

# THE DIRT

*The VNLA Quarterly Newsletter*

*Volume 37, Issue 3*

Summer



Meeting



2011

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In the wake of Hurricane Irene, two words have been haunting my writing desk – “adaptability” and “resilience”. Both words describe our ability to change ourselves to fit a change in our environment, or to bounce back from a blow. Some changes are larger than others, but the ability remains the same. Several of our members whose businesses are located along rivers were affected by the storm – greenhouses were flooded, fields of mums floated away, and property was ruined. I was glued to photos and videos of the damage, which was simultaneously stunning and heart-breaking – and I empathized with their loss in the pit of my stomach. I can only imagine the amount of hard work that went into the construction and propagation of their dreams, wiped out in a few short hours. Yet instead of seeing hopelessness in the face of such destruction, I’ve heard stories of hundreds of volunteers lending a hand to rebuild what was lost, of donations of all kinds being made, and of enormous courage in the face of change.



“Adaptability” keeps coming up for me – not just in the context of disasters, but on a smaller more individual scale. Just because we bounce, doesn’t mean we land in the same place. Sometimes it’s necessary to change ourselves, whether it’s our behavior or our systems, to keep moving forward. While listening to Richard Gallagher give his presentation at the Summer Meeting about customer service skills, I had an “ah-ha” moment. First I had the mortifying realization that despite being a “nice person” I had been saying *all* the wrong things to my customers during difficult situations this year. Then I felt a bit less horrible when he explained that saying the right thing runs counter to human nature, and that other members seated around me had “run-off-the-rails” experiences with their clients – where one moment everything was fine and then it wasn’t. So I accepted the fact that effective customer service is a science, my skills are in need of a tune-up, and it was time to read a book or two. It was empowering to remember that I can alter my mind-set to steer my reactions towards my customers, and that by utilizing some specific techniques I could breathe some enthusiasm back into one of the more difficult parts of my job.

I’m in the “cup is half-full” and “humanity is basically good” camp, but sometimes I get tired and slip into negativity. I have to consciously remind myself to think and act positively – an effort that has rewards for both me and the people around me. We need to keep learning, which is often painful and opposite to our human complacency instinct. Remaining active, both physically, mentally and socially helps us build our resilience and be prepared for what gets thrown at us – whether it’s fluctuations in the economy, changes in our business, growing children, or a storm of the century. I hope that you find the strength to adapt to whatever challenge is on your plate today, and that you ask your friends and neighbors for help. Together we are stronger.

*Rebecca Lindenmeyr, Green Works/VNLA President*



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Kristina at the Green  
Works Office -  
888.518.6484



## Top 10 Reasons to Renew your Membership for 2012!

1. **Meet other people** who have the answers to your critical business issues (or at least share the same strange obsession for plants that you do).
2. **Get fresh ideas** at our next Annual or Twilight Meeting that will help increase your revenue by improving your product and performance (usually the scenic views and food are darn good too).
3. **Receive training** specific to your profession to keep you up to date and promote your growth (yep, nothing like getting your hands dirty to make an idea sink in).
4. **Establish and maintain your credibility** by being a member and a VT Certified Horticulturalist; also gain credits towards affiliate certifications (stickers are important, really).
5. **Gain exposure for your business** through Green Works' website, press releases, and other marketing efforts (gives you more Google power).
6. **Be recognized** through one of our many Awards Programs ("Don't worry when you are not recognized, but strive to be worthy of recognition." Abraham Lincoln. And remember your odds of winning are *waaaay* better than the lottery).
7. **Stay informed** on upcoming trends, invasive pests, and legislative issues, and support research projects that lead to improved practices and products (because like it or not, change happens).
8. **Experience creative camaraderie** by participating in the Vermont Flower Show – the only cooperative flower show of its kind (plus it's a great workout and it smells awesome).
9. **Help promote the industry to the public** since a greater awareness of plants and landscape products and services in VT will benefit all members (a rising tide lifts all boats); and
10. **Support each other** and be part of something bigger than yourself!

*Courtesy of Rebecca Lindenmeyr, Green Works President  
(inspired by David Letterman)*

## New Green Works Member

### Green Stripes Landscaping

Matthew Abair  
194 Metayer Court  
Waterbury Center, VT 05677  
802-793-8885  
greenstripeslandscaping@comcast.net  
www.greenstripeslandscaping.com  
Category: Landscape Design/Build, Landscape Install  
Maintenance, Turf Care, Stonework  
Active Member

### Open Earth Landscaping

Jay Spaulding  
115 Jay Bird Lane  
Swanton, VT 05488  
802-868-9961  
jay@openearthlandscaping.com  
www.openearthlandscaping.com  
Category: Landscape Design, Landscape Install  
Maintenance, Stonework  
Active Member

### S and S Associates

Timothy Sands  
1495 Washington Street  
E. Bridgewater, MA 02333  
800-631-7792  
twsands@earthlink.net  
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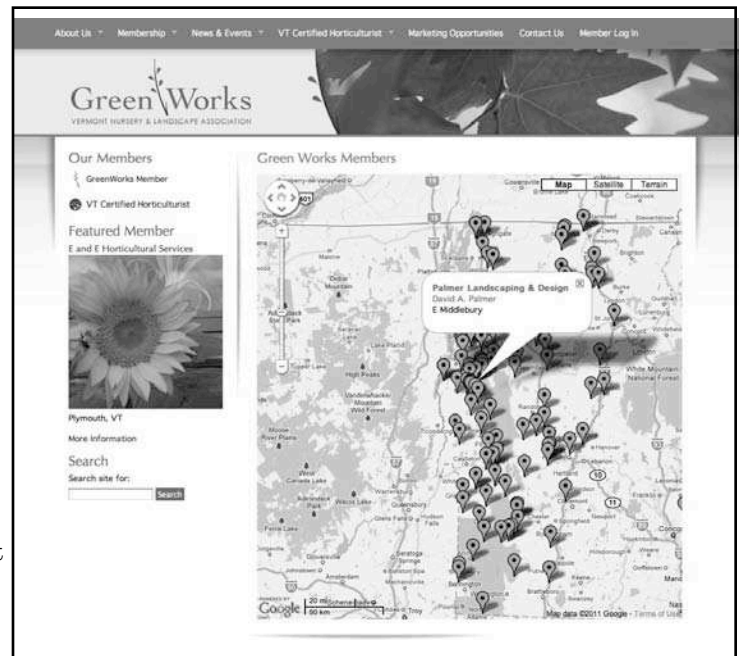
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# The Green Works Website has a new feature!

