

# THE DIRT

Fall Issue 2022, Volume 48, Issue 3



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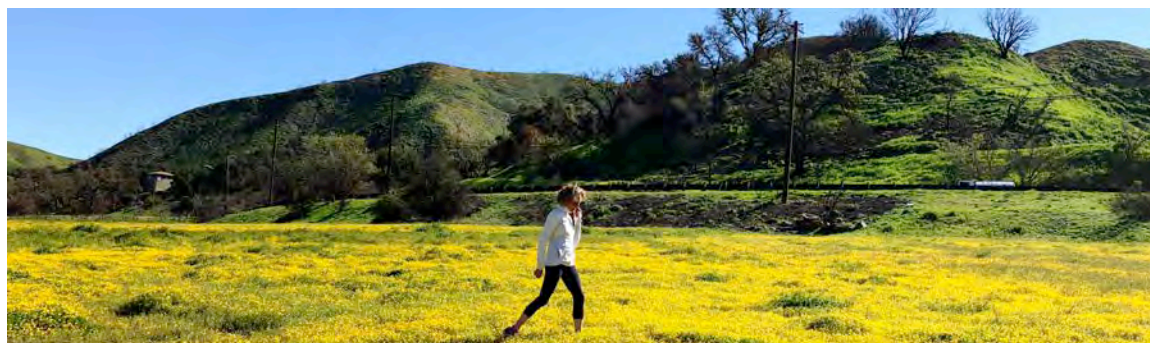
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## Dear Fellow VNLA Members & Friends,

It seems Autumn 2022, will go down as the fall that was summer! The curiously warm 70-degree November days leave me with mixed feelings. Surely, you were all out, like me, enjoying the extended season and brilliant colors, but I do wonder what this means for the future of our warming planet.

Talk of climate change is everywhere. And that's good. We need to talk about it to ACT on what we can DO about it. Our actions are what make changes possible. And it's your support of the important work we do **collectively** that makes change happen.

VNLA is here to support and strengthen the growth of the landscape industry here in Vermont and beyond. As advocates for the importance of healthy, beautiful, productive landscapes for everyone, I believe it is our responsibility to work at collective calls to action. I recently attended an event focused on biodiversity loss and what we in Vermont are doing across many agencies, organizations, and non-profits (VNLA included) are doing to address this topic. It was extremely informative, slightly daunting but mostly encouraging to see the myriad of ways we can work together to reverse this trend. What we do in the face of challenge is the measure of our strength and success. Our growth over the decades and YOUR dedication to this organization says it all, particularly in the last 2 years of Covid challenge.

I talk a lot about connectivity because without it, we wouldn't be here today. I strongly feel it's worth preserving and that the VNLA is an example of strength in connection. So VOTE for the VNLA!

It's YOUR voice we need to hear to help us move forward as well as support this Association's future needs. Our future of networking together and participating in educational opportunities counts on it, so we can all learn, grow and be stronger together living and working in Vermont and beyond.

THANK YOU for your continued support.

Happy Holiday Season!

Cheers,

Ashley



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**Cover Photo Credit: Kristina MacKulin**



# THE BUZZ

the low down on what's up!

## Project #4 - A Habitat for Humanity Project Collaboration!

The VNLA/Green Works established the Volunteer Project/Outreach Committee (VPOC) in February, 2018. Since that time we have collaborated with Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity on three projects in Chittenden County which you can view [HERE](#).

In early summer VPOC began working with **Habitat for Humanity of Addison County (HHAC)** on a recently completed home build located in Booth Woods, Vergennes, VT. This is one of 4 homes to be completed by HHAC. We were pleased to be able to expand our volunteer efforts into Addison County and collaborate on this landscaping project! You can learn more about HHAC [HERE](#).

All materials needed for the project were donated by VNLA members and associates. On Saturday, **October 15, 2023**

volunteers gathered to complete the landscape installation. You can view the complete slideshow [HERE](#).

