Garden Furnishings*, will present "Garden Furnishings," January 14, and "Gardening on Slippery Slopes," January 15, for the Mid-Atlantic Horticultural Short Course at the Norfolk Botanic Garden, Norfolk, Virginia.

January 15, **Ellen Zachos** (Region 5) will teach participants how to "Make Your Own Local Bitters" at the Sanibel Captiva Conservation Fund on Sanibel Island, Florida. That evening, she'll present "The Wildcrafted Cocktail," also at the SCCF. Both presentations will focus on local native plants.



On January 21, **Dan Benarcik** (Region 2) will present "Artistry Within the Garden" at the [Delaware Center for Horticulture.](#)

Chanticleer (Region 2) will host Aaron Bertelsen, vegetable gardener at Great Dixter, for a talk at 7 p.m., January 22, at the Conference Center at Penn State Great Valley, 30 East Swedesford Road, Malvern, Pennsylvania. [Aaron will present on his new book, "Growing Fruit and Vegetables in Pots,"](#) and there will be a book signing following the talk.

Mary-Kate Mackey (Region 6) will speak at the Good Earth Home, Garden and Living Show, January 25 and 26, in Eugene, Oregon, and at the Northwest Flower & Garden Festival, February 26, on "Winter Disasters: How to Help Your Garden Recover."

Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp (Region 3) will present two programs on "The Latest, Greatest and Guiltless Houseplants," January 26, at the Indianapolis Home Show at the Indiana State Fairgrounds.

Dan Cooper (Region 7) will speak about "Low-maintenance Gardening" based on his book *Gardening from a Hammock*, February 7, at the London Plant Symposium 2020 in London, Ontario, Canada. He'll talk about "Exotic Flowers of Southeast Asia," February 10, at the to the Stoney Creek Garden Club. This presentation is part travelogue and part weird and unusual tropical delights of Asia.

Kim Roman (Region 2) will teach a four-hour, two-evening, at Anne Arundel Community College, Arnold, Maryland campus, February 11 and 18. This class is for beginning to expert vegetable gardeners using any small-space gardening method.

Christy Wilhelmi (Region 6) launched her updated book, *Gardening For Geeks: All the Science You Need for Successful Organic Gardening* (Fox Chapel Publishing), February 11. On February 13, Diesel Bookstore in Brentwood, California, will host her initial book signing.

— Continues on page 15

Louise Clarke (Region 2) will speak to the Norristown (Pennsylvania) Garden Club February 12. Her talk “Green Roofs from the Ground Up” will look back at the history of the Morris Arboretum’s green roofs to current projects that include diversifying plants and habitat for invertebrates.

Ken Brown (Region 7) will speak at the Georgetown Horticultural Society February 19 about “3 + 1 Tenors,” the mainstays of the perennial garden. February 22, he’ll be at the Toronto (Canada) Botanical Garden’s Jump On Spring, with his “There are No Houseplants” presentation.

Square Foot Gardening Certified Instructor **Kim Roman** (Region 2) will present “An Introduction to Square Foot Gardening” for the [Mid-Atlantic Homeowners Expo at The Byzantium Event Center](#), Annapolis, Maryland, on Saturday, February 22, time TBD.

Janice Cox (Region 6) will speak in Seattle at The Northwest Flower and Garden Festival, February 26-March 1.

Ellen Zachos (Region 5) will speak in Seattle about “Houseplants” at the Northwest Flower & Garden Festival (formerly NWFGS show, February 28. On February 29, she’ll share the stage at 11:30 a.m. with **C.L. Fornari** (Region 1) in “Container Wars,” then again at 2 p.m., when they present a live version of their Plantrama podcast.

Patrick Ryan (Region 6) will present a DIY workshop making hypertufa planters called “Set in Stone” at the Northwest Flower and Garden Festival, February 28 and 29. There will be music!