We now have a membership map where everyone is represented by a linkable green icon to their membership listing. Please visit: <http://greenworksvermont.org/members-map/> to check it out.

Please review your location on the map because your listing is tied to how “google” represents your location. If you are showing up in the wrong location please let Kristina in the office know and we will correct it. If you do not want to appear on the map let us know and we can remove your appearance on the map.

Also, as the season begins to wind down it is a good time to visit the website to update your profile listing and add photos to your profile page. If you need assistance with this please contact Kristina in the office.



## industry awards program - 2011 - why you should enter!

By now Green Works members should have received their Industry Awards brochure and application in the mail. This year's awards have been altered to encourage greater participation among members. Most significantly we've changed the categories to include Residential Landscaping, Small Scale and Residential Landscaping Large Scale. We understand that many of our members design and install components of a landscape and not an entire lot or property. There should now be a category for just about everyone who works in the industry!

The Industry Awards Program is a great way to portfolio your work. The process of putting together the photos and descriptions and answering the application questions will help you put your work in focus and make it a presentable marketing piece to gain future work. It's also an opportunity to get some feedback on your work from the panel of judges. If your project is selected as a finalist, there is a great deal of exposure at all Green Works events and at all Green Works events that are open to the public such as the Flower Show. We continue to work on more ways to gain media exposure for our winners and believe this program has a lot of public interest. Meanwhile, finalists can also market their winning status in their own marketing material.

Another reason to enter the Awards is for the sheer interest in helping to generate interest in fine work, well done. We are only as good as we want to be and the Awards help inspire, motivate and educate other members. It's good to talk about our work and acknowledge exceptional projects.

If you have any questions about the Awards Program or would like to request a brochure and application, please call the Green Works office today.

*Ed Burke, Industry Awards Committee Chair*

## Participate in the Green Works 2011 Industry Awards Program



Scope out your projects and  
take lots of photos!

New categories! Entry deadline is  
December 30, 2011.

Entry forms are available on-line.

# hurricane irene - the recovery process

August 28, 2011 will be a date that all of us will not soon forget. Hurricane Irene swept through the state of Vermont and left behind a path of devastating destruction. Hurricane Irene touched each and every Vermonter in some way. So many of our families, friends, and businesses were affected and continue to deal with the aftermath. The stories and photos truly seem endless. It will take time, patience, and money to rebuild. But one thing is for sure, Vermonters are tenacious and generous and although the recovery process seems daunting and slow, Hurricane Irene will eventually become something that happened in the past.

Many of our members were affected by the destruction of Hurricane Irene and are putting the pieces back together and rebuilding their businesses. One such member was Allen Bros. Farms in Westminster, VT. Allen Bros. Farms was the location for our Summer Meeting and Trade Show, held on September 14, 2011. They suffered devastating losses of their store, greenhouses, crops, and equipment. It is hard to fathom but the good news is they have begun construction on a new store and are working hard to recover.

Homestead Landscaping, located in Bondville, VT suffered over \$60,000 in damage that day and has also worked hard to clean up, recover, and rebuild. Pembroke Landscaping in N. Bennington also suffered substantial losses that day and is continuing to deal with the aftermath of cleanup and rebuilding. As Allen Bros., Homestead, and Pembroke Landscaping, as well as many of our other members continue the process of recovering from Hurricane Irene please know that you can count on your Association and fellow members to help in any way we can. We will all need to work together in small and large ways to help those in need in the future.

Following is a list of resources and places to seek help:

**Farmers Should Report Loss to USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA):** Vermont farmers of all types, sizes and management methods, both organic and conventional—dairy, vegetable, livestock, orchard, crop, maple, diversified—who sustained damage from tropical storm Irene are urged to contact their county USDA office whether or not they have participated in USDA programs in the past and whether or not they carry crop insurance. FSA also has a number of financial programs to assist farmers in times of disaster.

**USDA county offices** are located in the following communities:

Brattleboro: 802-295-7942	Newport: 802-334-6090	St. Johnsbury: 802-748-2641
Middlebury: 802-388-6748	Rutland: 802-775-8969	Williston: 802-865-7895
Morrisville: 802-888-4935	St. Albans: 802-527-1296	White River Jct.: 802-295-7942

**Farmers Can Apply for Funds through the Vermont Farm Disaster Relief Fund:** Vermont Community Foundation and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture have worked together to set up the Vermont Farm Disaster Relief. The VT Farm Disaster Relief Fund provides grants to farmers for flood related issues. The grants can be up to \$10,000 and



*Above: Homestead Landscaping - Bondville, VT*



*Allen Bros. Farm Greenhouse (above); field crops below*



*continued on page 7*

the turnaround time is quick. For more details, contact the Vermont Farm Disaster Relief Fund at (802) 388-3398.

**Northeast Organic Farming Association of VT Farmer Emergency Fund:** This fund is currently providing grants and zero interest loans to certified organic farmers impacted by Irene. For more information on how to apply contact NOFA-VT at 802-434-4122

**Vermont Farm Fund Emergency Loan Program:** Established by Pete's Green and The Center for an Agricultural Economy this zero interest revolving loan program for farmers in need. For more information visit <http://hardwickagriculture.org/programs.html>

**Low Interest Loans for Farmers:** VEDA has allocated up to \$10 million in low-interest loans that will be made available to businesses and farms hurt by Hurricane Irene. <http://www.veda.org/>

**Farm First** offers no cost assistance to help farmers and their families find solutions to immediate personal and family issues and concerns. Call 877-493-6216

**Flooded Crops Information:** The FDA considers crops where the edible portion has come in contact with flood waters to be adulterated and not to be sold for human

consumption. <http://content.govdelivery.com/bulletins/gd/USDAO-124d37>

**Unemployment Information:** Do you have farm workers that have been laid off as a result of Irene? UVM Extension has put this helpful information sheet together to address this. Visit <http://www.uvm.edu/extension/> for more information.

**UVM Extension** has compiled a list of resources that you may find helpful. Visit <http://www.uvm.edu/extension/> for a complete list.

**Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont** has information for both producers and farmers. <http://nofavt.org/flood>

**Connect to Resources:** #VTResponse was set up by Sarah Waterman and the Reality Venture Capital team has to bridge the communication gap between volunteers and those in need, to help Vermonters help Vermonters. <http://vtresponse.wordpress.com/>

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## The Vermont Community Foundation: VT Farm Disaster Relief Fund Awards

On October 17, 2011 the Vermont Community Foundation and the Vermont Agency of Agriculture announced that the Vermont Farm Disaster Relief Fund has awarded \$237,500 to 49 farmers affected by Tropical Storm Irene in the fund's second grant round. To date, the grant committee has received 159 applications and a total of 101 farmers have received grants in excess of \$540,000. The committee is currently reviewing its third round of applications. As of October 13, total contributions received or pledged to the fund exceeded \$1.25 million.

*"The storm may be over but the challenges continue for our Vermont farmers," said Chuck Ross, secretary of the Vermont Agency of Agriculture. "The Vermont Community Foundation has created unique opportunities for people within and outside Vermont's borders to contribute to the Vermont Farm Disaster Relief Fund, and as the support continues with compassion and force, our ability to connect resources to farm needs remains strong."*

"Over the last six weeks, we've learned a lot from farmers about their immediate needs as well as the challenges they may start to face over the coming months," said Ryan Torres, philanthropic advisor at the Vermont Community Foundation. "As a fund, we're working to balance individual grants to affected farms as quickly as possible while also preparing to support Vermont's farming communities through the winter and spring, as new needs arise."

The grant committee includes representatives from the

Vermont Community Foundation, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, NOFA Vermont, Vermont Farm Bureau, Rural Vermont, Rutland Area Farm and Food Link, and University of Vermont Extension. Grant decisions are based on a number of factors, including total losses and overall need.

The grants, which fund up to \$10,000 per farm, will help farmers replace infrastructure, seed, feed, livestock, supplies, and equipment lost as a result of the storm, to the extent the losses were not covered by insurance or other sources of income. The grants can also be used to help pay outstanding bills such as farm mortgage costs, land lease payments, or animal feed bills.

According to the Agency of Agriculture, a rough estimate of farmland impacted by Irene exceeds 20,000 acres; a conservative estimate of crop losses and crop land damage needing repair exceeds \$10 million dollars.

Those interested in learning more about the fund or making a contribution can visit [www.vtfloodresponse.org](http://www.vtfloodresponse.org).

**Contacts:** *Stuart Comstock-Gay, The Vermont Community Foundation, 802-388-3355 ext. 285; Koi Boynton, Vermont Agency of Agriculture, 802-249-6647.*

*In September, Green Works donated \$1,369 to the VT Farm Disaster Relief Fund courtesy of our Summer Meeting auction participants.*





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# with deep sadness

It is with deep sadness that we share the news that Denyse Conant passed away on October 7, 2011. Denyse is the beloved wife and partner of Chris Conant of Claussen's Florist & Greenhouse. Our thoughts and sympathies are with Chris and their family and friends. Below is a re-print of Denyse's obituary. Denyse was an amazing woman. Together with her husband Chris, they have supported our industry and this Association tirelessly. Denyse will be greatly missed.



Denyse M. (Dulude) Conant, 53, died peacefully on Friday, Oct. 7, 2011, in The Vermont Respite House surrounded by her family, following a long battle with cancer. Denyse was born in St. Albans on Dec. 3, 1957, the daughter of Philip Dulude and Beatrice Desranleau. Denyse grew up in Alburgh, spending most of her childhood around her father's gas station with her seven brothers and sisters. She graduated from Champlain College, and married the love of her life, Christopher Conant, at Holy Cross Church on Sept. 26, 1981. Denyse was employed by IBM of Essex for over 12 years. She spent much of her adult life with her loving husband as business manager of Claussen's Florist & Greenhouse in Colchester, where they raised their three beautiful children.

Denyse, a loving, caring and compassionate wife, mother, aunt, and friend, was known for her passion for life, her love of her family, and her close friendships. She loved being outside, especially spending time at her camp on Lake Iroquois water-skiing and kayaking. She was an avid gardener and enjoyed tennis. She enjoyed her time at Siesta Key Beach in Sarasota, Fla., with the many friends who journeyed there with her. Denyse loved children. Her passion for the care of children in the Colchester community was evident through her volunteer efforts in the Colchester Parks and Recreation Program as a Board member, in the Colchester Reproductive Board, and in the many teams she coached. Later she became an active volunteer at the Lund Family Center and she was recognized for her volunteer efforts there.

Denyse was passionate about building and maintaining family, and her priority was keeping her extended family

connected. She was a gracious and lively hostess, welcoming any number of friends and family at any time in to her homes. Denyse leaves her husband, Christopher Conant and three loving children, Jessica, Alexandria, and Nathan. She is survived by her special aunts, Louise Wawzyniak and Germaine McDougall; her siblings and their families, Diane Dulude; Nick and Nicole Olmstead, Rowan; Mike and Lindsey Olmstead, Geneviève; Daniel and Bonnie Dulude, Matt and Ryan; Donna Dulude and Lloyd Boston, Caroline; Deborah and Rory Martin, Aurora and Devlyn; David and Nancy Dulude, Courtney and Brady; Damien and Kelly Dulude, Fiona; Daphne Dulude, Laurel and Lily; plus a number of cousins. She also leaves her mother-in-law, Gloria Conant, and Chris's extended family, Mary Lynn and Terry Riggs; Liza and James MacAuley, Maeve and Elsie Mae; Tyler and Jensen Riggs, Magnus and Josie; Will and Eleanor Riggs; Sally Conant; Courtney and Steve Boutin, Addie, Lily and Bella; Katie and Will Lawlor, Avery, Willy; Molly Turpin; David and Deb Conant; Hannah and Matt Dransfield, Lev; Ransom Conant and Alison Kosakowski; Emily and Drew Donovan, Zell; Gillian and Travis Rohlin; Kim and Jo-Anne Conant; Chelsea Conant; Sam Conant; Jay and Patti Conant; Corey and Meghan Conant; Kyle Conant. She was predeceased by her parents, Philip Dulude and Beatrice Desranleau Wakefield; her uncle, Henry Wawzyniak; and her father-in-law, Ransom Conant.