**THANK YOU** to all our members and associates who donated materials to make this project a reality! **THANK YOU** to all our volunteers on the day of installation as this project could



Top: Design concept drawing by Holly Greenleaf.  
Bottom: Pictured from left to right - Ralph Fitz-Gerald, Gabe Bushey, Ashley Robinson, Linzy Vos, and Holly Greenleaf, all members of the VPOC Committee.

not have been completed without you! The donors and volunteers are listed below.

### 2022 VNLA/Volunteer Project/Outreach Committee

- Ashley Robinson, Landscape Designer, chair
- Gabe Bushey, Crafted Landscapes, LLC
- Holly Greenleaf, Greenleaf Design, LLC
- Ralph Fitz-Gerald, Horsford Gardens & Nursery
- Linzy Vos, VNLA Board Member

### 2022 VNLA Project Donors

- American Meadows, 2 yds compost and 4 yds bark mulch
- Cobble Creek Nursery, shrubs, delivery
- Greenleaf Design, LLC, landscape design/drawings
- Evergreen Gardens of VT, shrubs, delivery
- Greenhaven Gardens & Nursery, shrubs
- Horsford Gardens & Nursery, trees, shrubs, delivery
- Panoramic Landscaping & Excavation, Pantone stone curbing
- Rocky Dale Gardens, shrubs, delivery
- Van Berkum Nursery, shrubs, delivery



## 2022 Installation Day Volunteers

- Ashley Robinson, Landscape Designer
- David Furney, Habitat for Humanity of Addison County
- Steven Ingram, Habitat for Humanity of Addison County
- Michael Johnston, Habitat for Humanity of Addison County
- Gary Sarachan, Habitat for Humanity of Addison County
- John Padua, Cobble Creek Nursery
- Gabe Bushey, Crafted Landscapes, LLC
- Jake Ringer, Crafted Landscapes, LLC
- Natalie Dedon, Gardener's Supply Co.
- Hillary Ballek, Gardener's Supply Co.
- Holly Greenleaf, Greenleaf Design, LLC
- Ralph Fitz-Gerald, Horsford Gardens & Nursery
- Judith Irven, Outdoor Spaces Landscape Design
- Linzy Vos, VNLA Board of Director
- Kristina MacKulin, VNLA Executive Director

Thanks to VNLA member Judith Irven, this collaboration was featured in *The Addison Independent Newspaper* on November 3, 2022. Following is a reprint of the article with the author's permission and we thank Judith for her efforts in writing this piece for the public to learn about this collaboration.

### ***Volunteers in Action: a new home comes to life***

***by: Judith Irven***

It was a special day last summer when the young family were able to move into their new Vergennes home—which is the latest project of Habitat for Humanity in Addison County.

And, as with all projects sponsored by Habitat for Humanity, this home was the result an amazing volunteer effort.

Beginning about a year ago a group of Middlebury College students, as part of their architecture class, developed a detailed design for an attractive 1200 square foot home that would also meet Efficiency Vermont's High Performance Standards.

For instance, carefully insulated walls and triple glazed windows will help keep the heat inside in the winter, while also insulating the home from excess external heat during the summer.

In addition, the array of solar panels up on the flat roof is expected to create enough renewable energy so that the average annual energy consumption requirements of the home will be zero. Sometimes called 'net metering', it means that on



sunny days the homeowner can sell excess electricity back to the power company while still accessing the power grid when the sun isn't shining.

Then, throughout this past summer, a team of community volunteers, as well as the new owners themselves, worked on the actual construction—everything from framing the walls to installing the cedar siding.



You can read more about the construction process in their summer newsletter newsletter <https://addisonhabitat.org/newsletter>.

