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GARDENCOMM

Garden Communicators International

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Visit MyGardenComm under Member Resources, [click here](#). A login screen will appear. Click "Forgot your password?" Enter your email address. A message will be sent with a secure link to set or reset your password. Click the link and choose a new password. Once complete, you may login using your email as username and your new password. For issues, please call 212-297-2198.



PHOTOS COURTESY CYNTHIA BEE/SALT LAKE CITY

The Daybreak community demonstrates that suburban developments of new homes can be filled with character and beautiful landscapes. Several will be on the South Valley tour during #GardenComm2019.

Only in Salt Lake

BY CYNTHIA BEE



Salt Lake City is excited to welcome GardenComm members to tour new garden attractions, quirky art and enjoy a true taste of the fabled American West. The 2019 Local Arrangements Committee

is planning a unique set of tours, which will provide many opportunities to enjoy the natural beauty and diversity of our local landscapes.

RED BUTTE GARDENS

Utah's flagship botanic garden, Red Butte Gardens and Arboretum, is at the base of Red Butte Canyon, just east of the University of Utah. The garden showcases a wide range of garden styles and features the unique red sandstone of the canyon whose name it bears.

In 2017, Red Butte Gardens celebrated the grand opening of a new 2-acre Conservation Garden, which highlights the artful use of local materials and native plants. The new garden stands in unique contrast to the lushness of the lower gardens, yet blends seamlessly into the steep foothills into which it is nestled.

THIS IS THE PLACE STATE PARK

Just around the corner from Red Butte Gardens and across the street from Utah's Hoogle Zoo stands This is the Place State Park. If you want to experience a taste of the Old West, this combination of recreated and real pioneer-era homes provides a western version of Colonial Williamsburg—complete with authentically costumed tour guides who explain the challenges faced and overcome by early settlers. It's a worthwhile way to experience the West.

— Continues on page 3



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

REGION 1

C.L. Fornari (2019 N)
The Garden Lady
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Groundworks Inc.
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REGION 2

Kathy Jentz (2021 N)
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Cottage in the Court

REGION 3

Diane Blazek (2019 N)
All-America Selections/
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Beth Botts (2020 R)
Morton Arboretum
Susan Martin (2019 R)
Gardener Sue's News

REGION 4

Kate Copsey (2021 N)
Freelancer
Cheval Opp (2019 R)
Cheval's Garden Tours
Marie Mims Butler (2020 R)
Garden Speaker

REGION 5

Bill Johnson (2019 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
(2019 R-South)

REGION 6

Mary-Kate Mackey (2020 N)
Freelance
Anne Reeves (2020 R-North)
Moment of Delight
Jacqueline Soule
(2020 R-South)
Gardening with Soule
Tova Roseman (2019 R-South)
Tova's Garden

REGION 7

Ken Brown (2021 N)
gardening-enjoyed.com
Andrea Whitely (2020 R)
Andrea Whitely Garden
Consultant
Bob Howard (2019 R)
The Hamilton Spectator

Happy New Year!



This is always an exciting time of year: It's a chance to reflect, start fresh, reinvigorate goals and, in some cases, create a new look. As many of you are aware, our association has recently undergone a rebrand and has officially relaunched as GardenComm.

The main purpose of the rebrand was to reflect expanding, diverse membership, which includes photographers, speakers, landscape designers, television and radio personalities, consultants, publishers, extension service agents and more.

Although our name has changed, the mission remains the same. For 70 years, GWA has been dedicated to providing leadership, education and development opportunities for professionals in the field of gardening communication, and we will continue on that path.

We'd like your help introducing our new name and visual identity to the garden and horticultural community. Here are a few ways:

WRITE A BLOG

Over the next few weeks, we'll be starting a blog series that explores our new name, which broadens the meaning of communicators. We're looking for a wide range of contributions, written by various members within different age groups and disciplines. The theme of the series will be "I am GardenComm."

RECORD A SHORT VIDEO

In conjunction with the blog series, we'd like you to capture yourself on film showing yourself practicing your communication discipline whether it is writing, videography, photography, podcasting, radio, designing, teaching or other work. The short—30 to 90 second—video should explain why you are part of GardenComm and how it has helped shaped your career. We'd like every video to end with the slogan "I am GardenComm."

MANTS

Heading to MANTS? We'll need volunteers to work the GardenComm booth. New this year, we'll be setting up a Press Interview Corner, where companies can promote a new plant, tool, service or other product our audiences want to know about. Our volunteer members will conduct the interviews via short smartphone videos, which they will send to the GardenComm staff to promote on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

SHARE NEW IDEAS

On January 26–27, a leadership committee will meet in Chicago to plan the future of GardenComm. If you have any ideas or suggestions on how we can share information about GardenComm within the industry, please send them my way, mungaro@kellen-company.com 212-297-2124

I look forward to the new levels of success that GardenComm will bring to our members and the organization! 🌱

Maria



The IHC Healing Garden, one of many new sustainable gardens created by the health care chain to promote healing for patients, will be on a tour in Salt Lake City.

PHOTOS COURTESY CYNTHIA BEE/SALT LAKE CITY

— Salt Lake, continued from page 1

LDs CONFERENCE CENTER ROOFTOP GARDEN

The massive structure is completely covered with mature evergreen trees and meadows of native plants. The design of the building was created to fulfill a vision of the church's second leader, Brigham Young, of "a building with groves and ponds on top." It also creates an interesting contrast with the famous traditional Victorian-style plantings on the church's Temple Square, located just south of the Conference Center.

GILGAL SCULPTURE GARDEN

Nearly lost to the pressures of development, Gilgal Sculpture Garden in Salt Lake City's Liberty Square neighborhood was constructed in the mid-20th century. It is a small garden that contains creator Thomas Child's unique expression of religious devotion through sculpture. Gilgal's most notable sculpture features a carved sphinx with the face of Mormon Church Founder Joseph Smith—considered quirky even by local standards.

If you find yourself in need of a little counterbalance to the religious art, check out the modern sculpture *Zion/Rocky Mountain Alliance* across town, which pokes a little fun at the city's religious roots while showing off the diverse and vibrant place the city has become.

INTERMOUNTAIN HEALTHCARE HEALING GARDEN

Adjacent to its hospital in the Avenues neighborhood of Salt Lake City, the IHC Healing Garden was created as a place of refuge for patients undergoing long-term treatment. IHC is a leader in the promotion of

sustainable gardening practices, and this small garden provides a wonderful example of an ideal Utah-style landscape.

All IHC facilities feature (or will soon feature) sustainable healing gardens in recognition of the power of landscapes to affect emotional healing while patients are receiving physical healing.

DAYBREAK

As Utah continues its rapid growth, planning for livable, sustainable spaces is increasingly important. The Daybreak Community is a massive 4,000-acre master-planned community in Salt Lake County's rapidly growing southwest quadrant.

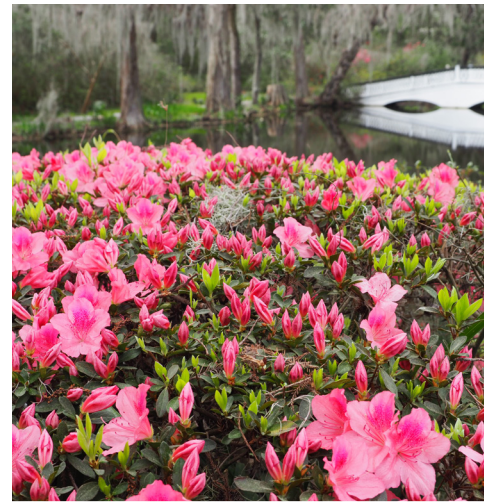
Daybreak features the best practices in modern urban planning and boasts an extensive system of trails, open spaces, parks and community gardens—including community beehives. Homes are designed to take advantage of outdoor spaces even though individual lot sizes are small. Daybreak is filled with great examples of small new suburban gardens, some of which we'll be touring as part of our 2019 conference.

The #GardenComm2019 Conference & Expo in Salt Lake City will feature 10 different tours showcasing everything from sustainable gardens in the Salt Lake Valley to the high mountain gardens of Park City. We'll enjoy lush, mature gardens and see the best of new suburban landscapes, too. See you in Salt Lake City. 🌿

[Cynthia Bee](#), Local Arrangements Committee Chair for #GardenComm2019, works to translate the complexity of sustainable landscape design and practices into public friendly messaging through her position as Outreach Coordinator for the Conservation Garden Park.

DON'T MISS THIS! CareerNext Summit

CHARLESTON, SC
Saturday, March 2



CareerNext defines tracks to professional livelihoods in the world of ornamental horticulture. This one-day powerhouse lineup of garden communicating superstars is designed for students looking to grow education into stable jobs in the industry, veteran communicators looking to redefine career goals and confident professionals diversifying their toolbox with state-of-the-art media awareness.

Speakers include: **Katie Elzer-Peters**, The Garden of Words LLC, horticulturist, digital marketing specialist and book project manager; **Chris Freimuth**, founder of CF Gardens, a design, installation and maintenance firm in New York City; **Tony Bertauski**, horticulture program director, Trident Technical College, Charleston, South Carolina; and **Kyle Barnett**, executive director of the Charleston Horticultural Society

Let us expand your horizons. Dare to challenge your occupational rut. Join us at CareerNext in South Carolina at the [Magnolia Plantation and Gardens](#) for a fabulous, fun and functional day of self-discovery, networking and creative career crafting.

The Story of Our New Beginning



Happy New Year! 2019 will be an exciting year for all of us as members of GardenComm and I couldn't be more optimistic for our future as garden communicators. If you are feeling a bit uneasy

about our new name, let me tell the abridged version of a very long story.

The Board of Directors cares immensely about our organization and its members. The Board has been looking at various ways to balance the budget—an amazing concept these days for a society that tends to live on credit. We realized that because we were GWA and GWA Foundation, we were duplicating work, time and payments for two separate boards, two separate meetings, two separate financial reports, two separate tax forms and the list goes on. The main difference between the two was that the Foundation was a 501c3, which enabled tax-exempt contributions for various projects, including education.