A special thanks goes out to those who cared for Denyse over the last several years, especially Dr. Paul Unger and the staff at the Vermont Center for Cancer Medicine & Blood Disorders; Dr. Paul and Lori Hayes at Champlain Chiropractic Services; all of the wonderful doctors and staff at Fletcher Allen; and Melanie and the staff at Visiting Nurses Association and the Vermont Respite House. Contributions may be made to the Lund Family Center, c/o Development (Denyse M. Conant), 76 Glen Road, Burlington, VT 05401, or to the Colchester Parks and Recreation Department, c/o Denyse M. Conant Scholarship Fund, P.O. Box 55, Colchester, VT 05446.

# green works Summer Programming Highlights

## Summer Meeting

Summer is becoming a distant memory but unfortunately Hurricane Irene will not let us forget this season. Our original hosts, Allen Brothers Farms, was hard hit by the hurricane and we were unable to hold our meeting as scheduled. We were able to quickly change venues and on September 14, 2011 approximately 85 attendees and exhibitors took part in the Summer Meeting held at Shelburne Farms in Shelburne, VT. It was a beautiful, end-of-summer day. We appreciate all who attended and were able to accommodate the change in venue.

The day's events included two presentations by our keynote speaker Richard Gallagher, communications expert and noted author. Richard is with Point of Contact Group, Ithaca, NY. Richard gave two interactive and extremely information presentations. The first presentation - *"Great Customer Connections"* provided some excellent advice and tips on how to get the best out of your customers. The second presentation was entitled: *"Strength-Based Coaching: How to Tell Your Employees Anything."* Again, this presentation was interactive and provided useful insight on how to enhance relationships with employees. For those of you who were not able to attend, you can find a reprint of the handouts Richard provided on pages 20-21. You can also visit his website: [www.pointofcontactgroup.com](http://www.pointofcontactgroup.com) for more information about Richard and his books. We hope to have Richard back for future presentations.

Tours of the market garden and the garden restoration project at Shelburne Farms were also on the day's agenda and we could not have asked for a nicer day to walk the grounds. Jon Turmel, VT State Entomologist, and Tim Schmalz, VT State Pathologist both gave presentations and updates on the insects and diseases that plagued Vermont this past season.

After lunch was over we held our annual summer auction. We received some excellent donations from exhibitors and attendees. Thank you to David Loysen, auctioneer extraordinaire, who set the stage for a successful auction. Thanks to everyone who participated!! We raised \$1,369 and donated all the proceeds to the Vermont Community Foundation's Vermont Farm Disaster Relief Fund.

## Summer Twilight Meetings

We held three Summer Twilight Meetings with the first one being held on June 19, 2011. Dr. Norman Pellett led a native tree and shrub identification walk through at the Birds of Vermont Museum woodland and meadows. A plus was also viewing some 500 carved birds at the Museum.

The second twilight of the season was held on July 27, 2011. Approximately 25 people turned out for a guided tour of the four phase, \$1.5 million dollar Formal Gardens Restoration Project at Shelburne Farms. Julie Eldridge Edwards, curator of collections, led the tour. It was a gorgeous summer evening. We plan to return there next summer as the project is on-going.



*Shelburne Farms Garden Restoration Project Tour*

The third twilight of the summer was hosted by Leonard Perry and Brian Vaughan who led a tour at the UVM Horticultural Farm of the current perennial collection. Dr. Perry also spoke about some of the latest perennials he has on trial as well as discussed his latest results on current research projects.

## Urban Forestry Meeting

In July we partnered with the VT Urban Forestry & Community Department and sponsored the workshop "Tree Establishment in Urban and Difficult Sites." This workshop was led by Dr. Nina Bassuk and Peter Trowbridge from Cornell University. The workshop was held in Rutland and was well attended.

## Montreal Botanic Garden Bus Tour

On September 19 a full bus headed to the Montreal Botanic Garden for a stunning tour of the gardens. This tour is timed to coincide with the Chinese lantern display. This display consists of hundreds of hand-made silk lanterns (lit up at night). Lanterns are strung along walks - some are floating in the pond while others are over 10' high. This year's theme was "The First Emperor". If you missed the bus this year there is always next September!

*Thank you to all who were able to participate in our summer programming offerings.*



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# a place in mind

by Judy Chaves

It was a fluke east wind that took the box elder down, an irrational burst that sent rain in through windows we normally never have to close, and seared the night sky with lightning. I was downstairs wrestling windows shut when the sound of it started: a high-pitched crackling that rapidly grew into a roar larger than anything imaginable and ended—while I raced upstairs screaming my husband's name, for Craig was in the addition, not three feet from the tree—in a final pounding like the heavens themselves slamming to earth. The two of us, shaking, stood at the window, trying to see with each flicker of lightning what lay below. The entire tree had come down, not a branch of it—thanks to the fluke wind—touching the house. All that remained upright was a jagged stump, its rotted center nearly hollow.

We had known all along we were pressing our luck. Box elders aren't supposed to last more than 30, 40 years, and this one had been approaching 50 some 18 years ago when we built the addition, limiting the addition's size, in fact, so the box elder could remain. And for 18 years we pampered that tree, fertilizing it, cabling its upper branches for support. Say what you will about the lowly box elder—weed tree, a species to plant when nothing else will do—but for 18 years that tree did thrive, a wide-branching beauty 15 feet in circumference and some 50 feet tall, providing privacy, shade, and coolness for us, and shelter for all manner of creatures. And now, in a matter of seconds, it was down.

I initially dealt with the loss by doing research: What would it take to replace the box elder? "\$5000," a landscaper told me, "will get you a tree of a decent size," though no species seemed ideal (slow-growing would give us little shade; fast-growing would provide shade but present the same risk as the box elder) and there'd be no guarantee of survival whatever we planted. \$4000 for retractable awnings that would limit the view, make the house look like a funeral parlor, but provide year-round shade. \$3000 (after tax rebates) for honeycomb shades that, to my eye, looked dreadful, but would provide privacy and hold in the heat when we wanted it and keep it out when we didn't, to such an extent, if you believed the salesman, that we'd actually be *glad* we had a reason to install them.