**Installing landscaping creates the final touch**

And finally, on October 15, which fortuitously turned out to be a perfect Vermont fall morning, a group of ten volunteers from the Vermont Nursery and Landscaping Association (VNLA), together with four members from the original Habitat team, worked together to installing trees and shrubs that would provide both beauty as



Front row: Holly Greenleaf, Hillary Ballek, Gabe Bushey, Ralph Fitz-Gerald, Jake Ringer, Linzy Vos, Ashley Robinson, Michael Johnston. Back row: Steve Ingram, Gary Sarachan, David Furney, and Natalie Dedon. Not pictured: Judith Irven,

down the driveway,

well as privacy for the new homeowners in the years to come.

By the end of the morning this hardworking group had planted out and mulched almost forty trees and shrubs, all donated by local nurseries and growers, together with thirty feet of Pantan Stone curbing to prevent the water cascading off the lawn and

## — We're All About Community —



Over the last 4 years our members have jumped in to partner with Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity building vegetable gardens, patios, and sustainable landscapes for their projects. We also sponsor the Vermont Blooms Initiative, a VNLA endeavor that completes small volunteer projects around the State to beautify public outdoor spaces. Please visit our website to find out more.

The Vermont Nursery and Landscape Association – visit us at [VNLAVT.org](http://VNLAVT.org)





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# The Vermont Flower Show is Full Steam Ahead!

by Kristina MacKulin

The show is just under three months away and both Flower Show Committees have been hard at work! The bulbs are being planted at Claussen's, the trees and shrubs have been donated and organized for forcing thanks to the plant forcing crew (let's just say they are amazing!), and the Flower Show Committees are cranking at finalizing the many details it takes to bring this show to life (also amazing people)! There are many tasks ahead and multiple ways to contribute / participate and get involved!

**Tickets are NOW ON SALE** on our website and until the end of December, each ticket is \$2.00 off. They will make a great holiday gift! Beginning in January tickets will also be for sale in advance at Gardener's Supply stores in VT and at Claussen's.

The seminar and workshop schedule will be posted on our website soon, as well as other scheduled events during the show. Our **keynote speaker, Kelly D. Norris**, is an award-winning plant expert, designer and author of *New Naturalism: Designing and Planting a Resilient, Ecologically Vibrant Home Garden* (Cool Springs Press, 2021) and several other gardening books. Considered one of the leading horticulturists of his generation, his work in gardens has been featured in The New York Times, Martha Stewart Living, Fine Gardening and in numerous regional and local media appearances. Norris is the former director of horticulture and education at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden in Iowa and has received recognition from the Perennial Plant Association, American Horticultural Society and others. [www.kellydnorris.com](http://www.kellydnorris.com). Kelly will be speaking on Saturday and Sunday. Cheryl Dorschner, seminar coordinator and Flower Show Committee Member, is putting together the final details of a vibrant and interesting array of speakers for the show!

**Become an Exhibitor!** There is still time to become an exhibitor in case you have been thinking about it but too busy to sign up yet! To date we have 70 vendors signed on to participate in the Flower Show Marketplace. You can learn more and register [HERE](#).

**Become a Sponsor!** We would like to thank the following Sponsors who have signed up to so generously support the show:

- Gardener's Supply Co. - Presenting Sponsor
- American National - Grand Garden Display Sponsor
- Bartlett Tree Experts - Bag/Seed Packet Sponsor
- Horsford's Garden & Nursery - Bag/Seed Packet Sponsor

- Proven Winners - bag/Seed Packet Sponsor
- VT Agency of Agriculture - Friday Seminar Sponsor
- Marijke's Perennial Gardens Plus - Saturday Seminar Sponsor
- Branch Out Burlington! - Daffodil Sponsor

We are very grateful for their financial support!

We are also grateful to **American Meadows** who have generously donated the production

of the 10,000 seed packets we will be

handing out at the show. **We are still looking** for one more Flower Show Bag/Seed Packet Sponsor and a Sunday seminar sponsor. You can read more about **Sponsorship Opportunities/Benefits** and the perks that come with sponsorship [HERE](#).