There was an ah-ha moment when we realized that there was no reason why our main organization couldn't be classified as a 501c3, because education was a big part of our efforts, as well. After much discussion, the Board voted to merge the two and stop duplicating efforts and payments. This decision was announced at the business meeting at the GWA Annual Conference & Expo in Chicago last August.

YEARS OF DISCUSSION

For years, there had been many discussions at board meetings and at regional meetings about the name GWA. Most didn't think that it was appropriate anymore, even though many of us were still attached to that name and were still involved in writing. The Board formed a task force to discuss where to go from this point: Name, tag line, logo and other options. They had many conference calls and worked long and hard, had great discussions and everyone felt empowered to express their opinions.

Many names had been suggested through the years, especially recently, and the task force discussed each and every one of them. Task Force member **Abra Lee**, a 2018 scholarship winner and a new and very active

member, expressed it better than I ever could. Please go to the [GardenComm Blog November 2018](#) to read about the journey of this Task Force.

CHANGE IS THE CONSTANT

As a business owner, I totally understand having to balance a budget. Because of that, I felt the need to share the background information with you. This process may seem to have happened very quickly, but I promise you, the merger and rebranding is just the end result of many years of working to live within our means, while meeting the goals of the members.

I have seen changes in our organization as the needs of its members have changed. I have also seen changes as society and technology have changed. What has not changed is the bond among the members of GardenComm who will reach out to lend a hand to each other if needed, offer advice if you ask for it, and help connect one member to another for mutual benefit.

Being a part of GardenComm is like having a family spread across the country and much of the rest of the world. What we call ourselves may be more important for technological reasons and SEO ratings as a business. I am thrilled that those issues are being discussed.

We want to be a sustainable organization. However, for me, the most important thing is the mission of GardenComm and our connection to each other as we work together to achieve those goals.

I want to thank the members of the Task Force for all the time and effort spent on this important project and congratulate them on a job well done.

EXPECT MORE WEBINARS

The Education Committee is planning some exciting webinars for 2019 and we are sure many of you will want to participate in these continuing education opportunities. The members of this enthusiastic committee would like to hear about topics that you want to learn more about. Please let us know so we can help you meet some of your career goals.

I look forward to seeing many of you at one of the trade shows, regional meetings or perhaps at CareerNext, which will be held at the beautiful Magnolia Plantation and Gardens in Charleston, South Carolina, Saturday, March 2. You don't have to be young or a new member to attend. Hope to see you there. 🌱

Becky Heath



ILLUSTRATION COURTESY ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/VJOM

HOT OFF the press

AMY STROSS

The Suburban Micro-Farm: Modern Solutions for Busy People

Twisted Creek Press • 356 pages, \$34.95

Published March 2018



The satisfaction of growing some of your own food is almost indescribable. Yet our modern lives leave us feeling rushed and overwhelmed

when we're tasked with keeping our beloved gardens maintained. Garden writer, educator and consultant, **Amy Stross** explores strategies to help you maintain a food garden that meets your needs and exceeds your expectations—with joy rather than a sense of being overwhelmed. More than 285 full-color images and illustrations bring to life Amy's helpful and unique suggestions for growing fruits, vegetables, and herbs in a low-maintenance way that integrates with—and enhances—the local ecology.

CAROL MICHEL

The Christmas Cottontail: A Story for Gardeners of All Ages

Gardenangelist Books • 34 pages, \$9.99

Published November 16, 2018



This is the story of the Christmas Cottontail who rides along with Santa on his Christmas Eve journey, rewarding good gardeners

everywhere by planting seeds and bulbs in their gardens. Gardeners of all ages will enjoy the Christmas Cottontail's story as they imagine what their gardens will look like after a long winter. 🐰

KATIE ELZER-PETERS

No-Waste Kitchen Gardening

Cool Springs Press • 128 pages, \$18.99

Published December 18, 2018



Katie Elzer-Peters' *No-Waste Kitchen Gardening* is a fun and colorful exploration of the amazing results you can get by re-growing vegetable cutoffs and scraps into harvestable, edible plants. Stop tossing your carrot

stumps, lettuce and cabbage stalks, loose cilantro sprigs and apple cores in the trash. The expert advice in *No-Waste Kitchen Gardening* gives you all the instructions and tricks you'll need to grow and re-propagate produce from food waste. You'll be astonished at how much food "waste" you can re-grow.

SUE GOETZ

A Taste for Herbs: A Guide to Seasonings, Mixes and Blends from the Herb Lover's Garden

St. Lynn's Press • 192 pages, \$23.95

To be published February 1



Think of this book as your herb-seasoning master class, filled with simple secrets for capturing the power of flavor from your herb garden. Herbs are

easy to grow anywhere—indoors or out—but do you know which ones do *what* in your

foods and beverages or *how* flavors play off of each other? This book shows you how to become an herbal taste master, whether you're a home cook or a gourmet foodie. It all starts in the garden with fresh-picked herbs. Let dedicated herb lover **Sue Goetz** guide you into the delicious world of 20 essential, flavor-rich herbs and the pleasures they offer.

SALLY CUNNINGHAM AND JIM CHARLIER

Buffalo-Style Gardens

St. Lynn's Press • 224 pages, \$24.95

To be published February 22



Buffalo-Style Gardens showcases the offbeat and one-of-kind space designs of Buffalo, New York, that readers can adopt for their own small space

garden. In *Buffalo-Style Gardens*, garden experts **Sally Cunningham** and **Jim Charlier** take readers into the free-spirited, innovative gardens of Buffalo, the Niagara region and western New York to reveal how fences and furnishings, trees and ornamental plants, art and whimsy—and the element of surprise—work together to transform ordinary spaces into memorable gardens. It's about seeing your space with new eyes and not letting existing limitations on the ground stop you from being out-of-the-box creative. You'll find hundreds of designs, planting and DIY tips to make it a reality. Full color photography throughout.



SAVE THE DATE!

GWA Annual 71st Conference & Expo

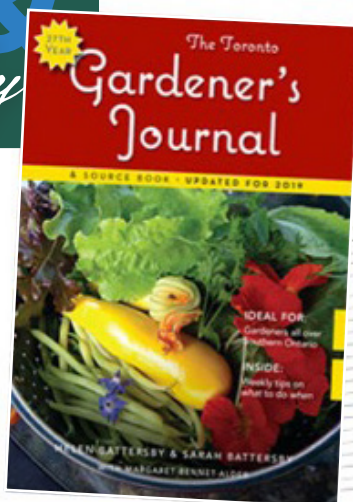
Salt Lake City, UT | September 4-7, 2019



NEW & Noteworthy

Battersby Updates Toronto Gardener's Journal and Source Book

Canadian GardenComm members are excited to see the great updates that **Helen Battersby** and her sister Sarah Battersby have made to Margaret Bennet Alder's [Toronto Gardener's Journal and Source Book](#). The 2019 updates look amazing.



Bussolini Kicks Off Newsletter

Karen Bussolini launched her email newsletter, "Eco-Friendly News, Views, Clues and How-Tos" with the September/October 2018 issue. You are [invited to sign up](#) for the free subscription to this friendly, thought-provoking and sometimes humorous guide to sustainable gardening.

Clarke and Monheim Form Training Biz

Louise Clarke and **Eva Monheim** have formed a new business, VEE (Verdant Earth Educators). The mission of VEE is to inspire clients to embrace earth-friendly principles in pursuit of environmental excellence. Louise and Eva will be training professional grounds crews and other land managers.

Hensley Designs Display for Northwest Flower and Garden Festival

Grace Hensley is designing a City Living Display at Seattle's Northwest Flower and Garden Festival runs February 20 through 24. The theme is "Gardens of the World." The display will feature container designs for a front entrance. She looks forward to meeting up with fellow GardenComm members at the show. Follow her work at [@fashion_plants](#) on all the usual social media channels.

Email Marketing Program to Begin in January

Katie Elzer-Peters and **Monica Hemingway** have joined forces to help green-industry businesses create and implement a revenue-generating, email-marketing program. They're offering an eight-module course from late January through early March.

The course will guide participants through developing a program that is batched and ready to deploy for the 2019 season. Topics to be covered include the basics of email marketing, writing engaging content, sourcing and creating graphics (on the cheap), setting up a MailChimp account, creating an editorial calendar, batching content, reading reports, creating templates and building an auto-responder sequence. For more information, email [Katie](#) or [Monica](#).

Deppe Honored by Mass Hort

At the 118th Honorary Medals Dinner, the Massachusetts Horticultural Society presented **Spring Meadow Nursery** owner Dale Deppe with its Jackson Dawson Memorial Award. The award, given October 18, 2018, in Wellesley, Massachusetts, recognizes Deppe's "exceptional skill in the science or practice of hybridization or propagation of hardy, woody plants."



Jabbour Launches YouTube Series

Best-selling, award-winning author **Niki Jabbour** has gone digital in her new YouTube series, "Get Growing with Niki Jabbour." The show celebrates food gardening with the aim of getting everyone to get growing, no matter their space or skill level. Watch episodes at [Youtube.com/NikiJabbour](https://www.youtube.com/NikiJabbour).

Monheim Hired by Barnes Arboretum

Eva Monheim was hired as a new faculty member for The Barnes Arboretum at St. Joseph's University in Lower Merion, Pennsylvania. The arboretum has long been known for its horticulture certificate program.

Montgomery Joins Garden Media Group

Garden Media Group has hired public relations communicator **Peggy Anne Montgomery** as an account executive. With more than 30 years of horticultural and PR experience, Montgomery will be responsible for managing client and media relations for several key accounts, contributing to strategic planning and developing new business opportunities. Prior to joining Garden Media Group, she worked with **Bailey Nurseries**, **American Beauties Native Plants** and **Mt. Cuba Center**.