Each possible "replacement" with its blatant inadequacies only exacerbated our loss by making it increasingly clear that privacy, coolness, and shade were far from all we were missing. And so for weeks we did nothing. We let the tree lie there. Squirrels and chipmunks, chickadees and nuthatches ran along its trunk, hid in its branches, making me wonder if they, too, had slipped into a state of denial. I would wake in the morning, look out the window and, like a kick to the gut, remember—and not want to get up. Pulling

into the driveway, I'd be struck, again, by the lack of welcoming branches—and not want this to be my house. We went on vacation and something made me remember—and for a moment I actually believed *there was no point in going home*.

We stopped sitting outside. There was no longer a sense of enclosure, of coziness, of mystery in what lay beyond. Hosta and ferns that had thrived in the shade were now yellowed and dry, caricatures of how Craig and I were feeling. Our yard had become a foreign place, flat and vapid as a newly-developed site. Even the addition had become something different, something diminished: a bland, two-storey box.

I kept thinking of the sound the tree had made when it had fallen—that high-pitched crackling—and began to recognize it as the sound of something vital being ripped from my inside.

"Your box elder was majestic," said a friend, "and created the atmosphere of an old country house." Maybe it was only in its 60s, maybe it was only a box elder, but our tree had the dignified air of an oak of similar size. It lent permanence to our undertakings; serenity, assurance. Waking in the tree's presence, dining beneath its canopy, reading in its shade, toasting dear friends who had just gotten married with its gnarled, gray trunk as witness, we had a context for all we did, a context of time as far-reaching—as seemingly forever—as the great encircling arc of its branches.

What would it take to replace the box elder? Someone recently gave me the only accurate answer to that question: "Do you have 100 years?" If the loss of the tree has brought anything to light, it is that we do not.

So as we awaken now with the full morning sun in our faces, as the chickadees find new perches in the nearby shrubs, as we await the twining of wisteria up the newly-built pergola, the question we will be answering in the coming years is not, then, what it would take to replace the box elder, but who we are without it.

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# news from the U

Plans are to continue these, with an online survey of master gardeners. Some highlights so far are that over half surveyed had a fruit or vegetable garden this past year, with a few more adding one this year. For those that didn't garden, having space to garden was a main deterrent, other reasons ranking somewhat similar. For those that did edible gardening, virtually all grew vegetables and about 2/3 had fruits. Top vegetables grown were tomatoes, herbs, and beans (in order). The top fruits noted so far by respondents were raspberries and blueberries, followed by apples and grapes, and then strawberries. Watch for more results on my website ([perrysperennials.info](http://perrysperennials.info)) as they are compiled.



In my own research, I'm beginning field trials in zone 4a this year of coneflower (Echinacea), with over 6 dozen easily found currently in catalogs. I've expanded by field coralbells (Heuchera) trials now to 92 and this is by no means complete, but hopefully representative and including many common and new ones. Top performers of the ones I had in ground last winter and this summer, were Dark Secret (my favorite) with very dark, glossy and ruffled foliage; and Mocha which as of this writing is one of the largest with many flower stalks.

There are about 80 other new or relatively new perennial introductions I'll have in the field for trial this fall from over 8 international firms. In controlled freezing studies, I'll begin with coneflowers (similar to the last couple years with coralbells) with 2 selections to be frozen both in mid and late winter to test for hardiness. I also hope to look at both a dianthus and foamflower for deacclimation. The past couple years I've examined the number of days in midwinter at warm (room) temperature to unhardened perennials. This year I plan to look at number of hours per day needed for unhardening-- situations similar to warm spells in overwintering greenhouses. For instance, for the sensitive Becky Shasta Daisy, only 3 warm days were sufficient for them to lose hardiness, not regained even putting back cold (40F) at night. Watch my website under the research link for more on these studies.

One of our newest PSS grads at UVM, Annie White (working with me on a PhD) now has an additional sideline with the distribution worldwide recently to over 23,000 growers of a new bi-monthly e-newsletter. This is one of the latest such newsletters distributed by Ball Horticulture based out of West Chicago-- one of the most established greenhouse and floriculture firms in the U.S. and now one of the top such firms internationally.

The focus of "Inside Grower" is controlled environment agriculture focusing on edible crops, covering topics like food production in urban warehouses and other vertical farming techniques, cutting-edge hydroponic research, educational opportunities, and much more.

As the editor of Inside Grower, Annie encourages you to let her know if you're involved in or have stumbled upon anything interesting/educational pertaining to growing edible crops in controlled or semi-controlled environments. She will be continually looking for news, technology, new cultural methods, research, business updates, etc. Check out her first edition here, and subscribe on the page if interested.

<http://www.ballpublishing.com/insidegrower/CurrentNewsletter.aspx>

Finally, on my website under the research link, you'll find a link to our All-America flower display garden at Burlington's waterfront, a joint project with Burlington Parks and Recreation and who make this garden possible. Plants were rated late summer, so you can see which were still top performers. It was interesting that virtually all were not affected by Irene passing directly over. You'll see from the few photos there too, or if you saw them in person, that this year we combined them much in the European style of interplanting rather than as discrete plants and groups, with many good combinations resulting. More of these will be featured in photos online this coming year. Join my website facebook page to keep up with these and other updates.

*Submitted by Leonard Perry*

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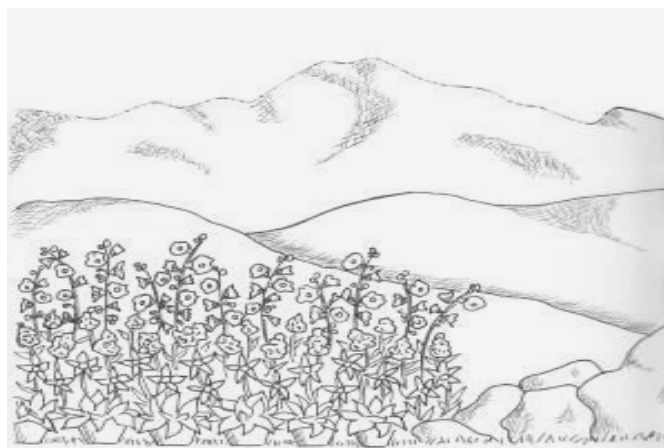
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# Safe Ecological Alternatives to Burning Bush

by Brian Vaughan

Burning Bush *Euonymus alatus* is a popular landscape shrub planted for its attractive red Fall color. The red seeds of this plant are eaten by birds in the Fall and carried long distances to forests where they are deposited in their droppings. Once Burning Bush is established in the forest understory it creates a dense stand and out competes native plants that many wildlife depend on for food. One way to help alleviate this problem is to remove and destroy existing plants in the landscape. Another is to not plant any new Burning Bush plants in the landscape. Many nurseries throughout the state have ceased the sale and use of this plant.