We would like to thank **Market 32** for signing on as a Flower Show sponsor again in helping us promote the show. Flower Show tickets will be on sale in all their stores beginning in February. In addition, our media sponsors are **Seven Days Newspaper** and **WCAX-Channel 3** and our hotel sponsor is **The Essex, Vermont's Culinary Resort & Spa**.

## Become an Advertiser!

Another way to support the show and showcase your business is to place an ad in the **Flower Show Program and Garden Guide**. If you are interested in placing a ad please contact me in the office: [kristina@vnalvt.org](mailto:kristina@vnalvt.org). Rates are published on our website.

## A Gala Fundraiser - New This Show!

For the first time, we will be holding a gala fundraiser - "**Flower Show After Dark**" - in collaboration with **Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity** on **Friday evening (March 3)** from 7pm-10:30pm. This special evening fundraiser will feature delightful appetizers, live music, a cash bar, and self-directed tours of the Grand Garden Display. Proceeds from ticket sales for this special event will benefit both the Vermont



Nursery and Landscape Association and Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity. Tickets are \$100 each.

Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity works to build homes to help our low-income, hardworking Vermont families become more stable, secure, and independent. Green Mountain Habitat's partner families contribute hundreds of their own sweat equity hours alongside many community volunteers to build safe, energy-efficient, and affordable homes throughout Northwest Vermont. The VNLA has collaborated on three planting projects since 2018 and just completed a project with the Addison chapter in October, 2022 (see article on page 4). Please help us spread the word on this special event and we hope you can join us!

### Display Building, Show Staffing and Clean-Up!

As the show draws closer we will be reaching out to let you know about ways to help and be involved in the 2023 Vermont Flower Show! We will be seeking help with set-up of the Grand Garden Display (Tuesday-Thursday evening), help in staffing the show, including the VNLA booth (Friday - Sunday), OR help with CLEAN-UP CREW Sunday evening and Monday. You can let us know at anytime if you might be able to help in these

areas! Please send me an email if you add your name to one of these lists: [kristina@vnlavt.org](mailto:kristina@vnlavt.org).

### Help us Promote the Show!

We are always looking for help in promoting the show. If you use social media platforms, such as FaceBook and Instagram, please like us and share our upcoming promotional posts with your followers. I can also provide some social media graphics and announcements for anyone who can help us spread the word! You can find us on FaceBook and Instagram:



<https://www.facebook.com/VermontFlowerShow>

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We appreciate any help in spreading the word about the Show! Stay tuned!



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# VNLA Summer Twilight @ Claussen's

by Kristina MacKulin

On September 8, a spectacular late summer evening I might add, Claussen's hosted our last summer twilight of the season. Over 20 of us gathered for a tour of the garden center, greenhouses, and grounds as Claussen's Florist, Greenhouse & Perennial Farm celebrates their 50<sup>th</sup> year this season! The evening was also an opportunity to celebrate the late Bill Claussen, who over the past 50 years has made great contributions to our Association and the horticultural industry in Vermont.

Chris Conant, Ali Lapiere, James MacAuley, Lori King, Mark Storch, and Brett Wilbur were all on hand to take us on the tour of their 40+ greenhouses, including their retail and production areas. Claussen's grows over 90% of the plant products they sell!

After receiving the grand tour we all sat down together for some spectacular food and beverages courtesy of Claussen's, as well as shared some great conversations! We are truly lucky in Vermont to have Claussen's leading the way in our industry these past fifty years.

On that note I would very much like to share a history of Claussen's as it appears on their website. Please join me in congratulating them on all their accomplishments since they began growing in 1972 and here's to what comes next!

## Claussen's History

On November 1, 1972 William "Bill" Claussen purchased Carpenter Greenhouses and started Claussen's Greenhouses.



Hard work, due diligence and knowledge of how to grow and sell great plants has always been our philosophy since day one.