— Continues on page 7



Odgen to Consult with Landreth's Garden Seed

Ellen Ecker Ogden is pleased to announce that she will be working as a consultant with Landreth's Garden Seed Company, in Shelburne, Vermont, to cultivate a new line of heirloom and open-pollinated seeds for 2019. Landreth's is America's oldest seed catalog—started in 1784—and is now owned by American Meadows Inc.



SWGardening Introduces Online Classes

Noelle Johnson, Ann McCormick, Teresa Odle and Jacqueline Soule are pleased to announce a new series of online garden classes available through [Southwest Gardening](#). Each class will have a one-month run. Topics for recent classes include creative garden containers, making potpourri from the garden, demystifying garden terms and success with living holiday trees.



Michel and Nash Team Up on Podcast

Carol Michel and Dee Nash, both passionate gardeners, authors and long-time bloggers, have recently teamed up on a new, weekly podcast called *The Gardenangels*. Calling themselves "evangelists for gardening," Dee and Carol chat over the garden-podcast fence about flowers, veggies and "all the best dirt on gardening." Listeners can subscribe to the podcast on iTunes. 🌱



JANUARY 9-11

[Connect \(& MORE\)](#) [GardenComm@MANTS 2019](#)

Baltimore, Maryland

Join GardenComm at the LB Tavern in the Lord Baltimore Hotel on Wednesday, January 9, for an intimate Connect Meeting, 5 to 7 PM. Connect with old friends and meet new ones. Registration is free and non-members and visitors are welcome to attend! Dinner options will be available on-site, but all food and drink is the responsibility of attendees. Afterward, you may wish to remain at the hotel for dinner or form a group to eat elsewhere.

NOTE: This Connect Meeting event is open to all GardenComm members and prospective members, whether you attend MANTS or not. **This is NOT a registration for MANTS access nor for the Media Breakfast;** you will need to sign up for those separately. To register for MANTS as press, send an email to eve@maroonpr.com; she will send you a link for press registration. Once approved, she will then send you an invitation to the Media Reception/Breakfast and you will need to RSVP back separately for that.

JANUARY 15-18

[Connect \(& MORE\)](#) [GardenComm@TPIE 2019](#)

Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Meet new friends and reconnect with old ones, as GardenComm members and non-members alike gather for [TPIE 2019](#). 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 16 (time & location TBD). Registration for TPIE is FREE. 🌱



iScape Adds Augmented Realty Features

The next generation of iScape, a top-rated outdoor living design app for landscape professionals and do-it-yourselfers, has implemented augmented reality in its app. A common example of augmented reality can be seen in football games, when yellow lines appear to be drawn on the field.

iScape's new AR version features live collaboration, where two people can view the same virtual world via their own devices, and even see edits in real time.

This is tool for landscape architects, designers, contractors and garden consultants who want to walk a client through a design they've created, help solve a problem or give advice on plantings. Collaboration features allow the pro and homeowner to view a shared AR design from their own personal devices. Among other features, the app has a sun-slider that shows how shadows will fall over surfaces.

iScape brings the user's vision to life through thousands of plants, hardscapes and outdoor living elements, virtually placed within the app so they can experience how a project will look before it's installed. It is available from the App Store. The company is owned by iScape Holdings Inc. The iScape team includes Patrick Pozzuto, founder, Charleston, South Carolina; and co-founders Jon Dean, Chicago, and Drew Izzo, Park City, Utah. 🌱

Genetically Engineered Crops

Frankenfood or Famine-Relief?



Gregor Mendel, known as the founder of modern genetics, performed some of the first experiments on cross pollinating, or hybridizing, of peas in the 19th century

(1856-1863). DNA was discovered in 1869 by Friedrich Miescher.

Hybridization is used to carefully select desirable plant characteristics. Brandon Huber, graduate research assistant and doctoral candidate at North Carolina State University offers one example, "Breeding for smaller watermelons is desirable because you can fit one into the fruit bin of a refrigerator, as opposed to a larger one that might not fit into the refrigerator at all. Smaller watermelons are also easier to handle. Another desirable [trait] for watermelon is sweetness. Simple trait crosses have led to the desirable ones you see in the market today."

Traditional hybridization techniques, which have been used for hundreds of years, employ natural sexual processes to determine the end product. For better predictability, the pollen of the plant is distributed by a human, rather than an insect or other pollinator.

In 1953, James Watson and Francis Crick discovered the DNA double helix, and in 1977, Frederick Sanger identified gene sequencing. These two findings prompted an entirely new line of thought regarding genetics.

GENETIC DEVELOPMENTS

Plant, human, animal and fungal genetics have developed together, enabling greater insight into potential leaps in genetic science. Vast strides in technology and the parallel discovery of gene sequencing prompted scientists to genetically manipulate strands of DNA without the natural processes of sexual reproduction; this is called genetic engineering.

One common technique of GE is gene splicing, which incorporates a piece of the genetic code from one type of organism, such as a fish or virus, into a host plant's genetic code. In the case of Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*), once splicing is complete, the resulting corn



ILLUSTRATION COURTESY ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/RANGREISS

USDA LIST OF GE FOODS

The 10 food crops in blue are commercially grown in the U.S. The GE genes in these plants range from Herbicide Resistance (HR) to Insect Resistance (Bt), from Disease Resistance to Consumer or Producer Enhanced and Resistance to Environmental Stress. The number in front of the crop indicates how many petitions have been approved or are awaiting approval.

3 Alfalfa	2 Papaya
2 Apple	2 Plum
2 Beet	9 Potato
11 Canola	3 Rice
1 Chicory	1 Rose
39 Corn	22 Soybean
17 Cotton	1 Sugar Beet
1 Creeping bent grass	11 Tomato
1 Eucalyptus	2 Zucchini
1 Flax	

and cotton plants will be toxic to caterpillars that feed on them.

WHAT ARE LARGER IMPLICATIONS?

Corn is a wind-pollinated plant, which means that the pollen carrying the new DNA sequence is capable of pollinating non-GE crops. Non-GE crops have evolved over time in a natural environment that includes insects, soil microbes, other plants and animals.

How can the non-GE crops be protected from being contaminated by the new GE crops? This is the dilemma that ethicists have

been discussing since the advent of GE crops in the 1990s.

For GE crops that rely on pollinators, there are many other factors to consider. What happens to pollinators, such as bees, which carry pollen from GE crops back to their hives? How does this affect seed, honey and other plants that surround them? People have been asking these questions, but getting no clearly defined responses, even though the U.S. government does make efforts to analyze the data from the large corporations that create these crops.

ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW

"GMOs [GEs] could actually save us from famine. Millions of people throughout the world, particularly in Africa and Asia, depend heavily on wheat for sustenance" said Allison Brown, adjunct professor of biology at Delaware Valley University in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. "Scientists are racing to keep up a fight against the much-reviled pathogen *Puccinia graminis* by conventional breeding of wheat varieties that are resistant to the pathogen. That takes time, though.

"Meanwhile, toxic fungicides must be used to keep the pathogen at bay. At University of California Davis, there is a guy doing research there, Jorge Dubcovsky, who has identified a gene that confers resistance to the latest strain of stem rust-Ug99. Is anti-GMO fervor keeping him from putting those genes to work?"

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

In October 2018, the European Court of Justice struck down the use of gene-edited (technically different from genetically-engineered) plants. More than half of the European Union countries have banned the use of GE plants to keep their own food lines clean from

— Continues on page 9

— Sustainability continued from page 8

contamination. We have not taken these same actions in the U.S.

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's permits and notifications office, there are more than 120 variations of 19 GE crops deregulated and approved for field production. Most of these crops are fed to our farm animals and sold in grocery stores. Currently, 80 percent of all processed foods in the U.S. contain GE foods. This number will continue to grow as more companies petition for deregulated status for their crops.

In the U.S., GE plants do not need to be listed on packaging, which continues to cause an outcry from consumers. It will take a long time to remove GE foods from our tables—if at all—because they are rapidly moving into our food chain.

Louise Clarke, horticulturist at the Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia, sums up the GE conundrum like this: "If the (federal) government had better oversight and independent researchers making informed decisions about GE foods, there might be a greater trust by the consumer. Right now, the government only assesses the research done by the very companies that create them." 🌱

Eva Monheim is a faculty member at Longwood Gardens, the Barnes Foundation and partner at VEE: Verdant Earth Educators. She can be reached at evamonheim@gmail.com

RESOURCES:

[Discovery of DNA Structure and Function: Watson and Crick](#)

[13 Important Pros and Cons of Genetic Engineered Foods](#)

[Genetically Engineered Foods](#)

[History of DNA Sequencing Technologies](#)

[What Is the Difference Between Genetically Modified Organisms and Genetically Engineered Organisms?](#)

[Probability of Inheritance](#)

[Applied genetics of Plants, Animals, Humans and Fungi](#)

[Opinion: The EU Gene-Editing Decision: Parliament Should not Let it Stand](#)

[What is Genetic Engineering?](#)

[The Environmental Literacy Council – Genetic Modification](#)

[Which genetically engineered crops are approved in the U.S.?](#)

[Over Half of E.U. Countries are Opting Out of GMOs](#)

Pay It Forward: A Way to Bring New Members into the Organization



At a recent membership committee meeting, it was noted that Ruth Clausen had introduced eight student members to GardenComm (formerly GWA) in the previous month.

By bringing eight new members to the organization, she covered not only her annual membership fee for 2019, she helped spread the word about the benefits of being a member.

It turns out that many people have still not heard about GardenComm. That includes students, horticultural staff at colleges and public gardens and Cooperative Extension agents.

Ruth has been writing books for many years; for more than a decade, she has been an enthusiastic GardenComm member. During that time, she has made a personal effort to help the organization maintain a healthy membership by spreading the word about the advantages of being a member. As she said, "It is the responsibility of members to encourage new members to join, because if existing members do not introduce them, who will?"