The question is what do you plant in place of a Burning Bush? The answer is there are many great options that are ornamental without being invasive. *Fothergilla major* Large Fothergilla is a shrub that grows 8' tall x 6' wide and produces sphere like fragrant white flowers in the Spring. This plant also has beautiful Fall foliage that turns colors of red, orange and yellow. *Cotinus coggygria* Smoke Bush is a shrub growing 12' tall x 10' wide and produces showy smoky pink flowers in Summer. Fall foliage is a nice combination of yellow, red and purple. For more shady locations there is *Enkianthus campanulatus* Red Veined Enkianthus (Zone 5) and *Hydrangea quercifolia* Oakleaf Hydrangea (Zone 5). Enkianthus grows 10' tall x 6' wide producing light yellow bell shaped flowers with red veins in Spring. Fall color is an

attractive bright red. Hydrangea q. grows 6' tall x 4' wide producing large white flowers in Summer but the real quality of this plant is its foliage, which is shaped like an Oak leaf and turns a stunning dark red and orange color in Fall.

For a more natural look there are native Vermont plants to choose from. *Aronia arbutifolia* 'Brilliantissima' Red Chokeberry is a shrub that grows 8' tall x 4' wide producing white flowers in the Spring. The leaves turn a showy bright red color in Fall. *Ilex verticillata* Winterberry is also a shrub that grows 12' x 8' that produces bright red berries in the Fall which persist into Winter. *Vaccinium corymbosum* High Bush Blueberry grows 8' tall x 4' wide producing abundant edible blueberries in the Summer. In the Fall the leaves turn an attractive dark burgundy red.

I have recently signed a voluntary code of conduct (PlantWise) through the VNLA, VIEPC and Nature Conservancy to not buy, sell or incorporate into my designs invasive plants including Burning Bush. To learn more you can visit Greenworks VNLA at <http://greenworksvermont.org/>, The Nature Conservancy: <http://www.nature.org/vermont/weeds> and my business blog: <http://vaughanlandscaping.blogspot.com>

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## Asian Longhorned Beetle Woes

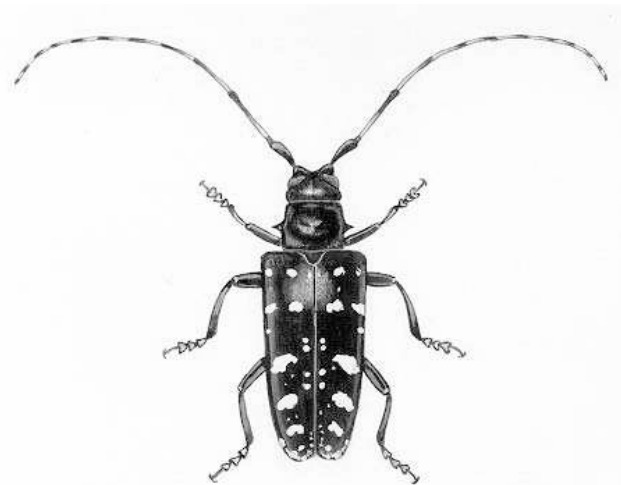
This article is provided by your state association and ANLA as a Lighthouse Program partner benefit.

USDA's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) recently acted to enlarge the quarantine/eradication zone for Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) in southern Ohio. The expansion of the ALB quarantine area is in response to the recent detection of infested trees in Monroe, resulting from the movement of infested firewood. The expanded ALB quarantine area in southern Ohio is 56.2 square miles. Meanwhile, APHIS officials have also moved to expand the ALB quarantine area by an additional 12 square miles in Worcester County, Massachusetts. The expanded ALB quarantine area in Central Massachusetts now totals 110 square miles.

ALB is a destructive wood-boring pest of maple and other hardwoods. ALB was first discovered in the United States in Brooklyn, New York, in August 1996. ALB was later detected in Chicago, Illinois, in July 1998. In October 2002, the beetle was found in Hudson County, New Jersey, and then in Middlesex and Union Counties, New Jersey, in August 2004. In August 2008, ALB was discovered in Worcester County, Massachusetts, and in July 2010, ALB was found in Suffolk County, Massachusetts. In 2008, ALB was declared eradicated in Chicago, Illinois, and Hudson County, New Jersey. Similarly, in 2011, ALB was declared eradicated from Islip, New York.

Failure to eradicate ALB in North America would change the face of America's forests and landscapes. Because detection is accomplished only through intense visual

inspection, survey for the pest is expensive and resource-intensive. However, eradication efforts are aided by the fact that the beetle is large, conspicuous, and slow to spread naturally. Preventing long-distance movement of firewood is vitally important; visit [www.dontmovefirewood.org](http://www.dontmovefirewood.org) for more information.





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# New England Grows: Above & Beyond!

## Great Education and Deals Under One Roof in February 2012

New England Grows, the Northeast's premier trade exposition and green industry educational conference, will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this coming February. The show is scheduled for Wednesday, February 1 - Friday, February 3, 2012 at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center. Mark your calendars and register before mid-January to save.

"Above & Beyond!" is the theme and with 30 groundbreaking educational seminars planned and exhibit booth sales already exceeding 2011 levels, New England Grows 2012 is expected to be better than ever.

The speaker lineup includes well-known experts Tony Avent, Lew French, Chris Heiler, Dan Kittredge, Brook Klausung, Rebecca McMackin, David Mellor, James Urban, Claudia West and many other trendsetting presenters. They will address a variety of horticultural and design topics like living architecture, water management solutions, and biological controls as well as important business-growth ideas such as inbound marketing, selling in a challenging economy, and social media strategies.

