What We Are Hearing  page 4

Pandemic Postponement: The Vermont Flower Show  page 9

Peonies: June Beauty Queens  page 27
BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT
Ashley Robinson
Ashley Robinson Landscape Designer
PO Box 28
Charlotte, VT  05445
802.922.1924
arobinsonld@gmail.com

VICE-PRESIDENT
Hannah Decker
Fairfax Perennial Farm, Inc.
7 Blackberry Hill Road
Fairfax, VT  05454
802.849.2775
perenniafarm@surfglobal.net

SECRETARY/TREASURER
Gabriel Bushey
Crafted Landscapes, LLC
176 South Maple Street
Vergennes, VT  05491
802.233.8551
gabe.w.bushey@gmail.com

DIRECTORS
Nate Carr
Church Hill Landscapes, Inc.
287 Church Hill Road
Charlotte, VT  05445
802.425.5222
nate@churchhilllandscapes.com

Marlys Eddy
Vermont Technical College
PO Box 500
Randolph Center, VT  05061
802.728.1207
mxe03080@vtc.vsc.edu

Ralph Fitz-Gerald
Horsford Gardens & Nursery
2111 Greenbush Road
Charlotte, VT  05445
802-425-2811
field@horsfordnursery.com

Sarah Salatino
Full Circle Gardens
68 Brigham Hill Road
Essex, VT  05452
802-879-1919
info@fullcirclegardens.com

Elise Schadler
VT Urban & Community Forestry Program
Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation
Program Manager
111 West Street
Essex Junction, VT  05452
802-522-6015
elise.schadler@vermont.gov

Pat Toporowski
Vermont Stone & Horticulture
1869 Main Street
Colchester, VT 05446
802-876-7901
pat@vermontstone.com

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Kristina MacKulin
VNLA/Green Works
P.O. Box 92
N. Ferrisburgh, VT  05473
Toll Free:  888.518.6484
P:  802.425.5117
Kristina@greenworksvermont.org
www.greenworksvermont.org

COMMITTEES
BUDGET AND FINANCE
COMMITTEE CHAIR
Gabe Bushey - Crafted Landscapes, LLC
802.425.5222

EVALUATION & PLANNING
COMMITTEE CHAIR
Ashley Robinson, Landscape Designer
802.922.1924

INDUSTRY AWARDS COMMITTEE CHAIR
Ashley Robinson, Landscape Designer
802.922.1924

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE CHAIR
Gabriel Bushey - Crafted Landscapes, LLC
802.233.8551

MARKETING & EDUCATION
COMMITTEE CHAIR
Ashley Robinson, Landscape Designer
802.922.1924

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE CO-CHAIRS
Hannah Decker - Fairfax Perennial Farm
802.849.2775
Ashley Robinson, Landscape Designer
802.922.1924

PROGRAM COMMITTEE CHAIR
Ralph Fitz-Gerald - Horsford Gardens & Nursery
802-425-2811

RESEARCH & AWARDS
VERMONT CERTIFIED HORTICULTURIST
COMMITTEE CHAIR
Nate Carr - Church Hill Landscapes, Inc.
802.425.5222

VOLUNTEER PROJECT OUTREACH
COMMITTEE CHAIR
Ashley Robinson, Landscape Designer
802.922.1924

Advertise with us!
Contact the VNLA office today!
888.518.6484

Connect with the VNLA/Green Works on Social Media!
Connect with us, post to our pages, or let us know something special you would like to share and we’ll share it. It’s another way for us to help your business thrive! You can find us at ...

Facebook: @greenworksvt & @vermontflowershow
Instagram: @greenworksvt & @vtflowershow
Dear Fellow VNLA Members & Friends,

It has surely been a wild start to the growing season! I sincerely hope you all have managed to stay safe and sane. It seems at every turn we are being challenged by something new. Lately the dry, hot weather has us sheltering from the sun and hopeful for rain. Even our gardens and lawns are suffering the stresses of this turbulent time!

I’ve always looked to the landscape to learn, feel joyful and fulfilled. This year is no different. In fact, the desire to garden, plant, and grow our landscapes has exploded recently. It seems more and more people are looking to their gardens for health, reprieve and enjoyment. The great reward in reaping the benefits of our outdoor spaces is being felt. It is in our nature to want nature!

Finding joy during these stressful times is important and I feel it is a part of what we offer as an industry. I like to think we are contributing in some small part to the healing of our communities. Bringing people closer together through gardening is the safest closeness we can have these days. Connecting to our neighbors and communities will always be important, perhaps now more so than ever.

Now is a time for hope, but so too is it a time for action and trust in the goodness of life. As an organization built to weather challenges, and shift with change, I am confident we are in a unique position to grow in new ways. There is opportunity for VNLA to affect positive, lasting influence on our communities. We can make a difference together, by supporting each other.

The VNLA needs all of our support to continue to grow, especially now. As we reach out to more of our communities to educate and to learn, we see how our collective efforts can influence change. We are in a position to help foster healthy landscapes and it is my hope that together we can be the ones to make a difference.

Thank you all for ALL you do.

Happy Summer!

Ashley

Cover Photo Credits: Mark Dwyer; China Snow® tree lilac (Syringa reticulata subsp. pekinensis 'Morton').
I would like to introduce you to our newest column - What We Are Hearing. I received a query from a member asking if the VNLA could organize a way to solicit “field/journal” notes from fellow members/associates to take their temperature at a given point in time on how people's seasons are going so far. It was a great suggestion which we acted upon immediately! We decided a quarterly check-in, which we could print in The Dirt, would be the way to go. These “field/journal” notes are organized by two categories: Retailers/Growers/Wholesalers and Landscapers/Designers and by region (keeping names anonymous). While we have tried member-to-member sharing in the past using a list serv and FaceBook, the launch of this column is timely as we strive to stay connected in any way we can through the pandemic we find ourselves living in.

Thank you to all who shared their “notes” and we look forward to even more responses for the Fall issue.

Kristina MacKulin, Executive Director

What We Are Hearing

Summer 2020

Query: We asked for a short summary of what is happening with your business/plants/clients, and or employees. How are you navigating COVID19, your workload, plans for 2021? These were the replies we received!

RETAILERS/GROWERS/ WHOLESALEERS

Charlotte

“We are hearing that edible plants/trees and classic plants (vulgaris lilacs, forsythia, etc) are selling like crazy from our garden center customers. We are also hearing raised bed soil is selling extremely well!”

Colchester

“OMG plants plants plants plants plants, all colors all sizes all types!!! Never thought that after 43 years selling plants that I would have to learn how to sell plants all over again....... once the customers came....they haven't stopped coming!! Thank god!! We are all so fortunate!! Stay well, be safe and healthy.....at home!!”

Elmore

“We are swamped with orders for plants this spring. We are working nearly everyday since late March in the tunnels and fields.”

“Our crew started all wearing masks and staying 6 ft apart but now, three months into it, are only wearing masks when we are working closely or around a customer or an older worker.”

“Our wholesale sales were very strong as well. We are heading into 2021 planning with lots of questions. While we have been able to open to the public now that things are slow, we don’t know if that will be feasible during the busy sales period of late April to mid

Hinesburg

“Our plant sales season has been really strong this year in spite of the limitations of operating during a pandemic. We were fortunate to put in place an online ordering system and curbside pick up during all of April through mid-June. There is no way we could have accommodated the number of sales we had with safe social distancing during peak season, and we are grateful that our customers were happy to place orders online for next day pick up or home delivery. Our crew rallied to make this work - it was three times the amount of work with zero of the fun of talking to customers. But we feel lucky to have a business and jobs that are meaningful and help people grow food at home, and engage in safe outdoor activities. Our Zoom classes were really well attended, and there is definitely a need for garden education more than ever. There are many new gardeners out there who have lots of questions and they could use support to be successful. I worry that without the face-to-face interactions, they are making decisions without guidance that will lead to problems. Hopefully they are not turned off from gardening as a result, but heading into a life-long new hobby!”

“Our wholesale sales were very strong as well. We are heading into 2021 planning with lots of questions. While we have been able to open to the public now that things are slow, we don’t know if that will be feasible during the busy sales period of late April to mid
June in 2021. Our plant donations were bigger than ever and our customers, for the first time, pitched in with contributions to our ‘grow it forward fund’ - something that was able to happen easily because of the structure of online shopping. We are curious to hear what others in the industry are planning for 2021, and grateful to the VNLA/Green Works for putting together this forum.”

**St. Johnsbury**

“What I’m hearing is:

- White River Junction

“Spring harvesting and shipping went pretty much normal for us. Our Industry is used to adapting quickly to abrupt change, especially in Spring, but a Pandemic? Across the Trade adaptation and perseverance is what people exercised. Our landscape and garden center customers have been busy with strong sales. The pace has slowed in the last few weeks, but we continue to ship each week from our growers in north east Ohio and NJ into New England.”

**White River Junction**

“What I’m hearing is:

- the phone won’t stop ringing
- people are spending money
- contractors have more work then they can handle and can’t find enough help to take on new work
- suppliers have sold fall plants and now are out for the immediate future on many staple items
- people are still concerned about COVID but not like it was 3 weeks ago.
- the phone won’t stop ringing
- hardlines suppliers are out of some products, some for the season, and others can’t find raw materials to make what they sell
- it needs to rain for a few days
- sales have been good for 8 weeks
- they need to figure out a way to start the baseball season.
- the phone won’t stop ringing.”