STUDENT MEMBERSHIPS

Ruth's particular interest is in getting students familiar with the benefits of GardenComm and pays it forward for several students to join. We are all familiar with how being in the organization leads to networking with other communicators, which in turn has led to jobs. But for students, the benefits include introductions to industry leaders who can offer employment after graduation and possible opportunities for internships at top gardens or companies.

Regional meetings offer low-cost ways to see behind the scenes at public gardens as well as tour private gardens that would not normally be available. Images for papers and their thesis are an added bonus for students. When the students are employed, they can repay the initial membership by paying for another student to have membership. Hence the "Pay it Forward."



PHOTO COURTESY RUTH CLAUSEN

Ruth Clausen recruits student members to GardenComm.

RUTH CHALLENGES MEMBERS

Ruth finds the candidates for membership in public gardens, such as the new Delaware Botanic Gardens in Dagsboro, Delaware, where she is on the board of directors. She challenges all members to view themselves as mentors to students and new communicators.

As mentors, Ruth declares, "It is our responsibility to encourage new members," and hopes that more members will consider "Pay It Forward" a membership. Remember too, that for each person you bring into GardenComm, you get a \$20 credit for your 2020 membership dues. 🌱

Kate Copsey is National Director for Region 4 and serves as co-chair of GardenComm's Sponsorship Committee. She's an author, speaker and freelance writer.

New Opportunities for Alternative Revenue Streams



Technology has completely upended the way we make money as garden communicators, whether we're writing, speaking, photographing or working as on-air talent. A lot of doors have shut,

but evolutions in technology have also opened doors, or rather, direct channels between garden communicators and content consumers, clearing the way for us to create our own revenue streams.

The downside is you have to shoulder the burden of costs and creation yourself. The upside is that you have complete control of the entire process and you receive all of the income. Then, there are the connections we're able to make via technology that might have been unheard of when networking mostly happened face-to-face or via the phone.

Here's how three GardenComm members have leveraged those opportunities into four new revenue streams. Use them as inspiration to work on your own new initiatives. I certainly am.

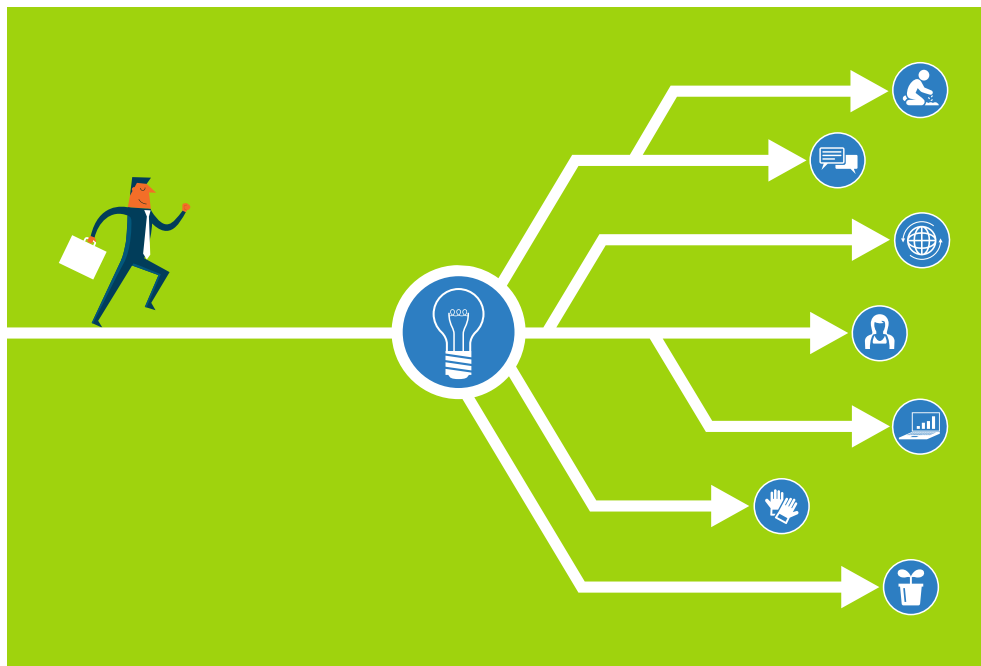
MEMBERSHIP SITE

Noelle Johnson, known as the AZ Plant Lady, gets her bread and butter from landscape consulting and garden consulting. She's had her own blog and social media properties for years, building up a region-specific audience in the Southwest and is now part of the team behind SWgardening.com.



In the summer of 2018, she opened the doors to her membership group, "Through the Garden Gate." For \$19.99 per month, members receive:

- Members-only Facebook group
- Plant of the month downloadable PDF
- Exclusive monthly newsletter with behind-the-scenes info, garden tasks and more
- Garden training videos (new videos added every month)
- Facebook live group garden coaching



"This is a great fit for people who already do garden coaching, and especially if they already do remote garden coaching or if they have a well-established brand," Noelle said.

With a membership site, Noelle creates content once and sells it to many people using digital platforms and resources available. "I schedule all of my onboarding emails with MailChimp and use the Facebook platform for live coaching. People really enjoy that. We forget we're not sitting right across the table from each other." She says to think about what kind of expertise you can offer online and develop a package around it.

It's no less work to do this than to work on a book or a series of articles, but the revenue-earning limits become your own instead of those imposed by an outside client or publisher.

GARDEN TOUR LEADER

Several GardenComm members lead garden tours. Most work with tour companies in some capacity. Some do more of the hands-on itinerary planning, while others serve mostly as a horticultural expert or guide. If you

enjoy travel, this is a great opportunity to have some bucket-list experiences and generate revenue.

Kylee Baumle has been a garden blogger since 2007. In 2013 her first book, *Indoor Plant Decor*, co-authored with Jenny Peterson, was published. At that point she decided to focus on monarch butterflies, first by raising them and then writing about them.



"I talked about it a lot on social media," Kylee said. "I sought out communities and joined Facebook groups that were monarch focused. The more I learned about monarchs, the more I wanted to go to Mexico and see them at their overwintering grounds. Everyone knew I wanted to do this. I set Google alerts for monarchs."

She contacted a Mexican tourism board to see if there was a way to bring a tour down to see the winter migration. This ended up as

— Continues on page 11

— Business continued from page 10

her first tour. “Right around Christmas, I got a Facebook message from Craft Tours asking me to go along as the monarch expert,” she said. “They had heard about me completely through word of mouth. The owner ended up going along to evaluate me.”

Next summer, Kylee is leading a tour to Ireland with Craft. “When I started to niche down, that’s when opportunities started to open. But you have to put yourself out there,” she said. Kylee receives a fee for her on-trip services and gets to experience spectacular travel opportunities.



EVENT HOST AND PLANNER

In 2019, **Kerry Ann Mendez**, owner of Perennially Yours LLC, who also works full time at Estabrooks Garden Center in Maine, will host the 15th

annual Great Gardens & Landscaping Symposium in Woodstock, Vermont. “When I started it, I wanted to bring together gardeners of all ages and abilities to learn about cutting edge changes in the industry,” she said. She caps the Symposium at 225 people due to space limitations and to preserve the quality of experience for attendees.

To make money, “I build an event planning fee into my budget.” This goes on the budget as a fixed cost, along with facilities fees, publicity and other costs that don’t change, regardless of the number of attendees. So, no matter how many people attend, she’ll generate a certain amount of revenue.

“I also build in a cushion for unplanned expenses,” she said. Sponsors are part of the event, to provide funds, but also to provide goodies for attendees and for marketing assistance. “Part of the agreement is that they help publicize the event to their lists.”

One benefit of the event is that she always picks up additional speaking gigs from attendees or from word of mouth. Working with sponsors has opened doors for her, as well.

WEBINARS

Kerry Ann had kept up a rigorous schedule, delivering 80 to 90 talks per year. “That was quickly becoming unsustainable.” Now she hosts a webinar series. She has done nine and has two more scheduled in 2019. “Webinars

allow me to reach a national audience from home,” she said.

Sponsors have also become key to the success of the webinars, with publicity playing a big part of the agreements. The webinars cost participants \$12, if they sign up before it runs, and \$13 after. She offers them for sale on her website, so that they can continue to provide a source of income.

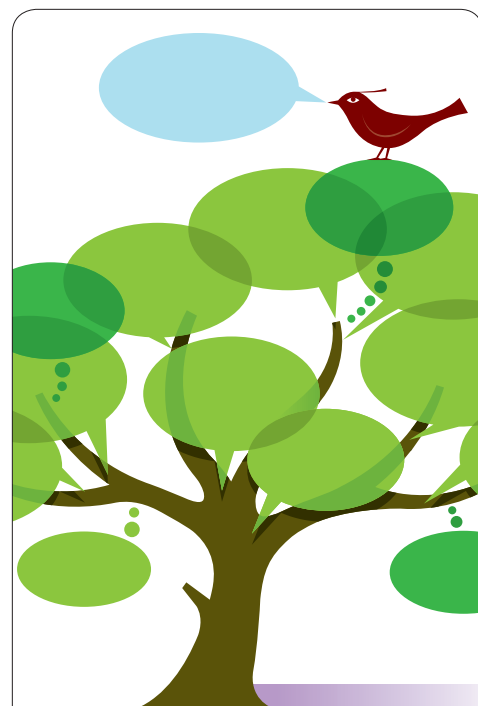
The SWGardening.com group is also offering webinars. Their “Holiday Greens for the Southwest” program is now available and includes the recording and a resource guide.

REVENUE STREAMS, NOT PASSIVE INCOME

Sometimes you’ll hear online offerings referred to as passive income, which is a misnomer. Yes, you create the materials once and sell them multiple times, but you’ll need to continually bring traffic to the point of sale, and that’s, well, work. There’s nothing passive about it.