"In 1992, New England Grows started as a spark of an idea --- to create a forum where everyone in the local green industry gathers to learn what's new, to share information, and to make connections," said New England Grows' president Richard Clark of Clark Farms in Wakefield, RI. "Twenty years and millions of dollars in industry contributions later, New England Grows is one of the greatest champions of innovation in today's horticulture industry. When you participate in New England Grows, you support your local green industry and I urge everyone to be a part of it in 2012."

At New England Grows, green industry professionals can obtain many professional Continuing Education (CEU) credits under one roof with recertification opportunities for Pesticide Licenses, NOFA, APLD, LA CES, CTSP, MCA, MCLP, and more.

Enjoy special savings for early registration - \$45 for all three days - when you register by January 16. The early registration price drops to just \$39 per person when four or more people from the same company register together. Affordable registration fees, combined with exclusive deals on the tradeshow floor, make New England Grows the best place to do business. Join New England Grows' growing community on Facebook and Twitter. Learn more at [www.NewEnglandGrows.org](http://www.NewEnglandGrows.org).

New England Grows, the premier conference and trade

exposition for green industry professionals, announces the return of *Garden Center Success* on Wednesday, February 1, 2012, from 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Introduced to rave reviews last year, this one-day intensive seminar is tailored to the specific needs of garden center professionals.

For the second year, a special *Garden Center Success* seminar will be held on Wednesday, February 1. This year's *Garden Center Success* is focused on helping garden center professionals buck retail market predictions and fight for their businesses in these turbulent times. Keynote speakers include business leader and best-selling author Bill Taylor, who will share the tenets of his latest book, *Practically Radical: Not-So-Crazy Ways to Transform Your Company, Shake Up Your Industry and Challenge Yourself*. Taylor shook up the business world with the launch of *Fast Company* magazine in 1995 and hasn't stopped since - inspiring champions of change and growth who are reinventing their companies.

Taylor will be joined by other speakers including garden center guru and marketing wizard Chad Harris, who together with his wife Beth, has crafted The Garden Gates in Southern Louisiana into one of the nation's premier lifestyle stores. Even under the most adverse conditions --- the economy, Mother Nature, and more --- their business has thrived due in large part to Chad's irreverent "market like a mad man" strategy.

Speaking about last year's *Garden Center Success*, that had 1000 registrants in its inaugural run, Nancy DuBrule-Clemente of Natureworks in Northford, Connecticut, said, "It was a totally amazing day. Thank you for getting the BEST speakers. I have already implemented many of the specific ideas they shared."

Again this year, with the help of master facilitator Jon Hockman, *Garden Center Success* participants will gain an understanding of real world retail trends, learn from peers who are getting it done in their own independent garden centers, and develop an action plan to increase sales, optimize their merchandising, and keep their people in peak performance mode.

"Expect a high impact, result-driven learning experience," said Rich Clark of Clark Farms in Wakefield, Rhode Island and New England Grows' education chairman. "If you're a key player at an independent garden center, you need to be at *Garden Center Success*!"

There is no additional charge to participate in *Garden Center Success*, but seating is limited and advance

registration is required.

New England Grows will celebrate its 20th anniversary year in Boston, Massachusetts on Wednesday, February 1 - Friday, February 3, 2012. In addition to a three-day line up of 30 business-building seminars, NE Grows 2012 will offer a trade exposition of more than 600 vendors showcasing solution-based products, technologies and services for the green industry.

New England Grows registration is \$45.00 per person before January 16, 2012 and \$65.00 thereafter. If you sign up 4 or more people from the same company before January 16, the price per person is just \$39.00. Affordable registration fees, combined with exclusive deals on the tradeshow floor, make New England Grows the best place to do business. Join New England Grows' growing community on Facebook and Twitter. Learn more at [www.NewEnglandGrows.org](http://www.NewEnglandGrows.org).

At New England Grows, green industry professionals can obtain many professional Continuing Education (CEU) credits under one roof with recertification opportunities for Pesticide Licenses, NOFA, APLD, LA CES, CTSP, MCA, MCLP, and more.

Garden Center Success at New England Grows is presented in cooperation with Garden Center magazine. *New England Grows is an educational partnership between the New England Nursery Association, Massachusetts Arborists Association, Massachusetts Association of Landscape*

*Professionals, Massachusetts Nursery & Landscape Association, and a network that includes more than 30 allied green industry organizations.*

*New England Grows is an educational partnership between the New England Nursery Association, Massachusetts Arborists Association, Massachusetts Association of Landscape Professionals, Massachusetts Nursery & Landscape Association, and its network includes more than 40 allied green industry organizations.*

## SCHEDULE

### New England Grows 2012

**Boston Convention & Exhibition Center  
Boston, MA**

[www.NewEnglandGrows.org](http://www.NewEnglandGrows.org)

#### Wednesday, February 1

Seminars: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Exposition: 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

#### Thursday, February 2

Seminars: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Exposition: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

#### Friday, February 3

Seminars: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Exposition: 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

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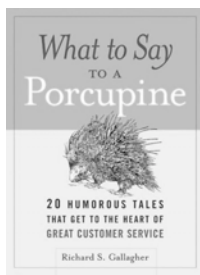
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# Great Customer Connections: Communications Skills for Excellent Service

Presented by Rich Gallagher at the Green Works Summer Meeting,  
Point of Contact Group, [www.pointofcontactgroup.com](http://www.pointofcontactgroup.com)

## What this is about: an example

- What do you say to someone when you have just towed their car away?

## Customer service – a science, not just an “attitude”

- Your profitability depends on how you communicate with customers
- For top firms, service is a thoughtfully composed performance
- Good service revolves around specific communications techniques, NOT human nature
- These techniques can be learned and practiced by anyone

## Techniques we will cover today

- Specific techniques for handling any customer situation:
  - How to make customers feel great in the first 30 seconds
  - Delivering feedback or bad news
  - Showing respect and empathy
  - Preventing confrontations
- How to defuse a customer crisis
- Dealing with your most challenging customer types

## Making customers feel great in 30 seconds or less: reflective listening

- 1. Give your undivided attention, then respond
- 2. *Paraphrase* what the other person says before your reply
- 3. Share your knowledge of the situation
- 4. Provide active feedback
- 5. Summarize understanding and obtain buyoff

## Delivering bad news: the “staging” approach

- Introduce what you are going to say *before* you say it
- Explain the reason for what you are saying *as* you are saying it
- Empathize with the customer's feelings *after* you have said it