**Waitsfield**

“We had a record Mother’s Day hanging basket sale through our on-line shop with parking lot pick up. We opened May 15, two weeks later than usual and sold more in those two weeks than our usual four week May sales. We have seen a decline in sales for June which may be a reflection of our stellar May sales and also of the fact that the Canadian second home owners in our region are confined to Canada. We have instituted strict Covid-19 parameters: masks required, maximum of six cars in the lot, only one shopper per car (now relaxed), shopping with purpose (no lingering), no entry to greenhouses, no public restroom (portelet provided for the desperate). 99% of our customers have been very pleased. Only 1% gave us any push back.”

**Williston**

“What’s happening with our business: First a big thank you to our State Department of Agriculture and VNLA(Kristina) for all the hard work and communication they did to help us get through this pandemic. Our clients/customers were very supportive and patient thank you.”

“Our employees have always worked hard, especially this year. It was hectic, nerve racking and difficult for a while but we got through it thanks to them. We can breathe now and feel a little normalcy.”

“Navigating COVID-19 continues with sanitization and requiring face masks. Trying hard not to let our guard down too soon.”

“Plans for next year, we are not making any major adjustments to production just yet, our greenhouses were at capacity this year. But if sales seem to be the same as this year, we will be prepared to make changes or additions more quickly. Covid will not be completely over, not all will be back to work, some will continue to work from home with time on their hands to be in the yard more easily. So many factors contributed to the unprecedented, pandemic phenom season this spring that most likely will not be there next year. We think sales will be early because people will not want to miss out on choices like this year because of selling out of some items so early. We heard comments suggesting this from customers. Most likely will have to continue with some form of curbside and online purchases, this may be the new norm?”

**OUT-OF-STATE**

**Chichester, NH**

“As far as what we are hearing: We have been going full steam ahead despite the challenges that Covid 19 has presented. As a precaution, we have not allowed landscapers and architects to tag their own material yet but we hope to soon. Our wonderful customers have all been great about this and we’ve been remarkably busy with deliveries and customer pickups all season...”

**Lebanon, CT**

It seems so long ago that we were together for the VNLA Winter Meeting with an outlook to a strong spring on the horizon. The weather in early March gave us even more optimism as we started shipping steadily all across the northeast. Mid March came and the cloud of Covid. Each state that we ship to started handling it differently so it was a very difficult end to March and beginning of April.”

“The weather in VT for April made it easier for garden centers to just try to wait it out and see what May would bring. The hardiness of all involved in the nursery and landscape industry started showing through as each company found a way to do some
business. Luckily much of what was learned through web sites, online ordering, curbside pick up and delivery will help many retailers continue to widen their reach into untapped markets for future growth.”

“Then came May, and all of the homeowners staying home and working on their yards started to pay off for all of us in the industry. We feel very confident in the future of our industry and our place in it here in the northeast due to how all of our customers pulled together to work through all of the changes and challenges we all faced this year.”

“We appreciate all of the cooperation and trust our customers placed in us to fulfill as best we could all of their needs and demands which became unprecedented and nothing that any of us could have predicted. We continue to have in place practices to keep our employees and customers safe as we still provide the service and quality plants that you have come to expect from us.”

“We are potting new plants at an increased pace to restock the nursery for fall and spring sales as we feel many of the new gardeners from this year will be back through your doors in the spring. I look forward to when we can all gather again to share our stories and love of plants.”

**LANDSCAPERS/DESIGNERS**

**Colchester**

“I wanted to let you know what I’ve been hearing as a landscape designer working for a design and build firm. This is my third year with the company and each one has gotten more demanding on my end, even this year with the pandemic.”

“Plandemic” is very fitting as I’ve talked to a number of potential clients who are moving forward with projects that they have put off for years. They finally have more time to spend at home and dream of what their sanctuary could be. May it be a new planting bed along their front foundation or a complete transformation of their backyard into an outdoor living space.”

“People have also been investing time and effort in order to increase their property’s sustainability. I have never seen so many new veggie beds in my life as I drive around and I even overhauled my own at home. It’s also funny when multiple stores (including Lowes) are sold out of watering cans.”

“On the other hand, an equal amount of people that I have spoken to are barely able to pay their bills and almost laugh at me when I mention landscape projects.”

“I have been working from home 90% of the time this season and my more significant installations have really just started. I haven’t had a ton of face time with actual vendors yet but it sounds like business has picked back up from what I understand. It seems as though Vermonters are taking even more pride in helping their fellow neighbors lately and simply buying locally is an easy and great way to start.”

**Fairfax**

“This year has been an exciting year for my business. I have added my husband to the workforce due to accepting a large maintenance contract with city of St. Albans planting and maintaining the streetscape planters and the gardens in historic Taylor Park. I have also kept all of my my great residential maintenance customers as well. So adding another person has been helpful. And, we haven’t killed each-other yet. It actually has been a pleasure and we are getting a tremendous amount of work done.”

“As for COVID affecting my business. I have had to cut back on annuals, new tree plantings and other plantings from our local Hospital contract due to their own financial issues. Otherwise everyone else in the world is definitely gardening and calling me for help. So I’m not worried about the future.”

“However I do normally work together with many volunteer organizations from the local Garden Club, Master Gardeners, Prison work crews, VYCC and the mentally and physically challenged. We work on all kinds of gardening projects and watering around the city of St.Albans. It is sad that many of these community members are not available to get out help this year it means a lot to many of them.”

“As for the shortage in annual plants: I am soooo glad that I planned ahead and Pre-ordered 160 Hanging baskets in December and bought local. My order was held until planting day.”

“With all this heat all it seems like all we are doing is watering so we decided to add our side-by-side 4 wheeler to our team as well. It is our watering wagon that goes all over St.Albans. The 120 planters and other gardens have minimal water access so we had to be creative.” I feel like 2021 will be a great year as well but I haven’t had time to think that far ahead with all the changes in day-to-day life.”

**New In VT**

“As I have recently relocated to Vermont with my family and starting my own Landscape Architecture Design Studio, I have complete optimism. I have seen people reevaluate their own properties and make the sound decision to enhance their landscape in order for them to live their best life.”
Rutland

“Folks seem to be over the panic and focused on getting things done. Our 2nd home silo of business has been particularly active. We’ve added tick control services this year which has been extremely popular with the current spike in their numbers.”

Shelburne

“After much uncertainty, this season has been anything but a disappointment. There seems to still be a lot of consumer confidence in our industry. We are already booking hardscape and softscape projects into the late fall. Our company is still working hard to follow all CDC guidelines and have worked it into our daily routine. We as a company feel very fortunate to be in the position we are in!”

Stowe

“The uncertainty of the pandemic certainly caused a slow ease into the season. With our largest client being a resort which was unable to operate, all work there was put on hold and is still TBD. A few other clients opted to tackle things themselves partly due to finances and partly because they simply had the time on their hands! I have been coaching them along as they need it. For this reason I did not hire any employees so I am going at it on my own with the strong help of my husband.”

“Sourcing vegetables starts, seeds, and annual flowers has been tough as homeowners tend to over buy....(who needs 10 watermelon plants?!) On the flip side this has been a welcomed challenge of my creativity and problem solving and for some customers has forced ‘trying something new’. Overall business has been strong with new clients and project work.”

“A quick shout out to all of my vendors who, as always, make things happen. Despite these challenges all in all so far for 2020 we have been good to grow! I am wondering for 2021, do I need any employees? Talk to me in October and I will let you know.”

Vergennes

“It has certainly been a strange season thus far. It has been our busiest season and I have had to turn down work which is always uncomfortable. I have heard some nurseries are low on stock as it was one of their busiest springs and maybe have ordered less than usual because of the uncertainty caused by Covid. I do have long term concerns. What are the dominoes still to fall and how do they impact business in the future?”

Pesticide Training and Recertification Online Courses Available

The UVM Extension Pesticide Safety Education Program is providing online courses to help study for pesticide applicator exams and to provide recertification credits for certified pesticide applicators. These on-demand, self-paced courses are presented through narrated video modules.

Current courses:

- Northeast CORE Manual Review (no credit)
- Northeast CORE Manual Review, Unit #1 (1 credit)
- Northeast CORE Manual Review, Unit #2 (1 credit)
- Northeast CORE Manual Review, Unit #3 (1 credit)
- Northeast CORE Manual Review, Unit #4 (1 credit)
- *NEW* Category 7A Manual Review (no credit)

Courses are available through eXtension Campus, part of the national Cooperative Extension System, and open to the general public and certified pesticide applicators throughout the Northeast.

Visit https://www.uvm.edu/extension/pseponline for course details.
As producers of the Vermont Flower Show, the first priority of the VNLA/Green Works Board of Directors is the safety of all attendees, vendors, and volunteers who participate in our signature event, the Vermont Flower Show. After examining the data on the COVID-19 pandemic all through March-April, the emerging theme was no one knows for sure how long this virus will remain with us. Now we are in July and that still holds true.

In an effort to keep people safe as well as to help mitigate the spread of the coronavirus, we made the decision in late April to postpone the 2021 Vermont Flower Show, scheduled for February 27, 28, and March 1, 2021. The new dates are March 4-6, 2022.

Our show depends on hundreds of volunteers, sponsorships, and many donations, and the board felt this was not the year to ask for this support until we could better understand the longer term effects the pandemic will have.