Bill set the bar high and that has always been the expectation that we have achieved through hard work. He built the greenhouses with the help of his energetic staff, from morning until night, through sweat and tears as he had a vision. For years, Bill worked on making his dreams come true. From the beginning, he ran the cash registers, did the books, cared for the plants and managed the entire business almost single-handedly. Bill is an astute businessman with a firm touch. He knew what his goals were and did not stop until he surpassed them. His kind of energy and commitment to excellence is what our company is built on today.

Although he is semi-retired, Bill remains the inspiration, along with Chris Conant (co-owner and Vice President). Chris started in the business in the 1970s possessing a love of flowers and people. Chris's dedication to fostering lasting relationships with our customers, along with Bill's devotion and that of over 35 employees, awarded Claussen's Florist & Greenhouse 'Vermont Retailer of the Year for 2008'.

In the mid 1980s it became apparent that the floral industry was beginning to change. To stay competitive, Claussen's had to balance its' focus between growing quality plants and serving the needs of our retail customers. In order to stand out from the retail chains and grocery stores selling plants and floral bouquets, Bill brought on Brenda Wheel. Brenda



specialized in producing individualized floral designs and maintaining the retail shop complete with novelty items and silk arrangements. Brenda is still a part of our amazing team today and serves as our Florist & Retail Manager. Along side Brenda, our talented floral designers maintain a keen eye for design and produce exquisite works of art.



*Claussen's, circa 1972.*

In 2013 Claussen's started our Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program. This program uses natural predators to fight pest bugs, to reduce the use of chemicals and emphasizes natural and low toxic chemicals making it safer for the environment, customers and our employees. In place of chemical pesticides. We are taking these steps for our future, because our top priority is you, our employees and our environment.

Through the years, Claussen's has had a number of locations throughout Vermont and New York. As our generous public acceptance increased, we decided to expand our current operations (in Colchester Village) by over 500,000 square feet and, in the later years, scaled back on the number of locations we had. This shift is an example of how we are constantly changing to improve customer convenience and company efficiency. In October 2009 Claussen's merged our Perennial Farm location into our Colchester Village location. This allowed all of our operations to be in one location, allowing our customers a one-stop-shop experience.

Loyalty to understanding and fulfilling our customer's needs is something we pride ourselves on and welcome the opportunity to do so. We are also proud to support many civic groups and local charities, which provide us the good fortune to give back to the communities that support us so strongly.

Unfortunately, Bill Claussen passed away on March 19, 2022. He leaves the greenhouse in the capable hands of business partner of over 40 years, Chris Conant, Ali Lapierre (Chris' daughter) and his wonderful Claussen's team to carry on the William Claussen tradition!



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### Calling all retailers for

**2023!** Sign up to participate in the 2023 program **NOW** and add your name to the businesses who have been participating in this program.

We have also invited VT Vegetable and Berry Growers Association members to participate. We were awarded a USDA Specialty Block Producer Grant this summer to grow and market this program for 2023. The promotion of this program will begin at the 2023 Vermont Flower Show! Contact Kristina in the office **ASAP** if you want to be part of the program: [kristina@vnlavt.org](mailto:kristina@vnlavt.org). You can learn more about how the program works [HERE](#).

## Vermont Industry Awards Program!

### Calling all landscape designers/contractors/maintenance experts!

Now is the time to start thinking about entering/showcasing your work by participating in the Industry Awards Program. This year will mark the Program's 14th year! All winning projects will be featured at the 2023 Vermont Flower Show and is an opportunity not to miss.



The Industry Awards Program is open to current VNLA members actively offering professional landscape services. Members may submit up to three projects per year. All installed landscapes or maintenance properties are eligible. In addition any specialty type projects related to horticulture will also be considered. There are no set categories and no project is too small or too large. Each project will be judged on its own merits. To learn more and review the **Guidelines and Entry Forms** please visit our website [HERE](#). To view past winning projects, please visit our website [HERE](#).