## Showing respect and empathy

- Problems are often “gift-wrapped” with the person's feelings about them
- Respect = acknowledging someone's problems *and* the agenda behind them
- Empathy = validating another person's feelings

## Techniques for showing respect and empathy

- Playback: rephrase the other person in a way that acknowledges their agenda
  - Because you \_\_\_\_, I am going to \_\_\_\_
  - Because you \_\_\_\_, I recommend \_\_\_\_
- Phrase substitution: change the wording of your standard responses (e.g. “Absolutely” instead of “OK”)
- Normalize feelings: Share common experiences and

reaffirm the customer's emotions (“Many people get frustrated about this”)

## The three “octane levels” of acknowledgement

- Observation: Observe the other person's feelings and reactions
  - “I can see how upset you are”
- Validation: Acknowledge the other person's feelings are valid. This always involves describing *other people*
  - “No one likes having a project delayed”
- Identification: Identify with the other person's feelings
  - “That wouldn't seem fair to me either”

## Managing another person's demands - doing the “can-can”

- Always respond with what you **can** acknowledge and **can** do - however small
- Respond to the other person's feelings – feelings are never wrong
- Focus on what *is* possible
- You can avoid saying “no” much more often than you think

## Defusing a crisis – the “Triple A” approach

- Acknowledgement: acknowledge feelings and give the problem importance
- Assessment: gather facts and assess the situation
- Alternatives: set boundaries and sell alternatives

## How to talk to *any* kind of customer

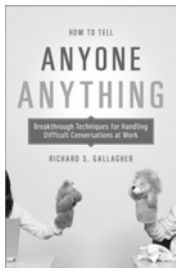
- The talk-a-holic
- The strong, silent type
- The non-linear thinker
- The time-waster
- The never-satisfied

## Summing it all up: action items to take back to the workplace

- You can *prevent* or *manage* almost any situation with the right communications skills
- It's all about technique, not “attitude”
- These skills are not human nature, and get better with practice
- These skills translate to *all* of your interactions with people

*Rich Gallagher is a leading expert on workplace communication skills. A former customer service executive and trained therapist, his eight books include the national #1 customer service bestseller What to Say to a Porcupine and his latest book How to Tell Anyone Anything.*





# Strength-Based Coaching: How to Tell Your Employees Anything!

Presented by Rich Gallagher at the Green Works Summer Meeting,  
Point of Contact Group, [www.pointofcontactgroup.com](http://www.pointofcontactgroup.com)

## Giving feedback: the CANDID approach

- **Compartmentalize** the message into its “safe” (neutral) and “unsafe” components.
- **Ask** questions, starting in the neutral zone.
- **Normalize** the situation.
- **Discuss** the details factually – and acknowledge the other person’s responses.
- **Incentivize** the outcome.
- **De-emphasize** the encounter and move on.

## The four neutral openings

1. Have the other person describe what happened.
  - “Could you walk me through how you do this?”
  - “How do you usually handle them?”
  - “It sounds like this was very frustrating for you – tell me about it.”
2. Ask the other person how they are doing.
3. Make a neutral observation.
  - “I notice some friction between you and George.”
4. Use the “I” technique – talk about times you or others have been in the same situation.

## Three "octane levels" of acknowledging (versus agreeing with) someone

- **Observation:** Simply observe their thoughts and feelings
  - "You must be pretty upset about that"; "I can tell you are really busy right now"
- **Validation:** Let them know feelings are valid by comparing them to *other people*
  - "No one likes to feel criticized"; "Everyone hates being overworked"
- **Identification:** Let them know how *you* would feel
  - "I wouldn't like that either"; "What happened to you was not fair"

## Discussing sensitive issues by boiling them into facts

The problem	How to discuss it
Your aren't carrying your weight around here.	Most of us handle X transactions per day. Your productivity has been about 40 per cent of that recently. Where could we go from here on this?
Your short temper is getting on my nerves.	I notice that when you say things like X, I react in a way that isn't helpful. How might we communicate better in the future?
You talk about me behind my back.	Look, we all share opinions about each other, and I sense that you are frustrated with me. What do you think?

## How to receive feedback – the PLAN approach

- **Paraphrase** the other person’s position.
- **Listen** actively to their response.
- **Ask questions** from a learning posture, and acknowledge the responses.
- **Negotiate** by merging common interests.

## The strength-based mantras

- You can never successfully criticize anyone for anything – ever!
- Leaning *into* people's concerns is the best way to deal with them

Don't worry about what to *say* – worry about what to *ask*

*Rich Gallagher is a leading expert on workplace communication skills. A former customer service executive and trained therapist, his eight books include the national #1 customer service bestseller What to Say to a Porcupine and his latest book How to Tell Anyone Anything.*

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# Industry Calendar

**November 2, 2011**  
**NENA Volunteer Leaders Summit**  
MHS Elm Bank Reservation  
Wellesley, MA

**December 1, 2011**  
**UMASS Extension Topics in Sustainable Landscape Design & Management Symposium**  
Sturbridge Host Hotel  
Sturbridge, MA  
508.892.0382  
[http://extension.umass.edu/turf/events/suscon\\_2011](http://extension.umass.edu/turf/events/suscon_2011)

**January 25, 2012**  
**Maine Nursery & Landscape Association Annual Meeting & Trade Show**  
Keynote speaker: Michael Dirr  
Augusta Civic Center  
Augusta, ME  
207.623.6430  
[www.melna.org](http://www.melna.org)

**January 25 – 28, 2012**  
**ANLA Management Clinic**  
Galt House Hotel & Suites  
Louisville, KY  
[www.anla.org](http://www.anla.org)  
[www.landcarenetwork.org](http://www.landcarenetwork.org)

**February 1-3, 2012**  
**New England Grows**  
Boston Convention & Exhibition Center  
Boston, MA  
[www.NewEnglandGrows.org](http://www.NewEnglandGrows.org)

**February 15, 2012**  
**Green Works/VNLA Annual Winter Meeting and Trade Show**  
UVM -Davis Center  
Burlington, VT  
888.518.6484

**February 15, 2012-April 4, 2012**  
**SOUL Tree Stewards Course**  
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### QUESTIONS?

Contact Kate Forrer, SOUL Program Coordinator, (802) 223-2389 X 210  
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