Although we are disappointed we cannot bring our beloved show to life in 2021, and we know many of you will be too, we believe this is the right decision until we can all be certain when holding large events will be safe again.

The Vermont Flower Show remains a very necessary revenue source for the VNLA and the board of directors are working on plans to help bridge the revenue gap we will be experiencing, due to this postponement. See the article on page 11. In the coming weeks, you will hear more from the board regarding those efforts via emails as well as in the Fall issue of The Dirt.

In the meantime, SAVE THE DATE (March 4-6) for the 2022 show and if you have any interest in helping with the planning of the next Vermont Flower Show please contact Kristina at: kristina@greenworksvermont.org.

In the meantime, the flower show committees will reconvene sometime in late Fall to begin their work anew to bring another flower show to life. We will just have to see if those meetings will be virtual or not.

Top: The next generation - one of the best reasons we do our show! Kids in the Family Room exploring the world of worms. Bottom: The 2019 Vermont Flower Show - just before we opened the doors on Friday. Photo Credits: Stephen Mease Photography.
Three Things to know about Van Berkum Nursery
1) We are passionate about what we grow, from New England Woodlanders to Wicked Ruggeds.
2) We specialize in healthy NH grown perennials, personal service, and extensive plant knowledge.
3) We have friends in low places. (ribbit.)

Van Berkum Nursery • 4 James Road Deerfield, NH 03037
(603) 463-7663 Fax 7326 • salesdesk@vanberkumnursery.com
www.vanberkumnursery.com

MILLCAN NURSERIES, LLC.
WWW.MNIPLANTS.COM
(603) 435-6660

Thousands of amazing trees, shrubs, perennials and groundcovers, all in one convenient location...

Outstanding customer service and a helpful sales staff that loves and knows plants...

Delivery throughout New England daily and quick turnaround time on orders...

SEE YOU SOON!
Now that we find ourselves fully immersed in living in a COVID-19 world, our ways of doing business and conducting our personal lives have shifted a great deal. In the beginning what to expect and all the uncertainty was challenging and still continues to be. Here in Vermont we have settled into a rhythm, our COVID-19 numbers are holding steady, and it does feel like we have come a long way since the first Stay Home Stay Safe order was issued. Our member businesses were some of the first to get back to work and now that health and safety requirements have eased, it has made doing business a bit easier and hopefully a little less stressful.

Here at the VNLA I/we continue to monitor all the COVID-19 reports as well as news releases from the Governor, Agencies of Agriculture and Commerce & Community Development, the VT Health Department and the CDC. We will continue to keep you informed and please don’t hesitate to reach out to us if we can help in any way.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

One place to keep informed on a daily basis about what is happening with COVID-19 in VT is to visit the VT Health Department website (https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19). It is updated on a daily basis with the current COVID activity in VT (by town and county), where to get tested, FAQs, travel information and MORE. The site also posts a daily update – visit the "See the Latest Update Button". On July 6 they added some additional information on keeping up with COVID-19 prevention that I would like to share below. One area they address is mask wearing in heat and humidity, which is especially pertinent to our industry since so many of you work outdoors.

Keep up COVID-19 Prevention

The beginning of July has seen record numbers of COVID-19 cases in parts of the United States. While our efforts have been critical to slowing the virus’ spread, the national trend shows that our progress can be fragile. We all want to keep Vermont healthy and open, and for that to happen we need everyone to continue to take prevention seriously. Keep up those simple actions to prevent the spread of COVID-19:

- Wear a face mask when around others if you are able
- Keep 6 feet apart
- Wash your hands frequently
- Stay home when you’re sick

Bring a mask with you when you leave home to help slow the spread of COVID-19. The virus can spread before a person has any symptoms. A mask helps protect others around you if you are infected and don’t know it. You still need to stay at least 6 feet away from people you don’t live with, even when wearing a mask.

Heat and Humidity on the Way

Summer heat is back in the forecast. So stay cool and hydrated, and listen to your body to prevent heat-related illness. Check on older adults and people with chronic medical conditions or disabilities, who are generally at higher risk during hot weather, especially if they live alone or don’t have air conditioning. Follow this link for more information on hot weather and health impacts: https://www.healthvermont.gov/health-environment/climate-health/hot-weather.

BUSINESS INFORMATION

There continues to be a plethora of information on the VT Agencies of Commerce and Community Development and Agriculture websites on current news, resources for businesses, including sector guidance, financial assistance and unemployment information. New grant opportunities became available on Monday, July 6 through the ACCD and will be coming soon through the VT Agency of Agriculture for non-dairy businesses. For more information on any of the above please visit their websites:

https://accd.vermont.gov/covid-19
https://agriculture.vermont.gov/covid-19-information

Another very helpful resource is the VT Small Business Development Center. You can sign up for email alerts and they offer a tremendous amount of help and guidance in navigating applying for business loans and grants. Visit their website for more information: https://www.vtsbdc.org/

Our member businesses and associates have contributed to the health and well being of our communities by being able to provide the plants and services so many in our towns and cities were craving as we all are staying so close to home. THANK YOU ALL for bringing that much needed joy into peoples lives.

While it feels like a great deal of time has passed, I do try to remind myself that we are still in the beginning phase of this pandemic. WE CAN’T LET OUR GUARD DOWN! On that note, take good care our there while your work and while you play! Enjoy time with family and friends and most of all KEEP WELL AND SAFE!
The Vermont Nursery and Landscape Association has been a resource for both industry professionals and customers alike for over 50 years. Customers looking for a contractor or a place to shop for their plant needs come to the Association for references and resources. Contractors, designers, and nursery professionals all gain a variety of benefits from membership, including access to industry conferences, networking opportunities, VCH certification, - the list goes on.

Many of you are aware that the VNLA board had to make the very difficult decision to postpone the next Vermont Flower Show until 2022. We came to this decision after considering several factors. We do not know where we will be with COVID. Even if we have moved into a safer period of time with the virus will people in general feel safe enough to visit such a high traffic event in February of ‘21? These past few months would have been the time we would normally be approaching vendors and sponsors for their commitments as well as soliciting donations. With all the uncertainty and financial hardships many are facing, it did not seem like the right time to be making these requests. We also recognized that the Association cannot afford to have a show that doesn’t have good attendance. The health and financial risks of having a show in the late winter of 2021 were just too great.

With all of that in mind and with a desire to ensure that we have the ability to offer industry professionals, customers and businesses the resources the VNLA offers, the board of directors is looking into several possibilities of alternative revenue streams, as well as potential public outreach projects.

The first item is adding a DONATE button to the VNLA website. We are currently working on a strategy to implement that button. Further information will be available soon.

Second, the board is looking into a project in the Village of Essex that would be a small “pocket” park. It would be a similar approach to the past Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity volunteer projects. However, the VNLA would receive a monetary donation to complete the project and we would then seek VNLA volunteers to help us complete the project with donated time, materials, and labor. This monetary donation would help the Association offset some of lost flower show revenues we are anticipating in 2021 due to the show’s postponement.

Third, each year we have an auction at the summer meeting. The board is looking into expanding this to the public possibly in the form of an on-line auction. Donations could be made in the form of plants, services, tools/ equipment, or other materials.

The final idea would be more of a marketing opportunity as well as a very positive community activity. The goal would be for VNLA members/associates to identify opportunities in their communities to work on a volunteer project. It could be anything from planting a tree at a school, to installing a planting bed at a library or perhaps installing a bench or small patio in a park. We would coordinate with each other to do the work, hopefully in several locations across the state, on the same day. We would put it on social media and try to get some news outlets to cover it. It has potential to be a recurring event.

No one knows the situation better than Kristina, our Executive Director. She has gone above and beyond in her dedication and work with the Association, especially since the start of the Covid quarantines. Kristina has volunteered to take half salary for the rest of this year. As a board we reluctantly accepted her offer. Kristina and the board recognize the challenges ahead of us, as well as understand that other organizations are dealing with similar issues. The loss of revenue is affecting many organizations and businesses due to this pandemic.

Because the Association depends on flower show revenue every other year as well as the decrease in membership dues revenue this year (we are down $4,393 from last year; this is pre-COVID), cutting administrative costs is really the only option at this point in time. We hope this will be temporary. This is one of the reasons the Association had incrementally been raising membership dues over the last few years. We did not, however, increase dues in 2020. We have been working toward bridging the gap between administrative costs and having membership dues cover those costs entirely, which would help reduce our reliance on flower show revenue.
Looking ahead over the next year and until our next flower show in 2022, we have identified a period of time where finances could get short for the Association. The board has developed some of the above strategies to help mitigate our situation.

The board will also continue to work toward seeking new members to join the VNLA. Every member can help in this effort. Now more than ever we are stronger and resilient together! We welcome your feedback on what I have discussed above and welcome more ideas as we work to sustain the future of the Association, which is in its 56th year.

---

**Congratulations to Member Tim Parsons**

Each year the Vermont Urban & Community Forestry Program and Council sponsors the Vermont Tree Steward Awards as a way to recognize Vermont’s urban and community forestry champions. The recipient of the 2020 Leader Award is member Tim Parson, of Middlebury College. The Leader Award is given to “an individual who, through services to their community or organization, has shown leadership and dedication in carrying out an urban or community forestry effort.” Tim is described on the VT Urban and Community Forestry website:

Tim Parsons is the Landscape Horticulturist at Middlebury College and in this role he is responsible for maintaining and caring for the 2200 trees on the Middlebury Campus. He has taught a "Trees in the Urban Forest" course several times, and provided informative field trips for other courses, including Forestry in North America. With his students he has developed emergency preparedness plans for the arrival of Emerald Ash Borer for both the town of Middlebury and the College. He is also a member of the college’s Master Plan Implementation Committee, the Emergency Response Team, and the Community Council, and has served on the Environmental Council. Tim Parsons has a passion for trees and an incredible gift to share that knowledge with others!