## Vermont Certified Horticulturist Program!

The upcoming winter months are a good time to consider becoming a VT Certified Horticulturist! If you have been thinking about adding this credential to your list of



accomplishments, these upcoming months allows for more time to study the manual and take the exam. Becoming a VCHer is a way to market your abilities and talents as a horticulturist and be recognized as an industry professional that subscribes to a code of ethics. This program has reciprocity with other New England State Associations. You can learn more about the eligibility requirements/code of ethics [HERE](#).

## Vermont Blooms Initiative!

The VNLA launched the **Vermont Blooms Initiative** in the **Fall of 2020**. It is a planting program available to all VNLA members and is dedicated to enhancing



Vermonters health by improving and beautifying our civic landscapes. Any member can propose such a planting project to the VNLA's Volunteer Project Outreach Committee and they will help source donations and volunteers to complete the proposed planting. These projects are intended to be relatively simple and easy to implement. Projects could include planting trees, planting a pollinator garden, a pruning project, etc. Locations for these projects could include a town center, a boys & girls club site, a community garden, local school, or public library to name a few. Our most recent completed project occurred this summer at the Ronald McDonald House in Burlington, VT. You can learn more about this program and view past projects [HERE](#).

## Plastic Pot Recycling Program!

2023 will bring the third year we have offered this program in collaboration with Prides Corner Farms. This program is open to VNLA members and offers a way to recycle #2 and #5 plastics at specific VNLA member drop off sites. Please keep this program



in mind for next year as we hope to grow the amount our industry can recycle through this program. We are also in need of drop off locations in the southern half of the state. Look for more details about how and when to recycle in 2023 at the start of next season. In the meantime you can learn more about this program [HERE](#).





# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**January 5-6, 2023**  
**34th Annual Landscape Design Symposium: Landscape, Ecology, and Culture**  
 Bryn Mawr College  
 Bryn Mawr, PA  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**January 11-13, 2023**  
**MANTS Means Business**  
 Baltimore, MD  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**January 11, 2023**  
**Noon - 1pm**  
**Ecological Landscape Alliance: Webinar: Deeper Learning Through Ecology**  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**January 12-13, 2023**  
**34th Annual Landscape Design Symposium: Landscape, Ecology, and Culture**  
 Connecticut College  
 New London, CT  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**January 20, 2023**  
**UVM Master Gardener & Master Composter 16 Week Program**  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**January 31 - February 2, 2023**  
**Mid-Atlantic Fruit & Vegetable Convention**  
 Hershey, PA  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**February 15-16, 2023**  
**MNLA Green Industry Winter Forum**  
 Fitchburg, MA  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**February 16, 2023**  
**VNLA Winter Meeting and Trade Show**  
 UVM Davis Center  
 Burlington, VT  
 Details TBA.

**March 3-5, 2023**  
**Vermont Flower Show**  
 Champlain Valley Expo  
 Essex Junction, VT  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**July 15-18, 2023**  
**AmericanHort Cultivate '23**  
 Columbus, OH  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**July 24-28, 2023**  
**Perennial Plant Association's National Symposium**  
 Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

**August 2-4, 2023**  
**Garden Center Conference & Expo**  
 Minneapolis, MN  
 Learn more [HERE](#).

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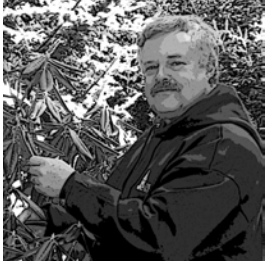
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# LEONARD'S CLIPPINGS!

by Dr. Leonard Perry, UVM Horticulture Professor Emeritus

Fall, 2022

**In PSS Department and Campus news:** Each semester I give a **snapshot of the PSS department** focus and student interest, gleaned from courses. Here's what is offered this fall, in-person unless noted.