None of the revenue streams covered here is magic—just different models than those that many of us currently use. In that, there’s new opportunity to earn. 🌱

Katie Elzer-Peters owns The Garden of Words LLC, a green industry firm specializing in digital marketing, self-publishing and freelancer business development.



GardenComm Grows: 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 🌱

ILLUSTRATION COURTESY ISTOCKPHOTO.COM/JOHN WOODCOCK



Join the American Horticultural Society

The American Horticultural Society (AHS) is a national membership organization that supports sustainable and earth-friendly gardening.

Member benefits include:

- Six issues of *The American Gardener* magazine
- Opportunity to participate in the annual AHS Seed Exchange program
- Access to members-only area of website
- Free admission and other discounts at 300 public gardens and arboreta

www.ahsgardening.org/join

REGION 1

ELLEN ECKER OGDEN

Karen Bussolini will speak February 23 on "Herb Liberation!" and will present her "Eco-Friendly Garden Coach Brainstorm" at the Connecticut Flower & Garden Show, Hartford, Connecticut. For more information and to sign up for Karen's newsletter, visit Karenbussolini.com

REGION 2

KATHY JENTZ

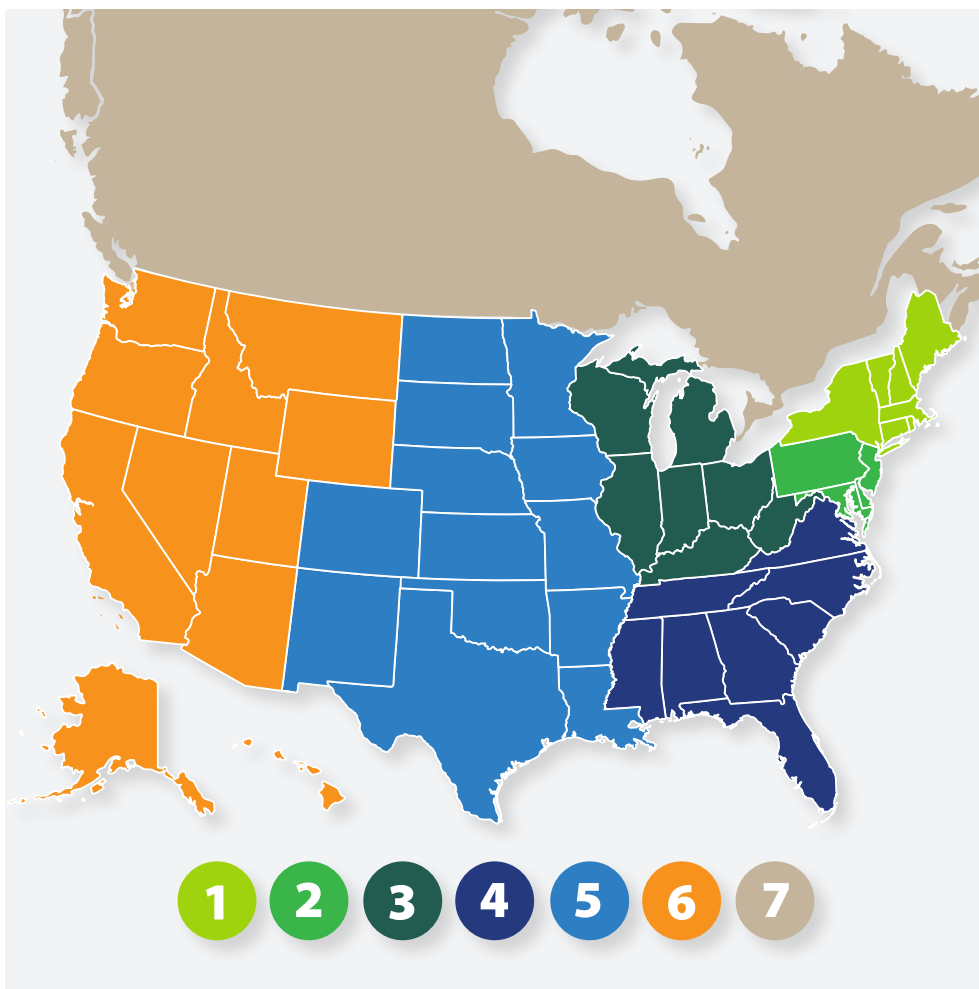
Mark Highland, president of the Organic Mechanics Soil Company, will speak on January 3 at the South East Pennsylvania Green Industry Conference at Delaware Valley University, Doylestown, Pennsylvania. He is also speaking January 24 about "Practical Organic Gardening" at the Delaware Center for Horticulture, Wilmington, Delaware.

Dan Benarcik will conduct a "Garden Chair Building Workshop" at the Adkins Arboretum, Ridgely, Maryland, January 26.

Kathy Jentz, editor of *Washington Gardener* magazine, will host the 14th Annual *Washington Gardener* Seed Exchanges, January 26, at the Brookside Gardens, Wheaton, Maryland, and February 2, at Green Spring Gardens in Fairfax, Virginia. Attendees trade seeds, exchange planting tips, hear expert speakers, and collect goody bags full of gardening treats.

The event also includes such "green" features as the garden book and catalog swap. Participants are encouraged to bring their gently used garden books and mail-order garden catalogs to trade with each other. Any leftover publications are donated to the National Agriculture Library in Beltsville, Maryland.

Chanticleer's **Bill Thomas** will speak on "The Art of Gardening at Chanticleer" at Morven Museum and Garden in Princeton, New Jersey, 6:30 p.m., February 26.



REGION 3

BETH BOTTS

Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp will make four appearances at the Indianapolis Home Show, January 21 and 22, for MarketPlace Events at the Indiana State Fairgrounds. She will be the featured speaker at the Fort Wayne (Indiana) Home & Garden Show, Feb. 28 to March 3, where she will demonstrate "How to Plant a Spring Container" and present a program on "How to Support Pollinators in the Landscape."

Amy Stross will present "Gardening in Small Spaces" to the Anderson Township Garden Club at the Anderson Center in Cincinnati, Ohio, January 23. Amy will share stories and tips from her book, *The Suburban Micro-Farm*. She will present "Tips for a Beautiful, Edible Landscape" at the Anderson Parks RecPlex in Cincinnati, February 4. She then travels to Madison, Wisconsin, February 9, to present

"Growing Herbs in the Vegetable Garden for Fertilizing, Mulch, Pest Resistance and More," and "Increase Vitality by Turning Your Backyard Orchard into a Permaculture Food Forest," at the Garden & Landscape Expo.

Several GardenComm members are speaking at iLandscape, the Illinois + Wisconsin Landscape Show in Schaumburg, Illinois, January 30 and February 1. **Jenks Farmer** will speak January 30 on a theme from his book *Deep Rooted Wisdom*. Targeted to professionals, he'll examine how his company creates ecologically friendly horticulture. February 1 presentations: **Susan Martin** will speak on "From Surviving to Thriving: How to Build Revenue from Today's Consumers." **Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp** will talk about "Woody Plants Worthy of Small Spaces" and **Bobbie Schwartz** will speak about "The New Perennial Garden: Design and Maintenance" and "The Artful Garden."

Susan Martin and **Bobbie Schwartz** will present at the 2019 Midwest Regional Symposium of the Perennial Plant Association, February 2, at The Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois. Susan's topic will be "Lessons Learned Under the Trees." Bobbie's will be "Painting with Perennials: A Landscape Artist's Perspective."

Bobbie Schwartz continues her Chicago-area ventures February 3 to present a program at Chalet Nursery and Garden Center in Wilmette, Illinois.

REGION 4

KATE COPSEY

Pam Beck will start her year January 14 in Norfolk, Virginia, to speak at the Virginia Horticultural Foundation's Home Gardener Day. That will be followed by two lectures January 15 at Mid-Atlantic Horticultural Short Course in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Finally, Pam will speak on February 8 at the annual Davidson County Gardeners Conference, Lexington, North Carolina.

Dan Benarcik will present "Containers: Pots with a Purpose," February 2, at "Spring to Green," organized by the Danville Master Gardeners of Danville, Virginia.

Karen Bussolini will present her "Eco-Friendly Garden Coach Brainstorm" workshop at the J.C. Raulston Arboretum, Raleigh, North Carolina, February 15, and "The Unsung Season: Gardens in Winter" at the arboretum's annual winter conference.

On February 21, **Jenks Farmer** heads to Greensboro, North Carolina, to discuss how historic gardens can be updated to serve modern needs, as well as keep their intention and beauty, for Gaston County Extension.

Denise Schreiber will speak on "Edible Flowers," March 9, at Magnolia Gardens in Charleston, South Carolina.

REGION 5

BILL JOHNSON

Dan Benarcik will speak about "Creating World Class Gardens," at Reiman Gardens, Ames, Iowa, January 18.

More than a dozen GardenComm members will be presenting programs at the [Northwest Flower and Garden Festival](#). (NWFGF is a new name – same great show), February 20 through 24. The Washington State Convention Center in Seattle will once again host the festival, featuring dramatic show gardens, the popular container wars, a marketplace of more than 300 vendors and more. Especially notable are the excellent gardening seminars. The members' list includes: **Lorraine Ballato**, **Linda Chalker-Scott**, **Karen Chapman**, **Darcy Daniels**, **C.L. Fornari**, **Sue Goetz**, **Linda Larson**, **Ellen Ecker Ogden**, **Jacqueline Soule**, **Nicholas Staddon**, **Lisa Eldred Steinkopf**, and **Nan Stermann**.