Tim is a long-time VNLA member and past president of the Association. Congratulations to Tim on his Leader Award! To learn more about this and other Vermont Tree Steward Awards visit: [https://vtcommunityforestry.org/programs/awards/tree-steward-awards](https://vtcommunityforestry.org/programs/awards/tree-steward-awards).

---

**Participate in the 2020 Industry Awards Program**

Start planning and scope out your projects! Applications will be available in September.
Welcome to NEW VNLA/Green Works Members!

**Eastern Shore Nursery**  
*Don Ward*  
PO Box 449  
Great Barrington, MA 01230  
413-446-4662  
dward@esnursery.com  
https://www.esnursery.com  
Associate Member  
Category: Wholesale Nursery

**Gnarly Roots, LLC**  
*Jennifer Rosenthal*  
PO Box 902  
South Londonderry, VT 05155  
802-375-5109  
gnarlyrootsvt@gmail.com  
https://www.gnarlyrootsvt.com  
Active Member  
Category: Landscape Install/Maintenance

**Kim Myers**  
Vermont Technical College  
182 Berlin Street  
Montpelier, VT 05602  
614-619-9750  
kimhmyers@gmail.com  
Student Member

**Leah Jacobs**  
603 Chapin Road  
Plainfield, VT 05667  
leahrocketship@hotmail.com  
Student Member

**TCE, Inc.**  
*Lucy Thayer*  
478 Blair Park Road  
Williston, VT 05495  
802-879-6331  
lucy.thayer@tcevt.com  
https://www.tcevt.com  
Active Member  
Category: Landscape Architect, Landscape Designer, Municipality, Museum & Gardens

Get Certified in 2020!  
Don’t delay and order your study manual today!

www.greenworksvermont.org  
888.518.6484
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 6 - August 18, 2020
New Directions in the American Landscape Webinar Series
Ecology, Culture, and the Designed Landscape
https://ndal.org/webinars-for-landscape-practitioners/

July 13-16, 2020
Cultivate '20 VIRTUAL
Greater Columbus Convention Center
Columbus, OH
www.cultivateevent.org

July 16, 2020 - 1:30 pm
Soil: The Solution Beneath our Feet
Webinar w/ Trevor Smith of Land Escapes, Design, Inc.
https://tinyurl.com/ybep8edb

July 22, 2022 - 2pm
Association of Professional Landscape Designers Webinar:
The Dirty Truth About Plastic Pots
https://tinyurl.com/y7phl4qs

August 3-6, 2020 - POSTPONED TO July 26 - 30, 2021
Perennial Plant Association National Symposium
Lancaster, PA
https://www.perennialplant.org

August 5, 2020 OR August 12, 2020 - 8:30 am - 5pm
Advanced Landscape Design Workshop w/ Patrick Cullina
https://www.ecolandscaping.org

November 11 - 12, 2020 - POSTPONED UNTIL 2021
Northeast Greenhouse Conference & Expo
Boxboro Regency Hotel
Boxborough, MA
https://www.negreenhouse.org/

December 4, 2020
Ecological Plant Conference
Ecological Landscaping Alliance
Brooklyn Botanic Garden
Brooklyn, NY
https://www.ecolandscaping.org

December 7 - 11, 2020
NGICP National Green Infrastructure Certification Program
Round Lake, NY
https://www.ecolandscaping.org

Horsford’s has it all for wholesale
Your one-stop shop for the most diverse selection of trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals in Vermont! Horsford's has over 30 acres of field and container production dedicated to growing hardy plants that survive Vermont winters. We consider anyone who sells or installs plants as their primary source of income a potential wholesale customer.

Wholesale pricelist available
Email wholesale@horsfordnursery.com

2111 GREENBUSH ROAD • CHARLOTTE, VT 05445

WHOLESALE-David Berg
wholesale@horsfordnursery.com
(802) 922-4628 direct line

PERENNIALS-Kristin Sprenkle
kristin@horsfordnursery.com
(802) 881-7684 direct line

FIELD-Ralph Fitz-Gerald
field@horsfordnursery.com
(802) 425-2811
Cobble Creek Nursery, LLC

We grow a diverse selection of B&B trees and shrubs at our nursery in Monkton, Vermont. We offer shade trees, ornamental trees, flowering shrubs and dwarf conifers. At Cobble Creek Nursery we are known for quality Vermont Grown plants, exceptional service and extensive woody plant knowledge. Stop by for a visit or give John a call for more information.

John Padua
991 Tyler Bridge Road, Bristol, VT 05443
phone/fax: 802-453-3889 / e-mail: cobcreek@gmavt.net
In PSS Department and Campus news:

• 2019 was a very busy year for pollinator research, education, and outreach activities at The University of Vermont (UVM). The Gund Institute for Environment received a significant donation to establish a center for improving pollinator health (https://www.uvm.edu/gund/apis-fund).
• Dr. Samantha Alger secured funding to establish the Vermont Bee Lab which will strive towards improving pollinator health through education, research and outreach (http://www.vermontbeelab.com/). Dr. Alger’s research on a possible adverse impact of domesticated bees on wild bee health was disseminated globally through a variety of new media outlets.
• The UVM Beekeepers Club (Dr. Mark Starrett advisor) had many activities on campus to foster awareness of honeybees and other pollinators. The club has over 1,000 current students on their listserv and is one of the most recognized clubs on campus. They are now part of a consortium of other clubs on campus dedicated to improving the local, regional, national and global environment under the guidance of the UVM Student Government Association. Thanks to the club and Dr. Starrett, the UVM campus was re-accredited as a Bee Campus USA.
• Congrats to both Martha Caswell, Co-Director, Agroecology and Livelihoods Collaborative and Jorge Ruiz Arocho, Insect Agroecology Lab M.S. student with Yolanda Chen. Both were appointed fellows with the UVM GUND Institute where they will be sharing their research and work on agriculture and the environment!

Fall will be interesting on campus, to say the least. UVM has had a committee and others coming up with reopening and instructional plans. While the semester will be only two days shorter, starting and ending on the planned usual times, there will be no fall recess day in October, on campus classes will continue two days into Thanksgiving week (usually this whole week is off), and the remaining few days of instruction and finals after Thanksgiving will all be online/remote. These measures will minimize travel with students not returning after that break.

On campus there will, of course, be the usual requirements for hygiene, distance and masks, with all signing a Green and Golden Pledge (let’s hope this is more effective than most usual pledges). There will be testing and tracing to try and contain the certain outbreaks. There will be fewer bodies in dorms, and in classrooms—most with increased seating distances at about 20% capacity. This means that only a subset of students will be in a class, the others participating remotely or asynchronously (at different times or during a certain timeframe), if the class isn’t totally online which is still an option. (For all my courses already online, this isn’t an issue.) Another option may be to use conference facilities on and off campus for larger classes.

Classroom example: Fleming 101, original capacity 185, new fall capacity 31 or 17%. This doesn’t even address the financial side, a whole separate story. In a letter from the UVM
President Garimella in May, some of the highlights he mentioned were a best case loss in revenue from fewer students returning and few out-of-state students ($26 million of 7% of the General Fund budget), immediate Covid-19 related expenses ($15 million), and increased health care premiums for employees ($5 million). “UVM is more reliant on tuition than nearly any other public research university—73% of our general fund expenditures are paid by tuition... Vermont provides the third-lowest per capita support for higher education of any state. ...Raising tuition as a source of additional revenue is not an option, because we already have the 4th highest out-of-state tuition among public universities in the country, after only the University of Michigan, the University of Virginia, and the UC system...”

Already, to help address these millions of dollars in shortfalls, every expense is being scrutinized, most hiring stopped, delayed $30 million in borrowing for part of the multisport complex (mentioned in previous issues of this column), most UVM travel not permitted or funded, many senior administrators forgoing a month of salary, employees taking furloughs, and non-union employees having a pay cut on a sliding scale by income. Endowments are restricted gifts given for a single purpose, so are not possible to tap.

Many students in higher education are projected to attend schools closer to home or in state (75 percent of UVM undergraduates are from out-of-state), or take a year off, and there are fewer high school seniors in Vermont and the Northeast. So, it will be interesting and anyone’s guess how many actually show up the end of August. There will be many more questions to be addressed such as college students—I’m glad my time on campus will be minimal, if any.

In the last issue I mentioned a couple of indoor plant name changes, now that botanists are using molecular research to revisit plant evolution (phylogeny). An outdoor plant with a new name is Persian cornflower (pink relative of the blue cornflower), which you may know as Centaurea dealbata, now is officially Psephellus dealbatus (reminding me of one of those trademark names that you can’t pronounce). Rosemary was Rosmarinus officinalis, but is now related to our annual and perennial garden salvias, Salvia rosmarinus.