Toni Gattoni (Region 6) will present “The Ease and Joy of Growing Edibles in Containers,” at the Northwest Flower and Garden Festival, February 28 and 29 in Seattle.

Dan Cooper (Region 7) will speak about “Exotic Flowers of Southeast Asia,” March 11 at the Burlington (Ontario) Horticultural Society. This presentation is part travelogue and part weird and unusual tropical delights of Asia.

Items submitted by:

Louise Clark
Helen Newling Lawson
Bill Johnson
Anne Reeves
Ken Brown

American Landscape Symposium

[Morris Arboretum](#) and [Connecticut College Arboretum](#) are co-sponsoring New Directions in the American Landscape (NDAL) Symposium at two locations in January. January 9 and 10, Goodhart Hall of Bryn Mawr College will host the event, and on January 16 and 17, the Cummings Art Center of Connecticut College will be the host.

Home Gardener Day in Norfolk, Virginia

The Virginia Horticultural Foundation presents “Botanical Elements,” January 13, at [Home Gardener Day](#) at the Norfolk Botanical Garden. Several GardenComm members are among the speakers, and this should be a sellout.

Mid-Atlantic Short Course Set

For horticulture professionals, the Virginia Horticultural Foundation presents the [Mid-Atlantic Horticultural Short Course](#) (MAHSC), January 14-16. The program offers educational tracks in arboriculture, business management, horticulture, landscape design, landscape maintenance, insects and disease, as well as training and recertification for pesticide applicators. GardenComm members are among the speakers. The MAHSC will be at the Norfolk Botanical Gardens, Norfolk, Virginia.

Georgia Hort Conference

The [Wintergreen Horticulture Conference and Trade Show](#), hosted by the Georgia Green Industry Association, will be at the Infinite Energy Center, Duluth, Georgia, January 21-23. Sessions include “New Plants” featuring Michael Dirr and Allan Armitage. The trade show features more than 250 exhibitors.

Rose Convention in South Carolina

On January 24-25, the American Rose Society’s Carolina District will hold its annual [Carolina District Mid Winter Meeting](#) in Greenville, South Carolina. It’s a daylong event with many speakers and vendors. For more information email dixie3.rose@yahoo.com.

Toronto’s Get the Jump on Spring

February 22, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Toronto (Ontario, Canada) Botanical Garden holds its annual Horticultural Open House, [Get the Jump on Spring](#). The event includes 30-plus exhibitors, including horticultural societies, garden clubs and environmental organizations in addition to a floral design competition and show. This one-day garden extravaganza includes:

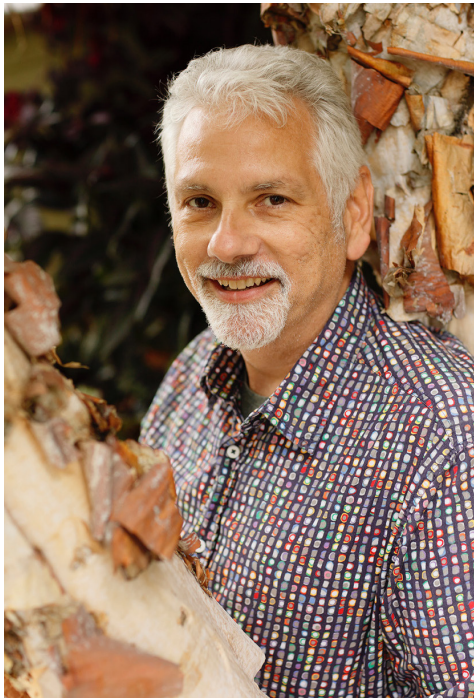
- Free talks and demonstrations
- Gently-used gardening book sale
- Gardening advice from Toronto Master Gardeners

Seedy Saturday is a community event in conjunction with Jump on Spring, where gardeners share their heirloom seeds and help to preserve our horticultural heritage. Bring your extra, open-pollinated or heirloom seeds on February 22 and discover something new. Drop your seeds off at the swap and then browse the seed exchange tables to see what others have brought. Also at the event, take advantage of local seed growers and vendors to stock up for this year’s garden, and learn about seed saving from seed conservation organizations. It’s also a great opportunity to discover varieties that are not available commercially.