- February 21 - **C.L. Fornari** and **Ellen Zachos** – "Container Wars" and "Plantrama," a live podcast covering the topic of coping with rabbits and deer. **Patrick Ryan** (aka Fish) – a DIY session, "Set in Stone," which includes instructions and a demonstration on making Hypertufa pots. He says, "This will be my first time presenting at the show, so I'm very excited! And that day happens to be my birthday, so it's a nice present."
- February 22 - **Charlie Nardozi** – "Edibles in Containers: Beyond Lettuce and Herbs;" **Ellen Zachos** – "The Secret Edible Garden."
- February 23 - **Susan L. Harrington** – "Lavender: Endless Uses, from Crafting to Culinary." A grower for 16 years, Susan writes a weekly newsletter, *Labyrinth Hill*, on the subject and is author of a 6-unit online course for start-up lavender farms with students in 18 countries. **Jan Johnsen** – "The Spirit of Stone;" **Mary-Kate Mackey** – "Midsummer Garden Nightmares — Mistakes I've Made So You Don't Have To;" **Denise Schreiber** – "Fragrant Flowers Almost Year-Round;"
- February 24 - **Jan Johnsen** will introduce her new book and talk: *Gardentopia: Design Basics for Creating Beautiful Outdoor Spaces*. **Denise Schreiber** – Garden 101 "Edible Flowers"; **Melinda Myers** and **Denise** square off in Container Wars. 🌱

Pat Hayward will give the keynote February 16 at the 4th annual [Landscaping with Colorado Native Plants Conference](#), at Denver's Auraria Campus. Her topic is "The Nature of Colorado's Native Plant Industry: Unveiling the Mysteries Behind Supply, Demand and Selection."

REGION 6

MARY-KATE MACKEY

Toni Gattone will present her "Adaptive Gardening" talks at several local garden clubs and women's groups, January through March. She predicts that 2019 is going to be an amazing year with big changes, as she is closing the doors on her manufacturers' rep agency started 28 years ago, because it no longer nourishes her soul. She will focus on her passion—to help gardeners continue doing what they love to do, with ease and comfort. Toni will begin working with sponsors and affiliate marketing partnerships, create her online store and develop her marketing plan for the launch of her book, *The Lifelong Gardener, Garden with Ease and Joy at Any Age*, to be published by Timber Press next summer.

REGION 7

KEN BROWN

Tony Spencer, aka The New Perennialist, starts off 2019 with a talk in Montreal at the Westmount Horticultural Society meeting, January 8.

Bobbie Schwartz will be at Landscape Ontario in Toronto, January 8 and 9, speaking about "Log Cabin or Taj Mahal: Are You Really Listening?" and "Painting with Perennials: A Landscape Artist's Perspective."

Ken Brown has a few speaking engagements to start the year. He'll be in Acton, January 19; Cloverleaf, January 20; Kitchener, January 22; and in Oshawa, February 11. 🌱

SPEAKER CALL OUT
#GardenComm2019
SALT LAKE CITY
DEADLINE: Thursday, January 31

CALL OUT FOR SPEAKERS
#GARDENCOMM2019

The [2019 GardenComm Conference & Expo](#) is an inclusive opportunity for all current and future members to engage in exceptional formal and informal learning experiences. We're looking for programs that support career development, increase individual productivity and provide innovative insights and solutions to industry challenges. Could this be you or someone you know?

For the conference in Salt Lake City, [GardenComm seeks breakout and round table proposals](#) focused on business, horticulture, photography, publishing, social media, speaking, sustainability and writing. Breakout sessions are about 60 minutes. Roundtables run about 10 to 15 minutes, depending on number and scheduling. We invite proposals that:

- Reflect innovation and cutting edge content
- Target either new, mid-career or seasoned professionals
- Stimulate and provoke discussion and audience engagement
- Provide diverse approaches for different types of learners
- Present evidence based on or supported by research
- Use multimedia approaches to enhance attendee learning
- Explore issues important to national audiences

Please feel free to share this information with people you think would be good presenters. [The deadline for submissions is January 31](#). Submissions are reviewed by the Program Committee, which makes the final selections. We anticipate sending acceptance notifications in March 2019. Upon acceptance, speakers will be asked to sign an agreement.

GardenComm conference presenters will receive a complimentary registration for the day of their presentation. Breakout speakers will be eligible for an honorarium of \$250 for solo presentations, \$125 per two-person panel participant and \$75 per three-person panel participant.

REGIONAL EVENTS

REGION 2

MANTS 2019 Connect Meeting

Join GardenComm at the LB Tavern in the Lord Baltimore Hotel, January 9, for an intimate Connect Meeting, 5 to 7 p.m. Connect with old friends and meet new ones. Registration is free and non-members and visitors are welcome to attend. Dinner options will be available on-site, but all food and drink is the responsibility of attendees. Afterward, you may wish to remain at the hotel for dinner or form a group to eat elsewhere.

Chanticleer is co-hosting the [Today's Horticulture Symposium](#) at Longwood Gardens, February 1.

REGION 3

The [2019 Newfields Horticulture Symposium](#) in Indianapolis, Indiana, February 9, features several GardenComm members. **Jenks Farmer** will use storytelling to share tips and lessons from self-taught gardeners. He'll also show ways he incorporates connections to design, build and plant joyful, soulful modern gardens. **Deborah Hardwick** will look at some of the 350 clematis species and cultivars and give her "bottom line" best for the garden. **Christopher Woods** will spotlight 50 modern gardens that push boundaries and define natural beauty in significant ways. His talk is based on *Gardenlust*, his new book that explores outdoor havens throughout the world.

Other speakers: Gwyn Rager will share her experiences at the Art of the Garden symposium at Great Dixter, and Katie Dickson discusses uses of winter floral elements and explore spring-planted, summer-blooming annuals and perennials that will liven up both your landscape and flower vase.

REGION 4

The horticultural year in the South kicks off with the impressive Tropical Plant International Expo (TPIE), January 16 through January 18, at the Broward County Convention Center, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. **Sylvia Gordon** has arranged for GardenComm members to have complimentary access to the show, including the pre-show tours, educational sessions and VIP Opening Day Reception. A Connect meeting at the show is being organized, too.

February 16, in celebration of Georgia Arbor Day, Lockerly Arboretum in Milledgeville, Georgia, will host a ribbon cutting to celebrate its new Azalea Legacy Garden, in partnership with **Ernest Koone**. Ernest has generously donated three each of 13 native azaleas.

On February 28, Lockerly Arboretum in Milledgeville, Georgia, hosts Wine in the Woods, 5 to 7 p.m., when the camellia collection will be at its best.

REGION 5

The [Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden](#) will again offer its "Learn on Saturdays" lecture series January through March, which includes weekly sessions on a wide range of gardening topics.

REGION 7

We will be having our Connect meeting at Landscape Ontario's Congress at the Toronto Congress Centre, January 9. We can tour the show and attend the educational sessions all day after our meeting. Some of us will be clever the next week and go to Fort Lauderdale, Florida, for the TPIE Show and tour.

Merger and Name Change explained

BY C.L. FORNARI



In 2018 the GWA Board voted to merge our main organization and the GWA Foundation. Keeping these two as separate entities required double the costs for staff, bookkeeping and other services without

the organization gaining anything from the separation. By folding GWA into the Foundation, our entire organization would gain from having non-profit status, and our administrative costs would be reduced.

Knowing that this would happen in January of 2019, the Board decided that this would be the ideal time to tackle the topic that we've discussed for the past 10 years: A name change. Three years ago we made a temporary step in that direction by changing the name to GWA: The Association for Garden Communicators. It was a temporary move, because at that time we were changing our management and we had enough on our plate at that time, so a full rebranding could wait.

At the Board meeting in Chicago in August, it was decided that the consolidation of the Foundation and main organization was the perfect time to rebrand. Here are some of the questions that the Board has heard about this process.

REBRANDING FAQS

Q. I didn't know we were rebranding.

How did this new rebrand come about?

A. Our organization is no longer just a group of garden writers. With that in mind, a strategic name change has been proposed and mentioned in regional and committee meetings over the last few years.

The GWA and Foundation merger and accompanying paperwork to secure 501c3 status provided the perfect opportunity for a rebrand. The Board appointed a rebranding taskforce to evaluate potential names and roll out rebranded materials before the January launch of the merged organization.

Q. Who was on the rebranding task force?

A. The Board-appointed taskforce was made up of members from diverse personal and professional backgrounds, including Julie Thompson-Adolf, Katie Elzer-Peters, Abra

Lee, Ryan McEnaney, Andrea Whitely, Randy Schultz, C.L. Fornari and Kirk Brown. Additionally, the taskforce consulted outside marketers about the names and logos.

Q. What process did the taskforce follow to create the new name?

A. The taskforce evaluated the various name recommendations that GWA members submitted by over the years. After carefully considering the 27 suggested names, we realized most had acronyms that belonged to existing organizations within our industry. Many of the appropriate URLs were also not available.

Additionally, in a time when we need to distinguish ourselves and become a nexus point for our industry, we felt that GardenComm was a really strong brand. It's easy to say, and expresses the two things our organization is about – *gardens* and *communicators*. It's also much more memorable than a string of letters. There are so many horticultural groups that use a string of acronyms...why should we be just another one of those? Our taskforce felt that we should stand out instead of being one among many.

Q. How many logos did the taskforce consider?

A. The taskforce considered 24 different logos, with a variety of fonts and colors. In the end, what was chosen had the widest appeal among the task force, Board and outside marketing consultants.

Q. Why wasn't the membership allowed to vote on the name?

A. We have learned that some of the members were disappointed they were not part of the process earlier and only had an opportunity to weigh in on the tag line. As you can see from the answers above, the taskforce did a thorough job of vetting names, colors, symbols, URLs and more from suggestions that had come in from our membership over the years.

GARDENCOMM

Garden Communicators International

Once GardenComm was suggested, it immediately gained the unanimous support of the taskforce. The taskforce's recommendations were presented to the executive committee which approved moving the recommendations forward to the full leadership group, which is made up of your elected representatives. After more discussion, the Board overwhelmingly approved the name change and logo and we moved to the membership vote of the tagline

Q. How can I get involved now?

A. There are two ways that you can participate: A leadership committee will be meeting in Chicago in January to talk about how to maximize this rebranding, and ways to make GardenComm the vanguard organization for communications in the green industry.