On a related topic to this herb and other scented plants, exposure to scents has been observed in studies to have psychophysiological effects on cognitive performance, stress, and mood. Lavender scent was observed to improve concentration and computational accuracy, reduce stress and anxiety, increase relaxation and improve mood. Peppermint scent resulted in enhanced attention, alertness, arousal, memory, and task performance. Rosemary enhanced alertness and quality of memory, and both stimulated and improved mood. Citrus was observed to increase scholastic performance, reduce stress and anxiety, and again both stimulate and improve mood. The latter also was improved by scents of cypress or vanilla. Blood pressure was observed to decrease too with cypress scent (from the keynote presentation by Dr. Charles Hall, at the 2019 America in Bloom Symposium, www.americainbloom.org). Maybe
you can consider sharing the above when designing client landscapes, or selling herbs?

One of THE most popular and carefree (unless possibly if you have slugs or deer) perennials, is hosta. With hundreds available, it is often hard to choose the best. (I know unless I’m in a “hosta” mood, my eyes glaze like the deer-in-headlights when confronted with so many.) To help with choices, and recommendations to customers, and to build on already existing publicity, consider the American Hosta Growers Association annual Hosta of the Year.

For 2020 they’ve chosen “Dancing Queen” (introduction by Terpening in 2005). This gold-leaved hosta reaches about 18inches high and 30inches wide, creating a mounding habit with pale lavender blooms in mid-summer. The bright yellow foliage is broad and wedge-shaped, with a rippled margin, turning paler later in summer. It is a seedling of ‘Split Personality’. You can learn more about yearly winners at the AHGA website (www.hostagrowers.org/Hosta_of_the_Year.html).

The American Hosta Growers Association 2020 Hosta of the Year: Dancing Queen. (Photo courtesy Kent Terpening and the AHGA website).

YOUR GOAL:
Having a partner that makes your life easier and your business more profitable.

OUR MISSION:
Making sure you reach your goal!

Contact us today so we can start helping you succeed!

Prides Corner Farms
Located in Lebanon, Connecticut  www.pridescorner.com  (800) 437-5168
Well, it has been interesting in this time of Covid-19. The UVM Plant Diagnostic Clinic has remained open for samples from commercial growers, UVM researchers and Extension specialists. The UVM Extension Master Gardener Helpline, housed in the Diagnostic Clinic, has been closed until further notice, although the 20 or so Helpline volunteers are still trying to answer questions through email. Everyone seems to be a gardener this year (positive effect of the virus!) so it is unfortunate to not have “all hands on deck” in the Clinic for the home garden calls.

It has been helpful that most growers now have cell phones where they can snap a picture of a problem and email it for diagnosis. A lot of times this is the best place to start and if we can’t figure it out from pictures, then we can request samples.

I have had very few calls regarding winter desiccation or winter injury from this past winter. So it appears we had a mild enough winter and enough snow cover to protect plants. I did however, see extensive dieback on some sweet cherries, but these are rated for Zone 5 and can be vulnerable to cold temperatures. I have seen a fair amount of frost damage on foliage of various woody ornamentals from the cold temperatures the state experienced May 13. Burlington’s recorded low was 33 F and Montpelier’s low was 26 F.

Below is a cool picture from a Burlington cemetery we received from a home gardener. According to Dr. Mark Starrett, Horticulture Professor at UVM, “This is a spruce that has undergone a genetic “reversion” where the original (“normal”) spruce is now coming out from the dwarf plant. It can be pruned to remove it but it will keep “wanting” to do this.”

I have recently joined the NH/VT Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation and am eager to work with the group to learn more about this beautiful tree that disappeared before I was born. The blight that wiped out these trees showed up at the Bronx Zoo in 1904 and by 1940, most mature chestnuts were dead from the fungal disease. The American Chestnut Foundation’s goal is to “develop a blight-resistant American chestnut tree via scientific research and breeding, and to restore the tree to its native forests along the eastern United States. There are several test plots throughout the country looking for resistance to the blight. The chestnut below is from a Williston chestnut plot and is showing an infestation of Lecanium scale.
This was a photo I received from a neighbor noticing leaf curling in her viburnum due to aphids. Once the leaves are curled, it is tough to get in with a spray to control the pests, but the damage is more cosmetic than damaging.

If you are noticing problems, feel free to email pictures to ann.hazelrigg@uvm.edu. If you need to send in a sample, please contact me first so I know something is coming in since I am not in the lab every day.

Top: Eleven foot ‘live edge’ chestnut beam from an old barn in southern NH. Doug McLane.

Left: Viburnum aphid. Sand Davis.

Claussen’s Greenhouse offers an extensive selection of plants, including annuals, perennials, herbs, vegetables, chrysanthemums, poinsettias, spring bulbs, tropical houseplants and much more.

187 Main Street, Colchester, VT 05446  ~  (802) 878-2361  ~  WWW.CLAUSSENS.COM
VNLA News and Updates June 2020

Congratulations to all VNLA members for getting through the cold, wet and pandemic spring! Summer is here, and the state looks lush and glorious, even though we are in need of rain!

Legislative Update:

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFM) filed its adopted Vermont Hemp Rules with the Vermont Secretary of State on May 6, 2020. The Vermont Hemp Rules became effective May 21, 15 days after filing the adopted rule. These rules come in advance of the 2020 planting season.

The Vermont Hemp Rules set standards and expectations for record keeping, reporting, testing, and labeling. They also include provisions for disposal of non-compliant crops and products, inspections and enforcement. The rules are important to protect public health, safety, and welfare, and to support the Vermont brand and production of quality agricultural products. The Vermont Hemp Rules can be found here, https://agriculture.vermont.gov/sites/agriculture/files/documents/PHARM/hemp/Vermont_Hemp_Rules_effective_05_21_20.pdf.

“The Agency appreciates all the input from stakeholders over the past year,” said Cary Giguere, VAAFM Director of Public Health and Agriculture Resource Management. “The process of educating hemp registrants on how the rules apply to their operations is just beginning, and the Agency looks forward to this next phase.”

It is not too late to register to grow or process hemp crops or hemp products in 2020, but you must register with the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets. For more information about the Vermont Hemp Program, please visit: https://agriculture.vermont.gov/public-health-agricultural-resource-management-division/hemp-program.

If you have any questions about the new rules, please contact VAAFM’s Cannabis Quality Control and Policy Administrator, Stephanie Smith, at stephanie.smith@vermont.gov / 802-661-8051.

And if you would like a good summary of legislative activity concerning natural resources, consider joining the Vermont Woodlands Association. You can access their legislative updates from their website without being a member, by going to https://www.vermontwoodlands.org/resources/

COVID-19 News:

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has issued guidelines for agricultural workers, some of which may be applicable to VNLA work sites. The guidelines can be found at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-agricultural-workers.html. They emphasize the need for PPE, masks and social distancing, and they have some other helpful ideas. The CDC recommends that business owners and managers conduct a workplace assessment that includes health and safety hazards, especially those that pertain to the spread of infectious diseases.

They suggest grouping workers into cohorts, that is, try to arrange crews so that the people who work closely together on one day will work closely together on other days and will not mix with other similar groups. Other possibilities for maintaining social distance between employees can include staggered shifts, meals and breaks, and smaller crew sizes.

The State of Vermont issued new guidelines for nurseries on May 18th, and for Farmer’s Markets on May 28th. These can be found at https://accd.vermont.gov/content/stay-home-stay-safe-sector-specific-guidance. They continue to emphasize social distancing of at least 6 feet for both customers and employees, the use of masks and hand hygiene (sanitizer, soap and water, etc.). Nurseries and landscaping businesses can have up to 25% of approved fire safety occupancy or 1 customer per 200 square feet for a total of 10 staff and customers combined. The temporary occupancy limit must be posted. Cashless transactions are preferred, as is curbside pick-up. Clean and disinfect frequently, create airflow (which can be easy on some of the windy days we’ve been experiencing), check staff for fever and other signs of sickness, and designate a health officer for each shift. Three people can share a vehicle now. There are other more guidelines about health and safety that each business owner and manager should review in the Sector Specific Guidance section for Agriculture and Forestry and in the Additional Guidance for Greenhouses and Nurseries area.

Guidelines for Pick Your Own operations have been posted, too. They are similar to the CDC and State of Vermont material, and include specific details about container use. Eating while picking is not allowed.

These guidelines may change in the next few weeks, so please remember to check in to the ACCD website for updates.

Insect and Disease Updates:

In national industry news, a large number of plants infected with the potato disease *Ralstonia* were imported to greenhouses in 44 US states. Vermont did not receive any of...
these plants. A concerted and diligent effort by state agriculture departments and the US Department of Agriculture Animal Plant Health Inspection Service Plant Protection and Quarantine (USDA APHIS PPQ) personnel eliminated this threat in two months.

The tomato brown rugose fruit virus (ToBRFV) has not been eradicated, and please be on the alert for it as the summer progresses. It looks like a tomato or tobacco mosaic virus but appears in tomatoes that have a gene that prevents regular TMV's from becoming established. If you see symptoms that look like this please let me know. This disease was covered in the February issue of the VNLA newsletter.

The voracious lily leaf beetle, *Lilioceris lilii*, has been seen in some local nurseries. They have a bright red thorax and abdomen and black heads, legs and antennae. This insect is an invasive and was established in Montreal in the 1940's, where it happily stayed until it was brought to Massachusetts in the early 1990's. Both adults and larvae eat true lilies, in the genuses *Lilium* and *Fritillaria*. They will eat a few other host plants but they are most devastating to the true lilies.