Newfields Symposium Feb. 29

Join fellow plant-lovers for a full day of talks focused on plants, design, and environmental stewardship. Hear experts share on a variety of topics that will inspire and inform your own garden. Topics include inspiration from travels in Japan, hardy perennials from the Chicago Botanic Garden trials, the integration of art and horticulture, annuals at the Cincinnati Zoo, developing resilient landscapes for a changing climate, and houseplant selection and care. Among the speakers are GardenComm members **Susan Martin**, **Scott Beuerlein** and **Richard Hawke**.

NEW & Noteworthy



Charlier Named to Board

Jim Charlier has been elected to the Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens' board of directors. "The appointment comes just as it announces its largest expansion in more than 100 years," he said. Plans call for a new visitor entrance, a butterfly conservatory, state-of-the-art classrooms, new grow houses, revenue-generating event spaces, a new gift shop and a café. Groundbreaking set for this year, with completion by fall 2022.

Cooper Launches 3rd Reprint of Book

Dan Cooper is reprinting *Gardening from a Hammock* for a third time. The book was first published in 2012. Co-authored with **Ellen Novack**, it has sold over 3,000 copies. GardenComm members with self-published books might be interested to learn that most of his copies, while available online and in stores like Lee Valley Tools, have also been sold at speaking engagements to horticultural societies and garden clubs.



Cox to Speak at Mother Earth News Fairs

Janice Cox (above) will be a speaker at the [Mother Earth News Magazine Fairs](#) across the country. She'll present ideas from her DIY beauty books and running hands-on workshops.

Grivas Contributes to Seattle Times

Erica Browne Grivas has become a regular contributor to the *Seattle Times*. She will cover lifestyle features and events. (See Erica's take on her first GardenComm conference in Salt Lake City on page 5).

Washington Master Gardeners Honor Mulvihill

Susan Mulvihill has received the 2019 Media Award from the Master Gardener Foundation of Washington State. In making its selection, the Awards Committee noted her contributions ranging from Master Gardener booklets, newspaper articles, guides and videos to radio and television appearances, interviews, teaching, seminars and lectures.

Curbelo Earns Hort Therapy Certificate



Perla Sofia Curbelo has completed her certification in Horticultural Therapy at the Chicago Botanic Garden and Oakton Community College. Her final work was a detailed proposal to create a wellness Horticultural Therapy Program focused on employees transitioning from parental leave to the workplace, earning her a perfect score and a top "A" in her final course. Horticulture Therapy is the professional direction in the use of plants, gardens, and activities related to Nature to achieve measurable results of physical and mental health. Horticultural

therapists need to be great communicators as they can practice in a variety of settings from hospitals, vocational institutions, recreational and residential centers, botanical gardens, schools and prisons to private companies.

The American Horticultural Therapy Association certifies the prestigious Certification Program in Horticultural Therapy of the Chicago Botanic Garden. The program, which lasted 10 months, consisted of three online courses and two face-to-face clinics in Chicago during the summer and fall.

"The program has been the culmination of two intense years. After Hurricane Maria (2017), I had to postpone the application to the program in the face of so much uncertainty in Puerto Rico and the doubts that always accompany you," Perla said. "Completing the application requirements and waiting for the response is almost half a year."

Three letters of recommendation were required. "I was fortunate to reach into the GardenComm network and ask one of my colleagues for a letter. I got a great one, which I'm sure contributed to my acceptance," Perla said.

"I acquired a lot of knowledge and new experiences, friendships, colleagues and the desire to continue contributing to the welfare of Puerto Rico through horticulture.