We are Team Horticulture and are Garden Strong! We'll be discussing ways to spread this message in the coming months. Your suggestions are needed and welcomed. Specifically:

- How can we publicize our mission to potential members and others in the green industry?
- How can we make this organization more visible to the public, as well?
- And finally, we know that we've done a good job in assisting any garden communicator who is interested in developing and promoting his or her career in garden communications. But how can we go further to promote plants and gardening to the general public as well? Send your suggestions to your National Director or any member of the Board.

As always, much of this organization's work takes place in the committees and new members are always welcomed. Contact one of the co-chairs to become involved. And when you have time, check out [Abra's blog](#) on the rebranding, name change and more. 🌱

C.L. Fornari is Region 1 National Director and a member of the rebranding committee and membership committee.

What's New This Year for the Media Awards

After last year's GWA Media Awards (now the GardenComm Media Awards), **Dee Nash** and **Ellen Zachos**, committee co-chairs for 2016-2017, asked the board to amend some of the rules for judging to:

- Alleviate some problems
- Clarify and streamline the process
- Make sure judging was done in the fairest way possible

After board approval, here are highlights of the changes made to the current judges' rules. A full list of the judges' rules will be sent to the judges, along with instructions, prior to the silver round opening. Here are the rule changes.

1. In the past, categories for some of the awards were consolidated for the final gold round of judging. For example, blog writing, brochures and newsletters each had their own category during the silver round, but were combined into one category called digital writing for the gold round. To make this more fair to the participants and to make the judges' jobs easier, now each category will be maintained intact throughout the entire competition.
2. When a blog-writing category was first created, it was treated as if it were a magazine or newspaper category, i.e., with both a feature (one post) and a column (three posts) option. However, blogs are not like magazines and newspapers, and feedback from the judges indicated that the three-post entries always trumped the one-post entries. Therefore, we eliminated the one-post entry and will maintain only one blog writing category with three post entries.
3. We had several requests from silver winners asking for feedback. For the past several years, we have not provided feedback for silver entries. This will continue because this is too much of a requirement for volunteer judges. So, no feedback will be given to entrants or silver winners, although gold winners may be given a sentence or two about why their entry was chosen for gold (if requested by the gold winner.)
4. We clarified information on the speakers' category to note that although the quality of the video itself isn't being judged, a poor quality video, specifically one in which the speaker is not clearly visible, will affect judging.
5. The number of silver winners is now restricted to no more than 25 percent of the total number of entries in each category.
6. Judges within a category are now required to communicate with each other prior to awarding the silver awards. They are not required to agree with one another, but this will allow them to adjust their scoring, if needed. This was done because some judges did not communicate with the other judges for their category in the past, and their scoring was not congruent. Unfortunately, this resulted in an averaging of the scores that sometimes produced a winner both judges weren't satisfied with. Also, too many silver awards were sometimes awarded in a particular category.
7. Judges will now have continued access to their silver-round scores on the website platform after the silver awards are announced. This should help judges to evaluate their scores during the gold round.
8. The following language will now be inserted across the bottom of all documents relating to the media awards: *No judge may judge his or her own entry, or any entry made by anyone else that includes the work of the judge.*
9. Award Committee Co-Chairs will now have access to all judging materials from the beginning of the awards process. Co-chairs will also be copied on all of Kellen's emails on the awards, so that the co-chairs will know if a judge is not judging on time. This should alleviate several problems the co-chairs had in past years with judging assignments not being completed in a timely manner.



CALL FOR ENTRIES:

Early-bird Rate ends February 15

We are excited to announce the launch of our prestigious [2019 GardenComm Media Awards](#) (formerly GWA Media Awards), the only national media awards program for the gardening communications industry.

Held annually for more than 30 years, the Media Awards have recognized the top professional horticultural communicators in the areas of writing, photography, speaking, digital media, broadcast media, publishing and trade.

[The 2019 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 GardenComm membership does qualify entrants for discounted entry fees.

Carol Michel and **Dee Nash** are in the process of emailing and calling potential judges. Please consider helping the Media Awards committee, especially if you have won a gold award in a particular category in the past. If you're a gold winner, you obviously know what quality work looks like. They'd appreciate your expertise in helping to identify future winners. 🌱

Whimsical Ain't for Everyone



That was not a typo. So I'll say it again, in what is considered a more grammatically correct manner. Whimsical is not for everyone. Not the garden style, but the adjective. To be honest,

charming and quaint aren't for everyone either, but I digress.

Of course I love and use these words that are popular in garden communications. For me, a whimsical garden may very well be preceded by a photograph or mention of an artist, such as Erykah Badu, just so my audience can visualize it. This is not for their lack of intelligence. It's because whimsical is not part of the vernacular—the everyday language of many communities, including mine.

MULTIPLE LANGUAGES

I grew up a little black girl—born and raised in the Deep South—I speak and understand three English vernaculars: American, African-American and Southern. I am intentional and proud in the use of multiple vernaculars and slang for my garden communications.

But why would a person do that? To connect the dots and speak in a way that is real to their heritage and culture. Everyone can code switch into a language recognized as our professional voice to express ideas. But if this is the only form of acceptable communication, we eliminate the diversity we try so hard to create.

I once listened to a person grumble about how they loathed the term yard. "It's a garden not a yard," were the specific words said. Well, as a southerner I can tell you my mama knows the genus, species and common name of every bush in her yard. You see, diminishing a person's words diminishes their identity. When we acknowledge the use of words like yard, people feel validated. Bush isn't slang for shrub, although slang is part of vernacular. It's just the way we speak. Our linguistic stories must be told through our garden writing, visuals and speech.

People from around the world have so much pride in their individualism, spirituality,

culture and ethnicity. True inclusion is embracing people for uniqueness. Their word choice and tone for garden communications may very well be different than yours. No one group is a monolith. But there are words that permeate a culture.

NOT DUMBING DOWN

For example, most all African-Americans will understand extending an invitation to "the cookout." For those who don't, the cookout is a metaphoric place where we gather to eat the best food, socialize and have a great time being our carefree selves. It's where we don't have to code switch. Carefully vetted visitors are extended a coveted invite to the cookout. If you've received one, consider it an honor. Invitations can also be easily rescinded for a misstep, such as correcting a person about calling their garden a yard.

It's not dumbing things down to get the message across. It is making yourself relatable to the audience so you can continue to introduce more advanced ideas. People want to be educated and entertained. If you are an intellectual and the big academic words are your sweet spot for communications, then by all means do your thing.

Or maybe you want to change things up and use a more colloquial approach. That is okay, too. As gardener communicators, whether formally trained or self-taught, it takes

courage and confidence to deliver a message. Whatever country or continent you are reppin' for, be it Puerto Rico, Australia or Canada, communicate in your truth.

We talk about the age and plant blindness problems in the garden world. Young people aren't signing up in droves to make gardening a career. Many adults cannot identify basic plants. The language that we use to communicate is not helping these issues. I am not referring to garden speak—things like botanical Latin, macronutrients versus micronutrients or propagation. That is part of getting your bearings when embarking on the journey to understand plants. This is about the tendency to speak at people instead of speaking to them.

How does GardenComm use diversity through communications to solve some of these problems? Extend paid opportunities to people with writing and speaking styles that don't sound like what we may be used to. Allowing people to communicate in their truths helps us grow audiences and learn about cultures, experiences, plants and gardens, especially when their truth is different from yours. That is where real representation starts. And as we say in the South, if their yard ain't broke, don't try to fix it. 🌱

Abra Lee is a Horticulturist Extraordinaire speaking truth on plants, fashion, and culture. You can follow her on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter @conquerthesoil



Sandy Dittmar – Evergreen Expert



When I initially called Sandy Dittmar to ask if I could interview her for *On the QT*, she told me that her story would be the story of **Iseli Nursery**. I was a little skeptical at first, but as we talked, I realized that she

was right. Sandy's career in the horticulture industry is really the story of the evolution of one of the most highly respected dwarf conifer and specialty tree nurseries in the country. Sandy has worked for Iseli for 41 years and isn't planning on retiring any time soon.

In 1975, Jean Iseli, a mathematician by training, purchased a defunct evergreen nursery in Boring, Oregon, filled with lots and lots of junipers, spruce and black pine that nobody wanted. Iseli had a vision though. He had a passion for plants, especially dwarf and rare conifers as well as Japanese maples, which he wanted to share with the rest of the world. Some folks were skeptical asking, "Who would buy a juniper in a 3-gallon container?" But folks did, and by 1977, Iseli's new start-up was growing and he was looking for some summer help. He put out a call for people to keep the weeds down around his expanding collection. Sandy was the only one to answer the call.

WILD AND CRAZY BUNCH

Sandy was a recent graduate of Oregon State University with a degree in horticulture and needed summer income. She spent the season pulling anything that was green and didn't belong around the nursery yard. When fall came, she decided she was having too much fun and stayed on with the company. "We were a wild and crazy bunch of people back then," she said of the crew that was trying to get Iseli's dream off the ground. Twenty of those people still work for the company today.

Time went by and she found herself working in the production area—pruning, potting up, doing pest and nutrient management, irrigation scheduling and yes, more weeding. Pretty soon she was managing the production area.

SANDY = CAN-DO

As the nursery grew so did Sandy's life. She cut back for a few years to start a family and



Sandy Dittmar stands next to one of Iseli Nursery's introductions *Ginkgo biloba* 'Jade Butterflies'.

Iseli was more than willing to let her work part time. She learned how to manage the inventory control system to ensure that sales and shipping knew what they had on hand to sell and pack. As her family grew up and her home responsibilities changed, she came back full time to manage all the reporting it took to run the now-thriving business. "I became the Jack of all trades," she said. "It became routine to ask, 'Sandy, can you do...'"