The larvae have the endearing habit of placing fecal material on their backs so handpicking is possible but only for the hardy. Products derived from the Neem tree can be used to treat young larvae though re-applications must take place weekly or more often. There are a number of Neem oils registered in Vermont, such as Natria Neem Oil or Monterey 70% Neem Oil. Spinosad (a fungal-based insecticide) may work too, and it can be found in products such as Captain Jack's Deadbug Brew Ready to Use or Bull's Eye BioInsecticide and other brands. Research on biocontrols for lily leaf beetles is well advanced and they may be available for commercial purchase soon. Make sure that any product that you use is registered for use in VT. For more information on this pest please see [https://ag.umass.edu/greenhouse-floriculture/fact-sheets/lily-leaf-beetle](https://ag.umass.edu/greenhouse-floriculture/fact-sheets/lily-leaf-beetle).

In reference to hemp, the cannabis aphid, *Phorodon cannabis*, has been confirmed to be in Vermont (See February 2020 VNLA newsletter for more details on this pest). It can be treated using standard aphid removal techniques. If the infestation is small then simply remove any infested leaves. Make sure that your growing area is well aerated; humidity is a friend of pests. Biocontrols such as parasitic wasps and lacewings can be quite effective, especially in enclosed areas.

If you are shipping any hemp plants to California be advised that there is a European corn borer quarantine in that state and they require a phytosanitary certificate (available from your friendly VAAFM Plant Industry staff) stating that their quarantine requirements have been met. The California quarantine rules can be found at [https://pi.cdfa.ca.gov/pqm/manual/htm/311.htm](https://pi.cdfa.ca.gov/pqm/manual/htm/311.htm).

Any guesses on what these webs are from? They are not from spiders and they are not from fall webworms. It's the euonymus caterpillars, which is making itself felt in a select few areas across the state, including in Bethel and in the islands.

Take care and stay safe.
WE ARE LOOKING FOR THE NEXT LEADER OF OUR WILLISTON TEAM!

Why Gardener’s Supply?
- Growing company with both online and four garden centers
- 100% employee-owned, B-corp, heavily involved in the community
- Generous benefits package
- Diverse opportunities within the organization
- Flagship store serving both retail customers and the landscape community

What are we looking for in a Store Manager:
- Strong leader with 5+ years management experience
- Team builder who shares our values
- Strategic thinker who will help lead our team into the future
- Strong problem solving skills
- Excellent communication skills

We offer strong cultural values, competitive wages and outstanding benefits (including a tremendous discount!). Please go to our careers page at www.gardeners.com/careers for full job description and apply online!
Growers and the public are becoming more aware of the environmental value of attracting “good bugs”, like bees and lady beetles, into their gardens. In the 2018 Winter issue of “The Dirt”, we reported on some of our results using ‘flowering habitat hedges’ to attract beneficials. Some of these are important native pollinators for crops and others are natural enemies that feed on pests like aphids and spider mites. Some are both, acting as pest-fighting pollinators. Nurturing these beneficials by providing enticing habitat contributes to combating pest populations, provides a beautiful landscape and minimizes or eliminates the need for chemical pesticides. We work with growers statewide to establish habitat hedges to encourage beneficials. These hedges consist of a variety of annuals, including alyssum, coreopsis, blue cornflower, Indian blanket, cosmos, sunflowers and zinnias. The hedges provide a diversity of floral shapes, sizes and heights throughout the season. To truly appreciate the value of these hedges, growers should be able to recognize the beneficials visiting their flowers, and distinguish them from pests.

In a series we call “Our Un-Bee-lievable Beneficials”, we are highlighting particular natural enemies you are likely to see around the landscape. We provide descriptions of their life stages and what they do. In the last issue we focused on “The Sedulous Syrphid Fly”. For this issue we are featuring some persistent pest parasites, namely wasps and flies. We hope this series encourages you to go expand your un-bee-lievable habitat plantings in the future.

There are numerous families of parasitic wasps and flies. They all have unique life cycles and come in an assortment of shapes and sizes. The term ‘parasite’ often fills us with fear as we think of ticks and tapeworms. When we hear ‘wasp’ we think of the stinging ones. There is nothing to fear here with these parasites because many are relatively small (1/16” to 1” inch long) and pose no threat to humans. Parasites attack several pests, such as scales, aphids, whiteflies and caterpillars. Some parasitize their host from the inside (endoparasites), others from the outside (ectoparasites).

Some of the most important ones are parasitic wasps of aphids. These particular wasps only sting aphids, not humans or other animals. Some are reared in insectaries and sold by commercial biocontrol suppliers. Most are slender, black or brown in color and have a tiny waist (Fig. 1a). Others are more robust (Fig. 1b). Parasitic wasps of aphids have a diversity of host preferences. Many of these wasps are specialists meaning they only parasitize one or few particular host species. Others attack many species. That is why it is important to identify the species of aphids on your plants. When buying wasps from a supplier, you need to select the right wasp for the aphid you have.

Adult female wasps roam the landscape searching for aphids. Once located, the wasps select aphids in which to lay their eggs. The eggs hatch into larvae and feed on the aphid host from within killing the aphid as they develop. The larvae develop into pupae, transforming the aphid into a hardened “mummy” case. These mummies can be different shades of golden brown to black, depending on wasp species (Fig. 2a,b). After pupation is complete, the adult chews a hole to emerge and seek new aphids to attack. Wasp larvae in the Praon genus exit their host to pupae underneath the aphid (Fig. 2c). After finding a mate, some wasps, can lay up to 300 eggs over its three-week life span. There are several other parasitic wasps, such as Cotesia melanoscela, that parasitizes caterpillars such as gypsy moths. There are also minute parasites in the genus Trichogramma that lay their eggs inside the eggs of their host.
killing it before the pest has a chance to emerge.

Many species of flies are effective parasites, often in the Tachinidae family. Some of these parasite adults look like hairy houseflies, others may resemble bees. A well-known example is the winsome fly, *Istocheta aldrichi*, that attacks the dreaded Japanese beetle. This introduced and now established fly lays its eggs on the backs of adult beetles (Fig. 3). After the egg hatches, the larva penetrates into the beetle’s body to feed and then pupate.

In general, parasitic wasp and fly adults need to feed on nectars and pollen because most do not eat insects or plants during that stage (with a few exceptions). Many of these parasitic wasps and flies are attracted to the same plants as bee and butterfly pollinators. This summer, consider designating a space for a small habitat hedge and help protect bees and pest-fighting pollinators. Look closely and you may see these tiny parasites, especially on alyssum and small flowered herbs. In the next edition of “*Our Un-Bee-lievable Beneficials*” we will discuss the predatory bug, *Orius*. Stay tuned! And let us know if you see any of these beneficials in your gardens.

Fig. 2. Aphid mummies.

Fig. 3. Parasitic fly eggs on Japanese beetles.

Dr. Margaret Skinner is the UVM Extension Entomologist and Research Associate Professor. Cheryl Frank Sullivan is an Entomologist & PhD Candidate. Together, they provide extension outreach to growers and landscapers and conduct research on IPM focusing on biological control. Businesses interested in establishing a habitat hedge tailored to their commercial operation should contact Cheryl Frank Sullivan at cfrank@uvm.edu 802-656-5434. More information on Univ. of VT, Entomology Research Laboratory cab be found at [https://www.uvm.edu/~entlab/](https://www.uvm.edu/~entlab/).

This work is supported with funds from the VT Nursery & Landscape Association/Green Works, the USDA Crop Protection & Pest Management Program, National Institute of Food & Agriculture and Univ. of Vermont Extension. Photo credits: Fig. 1a: greenmethods.com; Fig.1b: biobestgroup.com; Fig.2c: wikipedia.org.
**Spirit of Place**  
*The Making of a New England Garden*  
By Bill Noble  

**About the Book:** How does an individual garden relate to the larger landscape? How does it connect to the natural and cultural environment? Does it evoke a sense of place?

In *Spirit of Place*, Bill Noble—a lifelong gardener, and the former director of preservation for the Garden Conservancy—helps gardeners answer these questions by sharing how they influenced the creation of his garden in Vermont. Throughout, Noble reveals that a garden is never created in a vacuum but is rather the outcome of an individual’s personal vision combined with historical and cultural forces. Sumptuously illustrated, this thoughtful look at the process of garden-making shares insights gleaned over a long career that will inspire you to create a garden rich in context, personal vision, and spirit.

“Delve into this beautiful book. You’ll come away sharing his passion for the beauty that gardens bring into our lives.” — Sigourney Weaver, environmentalist, actor, trustee of New York Botanical Garden

**About the Author:** For 25 years Bill Noble has worked as a garden design and professional in garden preservation. As Director of Preservation for the Garden Conservancy, he was instrumental in the preservation and restoration of dozens of gardens throughout the United States. The insights gained from the gardens and gardeners he has worked with are reflected in his own garden in Norwich, Vermont, which is included in the Smithsonian Institution’s Archive of American Gardens and has been featured in Martha Stewart Living, House & Garden, the New York Times, and Outstanding American Gardens.