"The field of Horticultural Therapy is fertile in Puerto Rico," she said. As a Certified Horticultural Therapist, Perla will continue to enrich her gardening lifestyle project—[Agrochic.com](#)—and will amplify her consultancy services. She will be collaborating on an educational horticultural therapy conference taking place in Puerto Rico this summer.

Perla has been a GardenComm member since December 2017. Last year, she presented "Marketing to Culturally Diverse Communities" at #GardenComm2019 in Salt Lake City with colleague **Abra Lee**. 🌱



Former President Hodgson wins *Louange*

Past GardenComm President **Larry Hodgson's** daily French language gardening blog, [Jardinier Paresseux](#), won a Jardins Merveilleux award in October 2019. This international award, offered by the French online home and garden magazine *Maisonae.fr*, goes to the year's five best French-language gardening blogs. For those who don't read the language of Molière, the blog is also published in English at [Laidback Gardener](#).

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Rhoades and Whitney Collaborate

Eddie Rhoades is working with producer **Amy Whitney** on a series of short videos of the unusual fruits growing in his garden in Georgia. [See a preview](#). Amy blogs at [smallgardennews.com](#) and Eddie at [bittersweetgardens.com](#).

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Sterman's *A Growing Passion* to Air Nationally

Starting this Spring 2020, *A Growing Passion* will air nationally on Create TV, a public television channel available in 242 markets nationwide. "Now, people in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and other cities across the country will learn about the innovation and passion for the growing world in our San Diego community and elsewhere up and down California," said **Nan Sterman**, co-writer, co-producer and on-air host of the Emmy-winning program.

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Webb Publishes Blog for Herb Society of America

Sam Webb (Region 2) wrote an article for the [Herb Society of America blog](#) entitled "[Plant Labels](#)," which was published on November 11, 2019.

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Wilhelmi's Updates *Gardening for Geeks*

Christy Wilhelmi launches her updated book, *Gardening For Geeks: All the Science You Need for Successful Organic Gardening* (Fox Chapel Publishing). She gives special thanks to **Katie Elzer-Peters** for connecting Christy with Fox Chapel.



Outdoor Alliance for Kids Honors Susan Yoder

Susan Yoder (above) of Seed Your Future was among the recipients to receive the OAK (Outdoor Alliance for Kids) Awards, bestowed annually on bipartisan decision-makers and OAK members. It recognizes their significant contributions in advancing opportunities for children, youth and families to learn, get active and serve in the outdoors. The 2019 Awards were delivered during a reception in Capitol Hill as part of the annual meeting of the alliance, OAK Week.

"Each awardee has demonstrated commitment to policies and programs aligned with OAK's mission to connect children, youth and families to the outdoors," said Jayni Rasmussen, Senior Campaign Representative for the Outdoor Alliance for Kids (OAK) & Youth at Sierra Club.

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Landscape History Library Elects Zelonis

At its October 2019 board meeting, the [Library of American Landscape History](#) elected **Mark Zelonis** as its new treasurer. LALH is the leading publisher of books that advance the study and practice of American landscape architecture.

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Savvy Gardening Wins Canadian Travel Award

The Canadian Garden Council named [Savvy Gardening](#) the recipient of the Garden Media of the Year Award during the Garden Tourism Awards ceremony last November. **Niki Jabbour**, **Tara Nolan** and **Jessica Walliser** make up Savvy Gardening. Tara Nolan also won for Media Person of the Year.

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GardenComm Members to Judge at the Northwest Flower & Garden Festival

A panel of three judges—Region 6 Regional Director **Anne Held Reeves**, photographer **Mark Turner**, and writer **Erica Browne Grivas**—will hand out GardenComm's second Outdoor Living Award at Seattle's Northwest Flower & Garden Festival. The award will be given February 25 to the display garden on the show floor that exhibits the most beautiful, creative and educational ideas to encourage effective use of horticulture and design for functional outdoor living environments.