With her years of hands-on experience in every phase of the company, she worked her way into being the connection between sales and production, which translated into matching sales requests with what was available, ensuring that catalog write-ups matched grower information and that the tags that went on the plants matched the catalog and sales information. Only someone who had intimate knowledge of the company could do that job. Sandy was quick to say that it takes a dedicated village to make a company like Iseli a success, and she is proud to be part of the team.

MEMBER SINCE 2006

On of the biggest challenges she notes is that Iseli's plant development timeline is close to 10 years, and in some cases, 20 years. After all, dwarf conifers don't grow very fast. As a result, the company has to look far into the future and anticipate what the customer will be looking for a decade from now. "Our customers have to learn to be patient," Sandy said. It takes a long time to grow dwarf plants to market size. As an example, a Montgomery spruce (*Picea pungens* 'Montgomery') takes three years to grow to a 3-gallon container.

The Iseli company joined GardenComm in 2006 to come to the annual symposium and introduce its plants to the membership. Iseli found more than a market though. It found GardenComm to be an invaluable partner in introducing dwarf and rare conifers and specialty trees to consumers. "We can't measure the value of our GardenComm membership," she said. "It had made hauling all the plants to the annual meetings well worth it."

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“I became the Jack of all trades. It became routine to ask, ‘Sandy, can you do...’”

2008 SYMPOSIUM INSTIGATES DISPLAY GARDEN

Over the years, many customers and visitors asked to see its display garden and they had to say they didn't have one. However, in 2008 when the GardenComm Annual Symposium was scheduled for Portland, Oregon, the company decided it was now or never and they began building a display garden around their main office. For those of us who attended the conference, the garden was stunning and a highlight of the symposium. Little did we know that they went to the wire to get it done in time for our visit. Today, it has matured into a unique and beautiful garden full of Iseli's many introductions.

LIFE BEYOND THE NURSERY

Sandy's life isn't all about Iseli. She has two grandchildren and raised her family camping and hiking in the Oregon mountains. She even enjoys going home and gardening in her own yard. Her favorite hobby is being a baton twirler in an adult marching band called The Beat Goes On. “I started twirling when I was young and continued at OSU. This was a way to do something unusual but fun.” The band travels to many Northwest community festivals, including last fall's Octoberfest in Leavenworth, Washington, and has performed in Shanghai and on the Great Wall in China.

Thank you, Sandy, for introducing the GardenComm members to the joys of dwarf conifers and unusual Japanese maples. 🌿

From her base in Spokane, Washington, **Pat Munts** writes about gardening and natural history in the Inland Northwest east of the Cascade Mountains, where summers are hot and dry and winters are cold and snowy. Pat shares her gardening adventures in a weekly column for the *Spokesman-Review's* Voices section. She served as Regional Director for Region 6 from 2007 to 2016.



PHOTO COURTESY CLAIRE JONES

Hampton Court Flower Show

BALTIC SEA CRUISE

Dave Forehand, Vice President of Gardens for the Dallas Arboretum, will host a 10 day luxury cruise in the Baltic Sea, June 24 through July 4, offered by Oceania Cruises and David Morris International, exclusively for the Dallas Arboretum. Experience the Baltic region with Dave, a walking garden encyclopedia, in the company of avid garden admirers. Explore charming sea cities, opulent gothic castles, world-renowned Peterhof Gardens in St. Petersburg and so much more. Reserve a spot for this summer's trip by calling the Dallas Arboretum at 214-521-8508.

CAREX TOURS TO UK AND EUROPE

Garden designer and [Carex Tours](#) owner **Carolyn Mullet** leads tours to Scotland, the Netherlands, Germany and Italy. Author and columnist **Marianne Wilburn** leads a tour to England. Tour prices start at \$4,200 per double occupancy, and include seven to eight nights of four-star accommodations, luxury motor coach transportation, breakfasts and admission to all gardens. May 15-23, Chelsea Flower Show & Country Gardens; June 19-27, Gardens

of the Scottish Borders; Aug. 6-16, Piet Oudolf & Naturalistic Gardens in Netherlands & Germany; Sept. 25 - Oct. 2, Gardens of the Italian Lakes. For updated information: [email Carolyn Mullet](#) or call 240-429-0889.

HAMPTON COURT FLOWER SHOW

Claire Jones will lead a tour to Hampton Court Flower Show and iconic gardens of England, July 1 through 11. Accommodations are in four-star hotels. Limited to a small group. Beth Chatto's Garden, Bressingham, Sissinghurst and Great Dixter are included, with many more. The cost is approximately \$3,700, not including airfare. For more information, [email Claire](#) or [visit her website](#).

HYDRANGEA FESTIVAL

GardenComm members are invited to the [Cape Cod Hydrangea Festival](#). Opening party at a local microbrewery is July 11. Private gardens open Cape-wide, July 12 through July 21. Entry is \$5 per garden. There are special garden events throughout the 10-day period. All proceeds go directly to local non-profits. For more information [email C.L. Fornari](#). 🌿

Sylvia Gordon Shares Her Love of Tropical Plants



Sylvia Gordon was born into the green industry. Her father was a well-known landscape architect and she grew up weeding plants in their backyard nursery.

Starting her own landscaping-maintenance contracting business with a borrowed truck and a pair of pruners was a natural step after earning a degree in ornamental horticulture from the University of Florida. When working on customers' landscape designs, she started growing her own rare and unusual plants to supplement what was commonly available on the market. Over time, she transitioned to becoming a niche grower full-time.

Not satisfied with just sitting back running her own business, Sylvia is the type of person who sees a problem and jumps in to help solve it. She joined and volunteered in several green industry organizations. That brought her to her first GardenComm annual meeting in Indianapolis in 2011. She attended as a promoter of Florida-grown plants, representing her state's nursery and landscape association.

PROFESSIONAL PATH CLARIFIED

Since then, "It [GardenComm] has become much more than that for me, personally. I get to sit in on unique educational sessions and visit gardens all over the country with a group of people who inspire me, offer endless networking opportunities and have helped me visualize a future professional path," Sylvia said.

Sylvia is an inspiration to the many industry friends she has made along the way. She is described by fellow members as an adapter, "energy without restraint," and full of "tenacious willfulness." Hurricanes, cancer, labor shortages and market downturns are but a few challenges Sylvia has faced head on.

Her mission with Florida Nursery, Growers & Landscape Association (FNGLA) is to spread the knowledge and use of Florida-grown plants. Her personal passion is tropical plants. "People are unsure how to overcome the challenges that come along with adding tropicals to their garden's palate of plants," Sylvia said. "Some of these include how to



PHOTO COURTESY SYLVIA GORDON

Sylvia Gordon, a member of GardenComm's Association Outreach Committee, admires a costus at her tropical plant nursery in Florida. You can reach her at info@lsgsg.com.

overwinter them or how to deal with the spider mites that inevitably will find plants in the drier air conditions of a northern home during the winter."

Landscape by Sylvia Gordon is a wholesale specialty grower of tropical ornamentals, various palms, cycads and flowering trees. She also produces a line of edible and medicinal traditional and Asian herbs, vegetables and trees in containers, as part of her ingredients for the edible landscape program.

Sylvia's business philosophy is to share information, communicate clearly and be honest. She carries that same philosophy into all she does, including the board of directors and advisory committees on which she serves for her industry, the Florida Breast Cancer Foundation and the Baptist Health South Florida.

DEDICATED VOLUNTEER FOR CANCER RESEARCH

A survivor of four separate unrelated cancers, Sylvia passionately uses her experiences to advocate for excellent patient care. She has served on two of Baptist Health South Florida Committees for the creation of Miami Cancer Institute (MCI). Sylvia used her own experiences and needs throughout her cancer journeys to help the institute to apply for the Certificate of Need for an Adult Bone Marrow Transplant Program at Baptist Hospital of Miami and to help initiate the creation of a patient portal for MCI. Later, as a member of MCI's Patient and Family Advisory Committee she worked with the IT department to develop a patient portal. For the past 5 years, Sylvia has served on the Florida Breast Cancer Founda-

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tion's Education Committee. The foundation provides grants throughout Florida for programs on breast cancer and breast health to populations that need it most.

SERVES MANY ORGANIZATIONS

Sylvia has served her industry in many capacities. She has been involved with the Florida Nursery, Growers and Landscape Association, the Florida Farm Bureau, the Tropical Research and Education Center, the Miami-Dade County Cooperative Extension Service and the Wedgworth Leadership Institute over the last 30 years. She's served as a director, treasurer and president of FNGLA Dade Chapter and was the editor of the chapter's monthly plant listing publication, *The Nursery Report*. She represented her chapter on the State FNGLA Board of Directors. Currently, she serves on FNGLA's Membership & Marketing and Endowed Research Fund Advisory committees. In addition, she represents Florida's green industry at the national meetings of GardenComm and is a member of the Association Outreach Committee.

Sylvia is also a Class 5 graduate of the Wedgworth Leadership Institute, a University of Florida Agriculture and Natural Resource program designed for private sector individuals experienced in leadership roles. The programs develop the leadership capabilities of Florida agriculturists and horticulturalists as they become increasingly involved in the formation of policies at the community, state, national or international levels.

She is usually outdoors in the nursery for five to six hours of her nine- to 12-hour workdays. "I still wear most of the hats—from sales, weeding, pruning and scheduling." One of her goals is to become more profitable by using her small space more efficiently to focusing on her specialty plants. A lesson she learned was to stop trying to be all things to everyone. "Being a one-stop-shop isn't always the best way to go," she said. In other words, the riches are in the niches. 🌱

Kathy Jentz is editor and publisher of *Washington Gardener* magazine. A lifelong gardener, Kathy believes that growing plants should be stress-free and enjoyable. Her philosophy is inspiration over perspiration. She is National Director of GardenComm's Region II. She can be reached at KathyJentz@gmail.com, or WashingtonGardener.com.

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Helping **US**
GROW!

Thanks to these GardenComm members for helping to grow the organization in 2019. For every new member you bring in in 2019, you'll save \$20 on your 2020 membership dues.

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