Courtesy of: [www.timberpress.com](http://www.timberpress.com)

---

**Vermont Forest Health Report**  
*Insect and Disease Observations - May 2020*  
Provided by: VT Department of Forest, Parks & Recreation

This is a report worth reading and is filled with lots of interesting information including:

- Weather Recap for May compared to 2019
- News about the Asian Giant Hornets
- Funky Fungi
- All about Morels
- Hemlock Wooly Adelgid Update
- May Invasive Plant Phenology
- Invasive Species Update

Peonies: June Beauty Queens
By: Judith Irven, VCH; Photographs: Dick Conrad

A Designer’s Notebook

June is peony time!

With their massive blooms in shades of red, pink and white and yellow, peonies—one of the most beautiful and venerated garden plants—are taking center stage in all Vermont gardens. And, for a match made in heaven, try combining them with some slender blue flowers, like salvia, catmint or irises, that also bloom in June.

Across the Centuries: A Passion for Peonies

Over two thousand years ago the people of China started cultivating peonies as a flavoring for food. Then, during the elegant Tang dynasty (618-907) they experimented with crossing different species to obtain more beautiful blooms—the genesis of a worldwide passion for these glamorous flowers. Soon peony cultivation was also flourishing in Japan, eventually migrating to England and France in the eighteenth century.

Today: A Vast Array of Peonies for Gardeners Everywhere

There are actually over thirty different species of peonies—all members of the genus *Paeonia* and thus genetically related—native to the cold and temperate regions of Asia, Europe and western North America.

The majority are herbaceous perennials (meaning they will die back to the ground each winter but re-sprout every spring), but a few have woody stems (enabling them to remain above ground throughout the year).

And this vast genetic pool is the basis of all the beautiful cultivated varieties—or cultivars—we know today.

*Single peonies*, such as ‘Krinkled White’ have one or two whorls of broad over-lapping petals surrounding a central mass of yellow stamens. These are the sophisticates of the peony world.

*Semi double peonies*, like Coral Sunset, have three or four whorls of petals but the central mass of stamens is still easily visible.

*Double peonies*, such as the immensely popular ‘Sarah Bernhardt’, have sumptuous spherical flowers that are completely filled with numerous overlapping petals. Some blooms have more than a hundred petals!

*Japanese or Anemone form peonies*—like ‘Bowl of Beauty’—have one or more rows of large outer petals surrounding a mass of miniature petals, known as petaloids.

Back in 1923 the American Peony Society began awarding the society’s Gold Medal to exceptional peony cultivars, a practice that still continues annually.

Top: In each ‘Krinkled White’ peony flower, a ring of undulating white petals frames a mass of yellow stamens.

Middle: ‘Gala’ with its bright pink petals, is a diminutive plant, ideal for the front of the border.

Bottom: ‘Raspberry Sundae’ is a stunning double peony. The flowers first open pale yellow, but gradually mature to a sumptuous frothy pink.
Magnificent Itoh Peonies — A Gardener’s Dream Come True

Tree peonies, with their spectacular flowers and beautiful colors have long been coveted by gardeners everywhere. But typically their above-ground stems (where most of the buds that make next year’s flowers are produced) will not survive our harsh winters.

But ‘Itoh hybrid peonies’— created by hybridizing a herbaceous peony with a tree peony—combine the best features of each. Itoh peonies have enormous flowers up to eight inches across, with undulating petals encircling a froth of yellow stamens. The original cultivars were yellow, but today there are many beautiful colors including coral, red, pink and white, as well as their signature buttery yellow.

And, best of all, just as the herbaceous peonies finish flowering, the Itoh peonies burst into bloom, thus extending the peony season by almost three weeks.

The first flowers develop from terminal buds at the top of the stems and then, as these begin to fade, the side buds begin to bloom. In this way a single established plant can produce three dozen or more flowers.

Itoh peonies also create an elegant mound of finely divided leaves. Thus, even after flowering, they continue to shine at the front of the border.

The Amazing Story of the Itoh Hybrid Peonies

Itoh peonies began as a plant hybridizer’s dream—to cross a tree peony with a herbaceous peony to produce an offspring with the best features of both parents.

Many people had tried this over the years—without any success. One problem was, because the bloom times for the two types of peony are several weeks apart, successful cross-fertilization is difficult. Also—although tree and herbaceous peonies are both members of the huge genus *Paeonia*—genetically they are only distantly related, making it difficult to achieve viable progeny.

Dr. Toichi Itoh—a Japanese botanist quietly working in Tokyo surrounded by the incredible devastation of World War II—was totally consumed with this monumental hybridization challenge.

Finally in 1948 his dream came true. After thousands of meticulous attempts to dust tree peony pollen onto herbaceous peony pistils, a few seeds actually germinated.

Then tragically in 1956, and before his successful crosses had matured enough to produce their first flowers, Dr. Itoh passed away. So it fell to his family to nurture those very special plants, finally bringing them to flower in 1964. Eventually an American botanist, Louis Smirnow, received permission from Dr. Itoh’s widow to bring a few plants with huge buttery yellow flowers to the USA, naming them ‘Itoh hybrids’.

Inspired by this success, peony breeders everywhere were motivated to replicate Dr Itoh’s detailed techniques, leading to the new ‘intersectional hybrid’ classification characterized by huge blooms and luscious colors. Finally in 1996, the American Peony Society bestowed its coveted Gold Medal Award on the Itoh hybrid called ‘Garden Treasure’.

A Personal Story

At the 2002 VNLA Summer meeting I was chatting with Bill Countryman, renowned peony grower, and his wife Anne, whereupon he graciously invited Dick and me to visit his fabulous collection high up on a hillside in Northfield. Here he...
was growing not only every American Peony Society’s Gold Medal winner to date, but also all the early Itoh hybrids, which were still very much a rarity at that time.

As he drove us around his beloved peony fields in mid-August—when of course there was not a flower to be seen—he told us about each and every cultivar, and also recounted the incredible story of how the Itoh hybrids came to be. I was completely smitten! I decided to purchase a single root of ‘Garden Treasure’—for the astronomical price of $125.00!! Dick was absolutely flabbergasted that I would even consider spending that much money for a SINGLE root!!

Late summer is the perfect time to move peony roots. So I chose a sunny spot in my garden, enriched the soil with plenty of compost and carefully planted my new extravagance. Now, every year towards the end of June, just as the flowers of my herbaceous peonies are fading, both Dick and I eagerly await the moment when our Garden Treasure starts to bloom. It is by far the most beautiful plant in our entire garden, and it has more than lived up to the promises Bill made to me all those years ago.

Today Itoh hybrid roots are both readily available and the price has dropped significantly, making them excellent candidates for Vermont gardens.

A New Opportunity for Countryman’s Peony Farm

Tragically in June, 2005— and within days of a planned visit of the American Peony Society for their annual meeting—Bill suddenly died. Members of VNLA descended on his peony fields to tidy everything up for the big day, and the Peony Society indeed came to Northfield as planned.

But, without Bill’s continuing care, it would not be long before his famous peony fields were engulfed by weeds.

But this sad story has a happy ending....

Four years ago, Connecticut dwellers Dan and Ann Sivori decided to purchase Countryman Peony Farm and restore Bill’s legacy.

Their results are spectacular. Today the plants are again labelled and the fields almost weed free once more. And furthermore, on Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays between June 12 and June 30 you can visit Countryman Peony Farm in person. Check their Facebook page for more information.

Judith Irven and her husband Dick Conrad live in Goshen where together they nurture a large garden. Judith is a landscape designer and Vermont Certified Horticulturist. She also teaches Sustainable Home Landscaping for the Vermont Master Gardener program. She writes about her Vermont gardening life at www.northcountryreflections.com. You can reach her at judithirven@gmail.com. Dick is a landscape and garden photographer; you can see his pictures at www.northcountryimpressions.com.
Without at doubt, the past few months have separated those with tenacity and grit from those without. I want to share a story with all of my readers this month, one that makes me incredibly grateful to be a part of. It’s about the community of Landscape Ontario (LO) and how it has shone through the crisis of April and May that struck our profession at the worst possible time of year.

I am impossibly proud to be an LO member.

Not a week has gone by in the past two months that I haven’t been both grateful and impressed with the sincere dedication of the staff team, the volunteer COVID-19 Task Force, those allied with the industry, the garden communicators, the allied professional business coaches and many more.

There’s a long, long list of leaders who have stepped up amidst rapid and uncertain change. It’s an impressive and long list of entrepreneurs and volunteers who have come together to give dozens (if not hundreds) of hours dedicated to finding clarity on rapidly changing, complex and time-sensitive issues to support members.

Some researched tirelessly and posted resources, some ‘pulled strings’ to get answers from politicians and community leaders, some worked hard to reassure, others advised on next steps and creating new plans. Everyone simply dug in and leaned hard into the challenges we all faced.

Sir Winston Churchill once said “Never Let A Good Crisis Go To Waste”. He was referring to the unlikely trio alliance created between himself, Roosevelt and Stalin in February 1945 – when among other things, they agreed to collaborate to form the UN. Amidst a crisis, they came together to create opportunity.

In my opinion, Landscape Ontario has just showed the same leadership blueprint for stronger members and an improved professional community for the future. LO has demonstrated how to rally in a crisis, with humility, sincerity and patience.

If any of you ever doubted the value of a membership in LO before, I hope that you never will again. If I’m correct about this stellar leadership blueprint, then Tony Digiovanni (Executive Director) is our Winston. He’ll possibly be cross with me for saying so (because he is so humble), but every cause and every army has its leader. And Tony has truly led the collaboration and mutual improvement ethic, which has equipped and empowered our members to succeed as best as possible this spring. It’s his vision of collaboration and cooperation that mobilized an army.

In the midst of an unpredictably and rapidly changing business and health landscape, Tony mobilized the LO Leadership Team (welcome aboard Joe!) and the staff to swing into action swiftly and effectively. And in doing so, they have equipped us as members to do the same. AND, this has raised the profile of our profession with politicians and policy makers alike.

LO has been the broker of an unbelievable amount of valuable and important information at a time when we needed it the most. In an instant, LO is in the webinar business (shout out here with thanks to the lovely Keri McIvor!) The countless webinars are a blur. And we now have online training modules up and running as well.

Personally, I connected with the Peer Network members by hosting twice weekly ‘coffee chats’ on Zoom with up to 35 Peers at a time – and facilitated great mentors and resource people like LO President Dave Wright, Sally Harvey, LMN CEO Mark Bradley, Scott Wentworth, Frank Bourque, Task Force Chair Al White.

Our community has come together like never before. We kept moving forward even when we didn’t know what that really
looked like. Thank you LO. Thank you Outdoor Profession Entrepreneurs. We’ve GOT this.

My Thoughts on Safety Compliance Going Forward:

As we move through the various phases of COVID-19 restrictions and openings, there are challenges still ahead with respect to keeping the protocols in place for worker safety, team health and family protection: Ensuring that ‘Compliant’ doesn’t become ‘Complacent’.

Complacency is going to be tough to avoid. As the weather warms up, masks and gloves will become less and less manageable. As more and more people come outside, social distancing will become harder to ensure and enforce. Now that you have your policies and procedures in place I think the next challenge is to keep staff, your clients, sub-trades and suppliers engaged and compliant in the longer term.

We can all see and hear the risks that our ‘normal’ PPE protects us from, but we can’t ‘see’ the risk of COVID-19 unless we’re watching the news, or have loved ones amid outbreak situations at work or in LTC residences.

Please keep your eye on the prize: Compliance with all of your policies and procedures. Complacency can and will creep in...

it’s human nature to go back to the ‘old’ way. Heads up! Be ready!

ONWARDS!

About the Author: Jacki Hart is president of Consulting by Hart in Ontario, Canada. She is an entrepreneur, advisor, business consultant, and workshop facilitator with a career in the Green Industry spanning 35 years. Jacki is one of Canada’s first women to hold the North American Green Industry certificate for business management excellence. Jacki also manages the Prosperity Program and Peer to Peer Network for Landscape Ontario.

Jacki writes for other trade magazines and will be a regular contributor to our business column. CBH is a consulting firm that “passionately believes that entrepreneurial success depends on sustained forward momentum - across all areas of business - both the visible and the invisible. To learn more about CBH visit www.consultingbyhart.com.
New Member Profile:
TCE: Trudell Consulting Engineers

We asked new member Lucy Thayer of Trudell Consulting Engineers to introduce TCE via a member questionnaire we sent to her. Please meet Lucy Thayer/TCE below and we welcome them to the VNLA!

TCE [Trudell Consulting Engineers] is a multidisciplinary consulting firm with offices in St. Albans and Williston that specializes in civil engineering, landscape architecture, environmental services, surveying, and underground utility locating founded in 1975. Over the past 45 years, TCE has continued to evolve and adapt to the changing economy and challenges in an ever increasingly complex regulatory world.

We are proud to have been named “The 2020 Best Engineering Firm in Vermont” by Vermont Business Magazine Best of Business Awards. We help our clients achieve their goals and developing successful projects from the initial concept through to the final construction. TCE has always taken a different approach to site engineering by including a full-time landscape architect on staff throughout its history. This interdisciplinary collaboration gives our work something extra because we approach all of our projects holistically and reach out to our team to use our collective experience and knowledge to find the best solution. We understand the importance of coordination between planning and the ground construction, highlighted by our firm’s work with the nursery and landscape industry through our surveying and underground utility locating services.

When recently asked to become a member of VNLA, TCE’s landscape architect, Lucy Thayer, PLA, ASLA was excited at the chance to expand our outreach to her community and share her passion for horticulture and working landscapes. After drawing up the plans, Lucy loves to get out onsite with landscape professionals to see the project come to life. She has an eye for design and with her horticultural background, Lucy is able to build comprehensive plans and communicate with landscape contractors, nurseries, and homeowners alike.

Our team thrives on solving tough problems. Lucy did this recently with she created detailed grading plans for some tough sites. One site is on a steep hill on a busy urban street that requires careful balance of slope, public accessibility, and functionality to meet the client needs; while other site requires sensitivity of contaminated soils and stormwater. Both sites required attention to detail and understanding of the big picture to bring all the various considerations into a successful plan, and she did just that.

Becoming a member of the VNLA at this stage in Lucy’s career is a great feeling, she was the 2008 Vermont Technical College recipient of the VNLA Student Merit award and is excited to be able to contribute to the field in a professional capacity and work with a bunch of engineers who appreciate the beauty that comes from a well designed project.
China Snow® Tree Lilac: Syringa reticulata subsp. pekinensis ‘Morton’
by Mark Dwyer, Landscape Prescriptions MD

It’s rare to have a woody tree that can offer so much lengthy, seasonal interest in the landscape. The China Snow® tree lilac (Syringa reticulata subsp. pekinensis ‘Morton’) is such a tree with significant ornamental contributions of gorgeous late spring flowers and very ornamental, copper-colored, exfoliating bark. Toughness, consistent habit and applicability in a wide range of landscape situations, including residential use, parks, parkways, wide medians and under utility lines, will continue to make this selection more popular and available in the coming years. Some sources use the older, but still very common, nomenclature of Syringa pekinensis and common names include Chinese lilac, Peking lilac and Pekin lilac.

With Japanese tree lilac (Syringa reticulata) selections having their own run with popularity, this selection, a Chicagoland Grows Introduction, really has become the “poster child” for the value and impact of ornamental bark in our gardens, parks and streetscapes. This selection is thought to have a finer texture than Syringa reticulata and certainly more impactful ornamental bark and winter interest. China Snow® has also won an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.

This variety was selected from seed-started collections at the Morton Arboretum (Lisle, IL). The original seed has an interesting and notable history with original collection for the Arnold Arboretum by Joseph Rock in Gansu Province, China in 1926. Some of that seed arrived at the Morton Arboretum later that year and the parent tree of China Snow® is now 45’ tall and 40’ wide. The heart-shaped, opposite leaves offer a dark green, semi-gloss contribution in the summer months and the variable fall color is typically a respectable yellow. The creamy white, fragrant flowers (on 3-6” panicles) in June are remarkable and consistently appear every year and will last for 2-3 weeks with decent coloration. Fading flowers will become grass-green, loose capsules that later transition to tan and add persistent interest over the winter months. The cinnamon-colored, exfoliating bark is truly amazing with younger stems showing more of a smooth glossiness and older trunk and stem portions really contributing significant peels and flakes. Intensity of exfoliation seems to certainly increase with age but also has some variability between specimens of a similar size and age. Regardless, the contribution of ornamental bark is significant and beautiful and looks great 365 days of the year. This member of the Oleacea (olive) family is certainly hardy in zones 5-7 although some more recent sources are listing...
hardiness from zones 4b-7b. With a moderate growth rate, this selection will become a medium sized tree with an average height of 25’ and width of 20’ after 20 years. Offered as either single-stemmed or multi-stemmed specimens, the form is upright and spreading with a more rounded form with advancing age. Most pruning should be accomplished after flowering as is typical with the genus. Full sun situations are ideal although partial sun will be tolerated but will create a looser, more open form with less flowering. With the heavy contribution of ornamental bark throughout the season (particularly in winter of course), low branched specimens are fairly common. Dr. Jim Ault of the Chicago Botanic Garden makes the comment in terms of tree placement for the appreciation of the bark...“which is especially notable where the tree can be backlit in the winter sun.”

China Snow® tree lilac has no serious insect or disease problems and has some resistance to bacterial blight, powdery mildew, scale insects and lilac borers. There is susceptibility, however, to some leaf spots, wilt and ring spot virus. Open areas with better air circulation help with possible foliage problems although there is an inherent and notable mildew resistance compared to some other Syringa species. Deer don’t seem very interested in nibbling on this plant although butterflies, hummingbirds, bees and other pollinators enjoy the showy bloom period as well. Moderately tolerant of clay soils, dry soils and drought, this selection is not picky about pH and will accept both acidic and alkaline conditions. However, good drainage is absolutely vital. Overly wet or poorly drained soils will be problematic for this selection and affect health and longevity. The ideal planting space for this tree would include organically rich, slightly acidic soils with excellent drainage. There are some additional varieties of Syringa reticulata subsp. pekinensis to consider for some differences in traits described above for China Snow®. All of these selections maintain the wonderful ornamental bark. One of the most popular is Beijing Gold® (‘Zhang Zhiming’) which features conspicuously golden yellow flowers and a mature height around 20’ tall. Great Wall™ (‘WFH2’) has more upward sweeping branches which creates a narrow form with only a 12-15’ width at a height of 20-25’. Lastly, Summer Charm® (‘DTR 124’) was introduced by Willett Wandell (IL) and is known for a slightly finer foliage texture, uniformity of habit and perhaps a slightly increased hardiness.
The VNLA/Green Works mission is to support and strengthen the horticulture industry of Vermont by creating greater awareness of the benefits of landscaping and promoting the professional services and products of our members.