World Report has ranked UVM in the top 100 graduate nursing programs in the nation; for medium-sized schools, UVM ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation for number of graduates who enter the Peace Corps; UVM is the 5<sup>th</sup> oldest university in New England (after Harvard, Yale, Dartmouth, Brown).

- Courses (with faculty instructor and numbers of students as of this writing) include: Home and Garden Horticulture (lecture online, Starrett, 193; lab 43), Intro to Agroecology (Izzo, 72), Entomology and Pest Management (Chen, 33), Weed Ecology and Management (Izzo, 23), Plant Pathology (Delaney, 12), Garden Flowers (White, 19), Woody Landscape Plants (Starrett, 17), Introduction to Hemp Production (online, Lewins, 52), Landscape Design Fundamentals (Hurley, 21), Composting Ecology and Management (Neher, 38), Permaculture (online, White, 56), Fundamentals of Soil Science (Gorres, 88), Regenerative Grazing (Alvez, 6), Plant Based Healing Medicine (Elmer, 24), Advanced Agroecology (Izzo, 45), Sustainable Orchard Management (Bradshaw, 10). In addition, there are several graduate level courses such as the Professional Skills Colloquium. With my retirement now from teaching online courses, The Garden Flowers (above) is now being taught in-person by White. No longer offered in fall are Indoor Plants, Home Fruit Growing, and



- Allie Film (center photo), a senior majoring in ecological agriculture in the UVM Plant and Soil Science Department, recently completed a **summer horticulture internship** in the historic King's Garden at Fort Ticonderoga, New York, while also earning credits for her work... Through the internship, Film worked with others on Fort Ticonderoga's horticulture team, expanding her experience in pruning, planting, cultivation and fruit and vegetable garden management, including the management of weeds and invasive species, and control of various garden pests. She chose to work on composting at the Fort as an additional special project. (photos courtesy Ft. Ticonderoga, details from CALS Communications; overhead photo of King's Garden (center bottom)



Flowers and Foliage. (photo courtesy UVM PSS Facebook)

- **Some fun facts from UVM:** it was the first university to admit women and African-Americans into the Phi Beta Kappa honor society; UVM's Sustainable Innovation MBA is ranked #2 in America by the Princeton Review; U.S. News and

- **Eric Bishop von Wettberg** received the **CALS Vogelmann Award** in recognition of his work in ecology and genetics of wild relatives of agricultural crops. The Vogelmann Award honors the late Hub Vogelmann, a hugely influential naturalist/botanist in Vermont. **Sid Bosworth**, Extension



Professor Emeritus, (right photo) received the **CALS Sinclair Cup** which recognizes lifetime career efforts. For 31 years Sid provided science-based answers through Extension to the local farming community and educated generations of students. The Sinclair Cup Award honors distinguished alumnus and Dean Emeritus Robert O. Sinclair.



“The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) today named the University of Vermont (UVM) as regional winner of the 2022 **W.K. Kellogg Foundation Community Engagement Scholarship Award** in recognition of the extraordinary community engagement of the **Agroecology and Livelihoods Collaborative**, a community of practice at UVM working to advance participatory agroecology research and solutions around the world [my note: in Vermont and Latin America, primarily coffee farmers]... UVM is one of four land-grant universities to receive the award.” The ALC is co-chaired by PSS faculty member Ernesto Mendez. (courtesy of CALS Communications)



“...the reality that spending time in the outdoors is often largely determined by how much leisure time you have. Canada’s PaRX initiative ([www.parkprescriptions.ca/](http://www.parkprescriptions.ca/)), which views nature as a form of medical treatment, effectively reconciles this by underlining the importance of incorporating nature experiences into the busyness of our everyday life with a nature prescription. The initiative is built around an understanding that more people adhere to healthy advice when that advice is written down by a healthcare authority. In other words, if your doctor is prescribing you 30 minutes a day in nature, you’re more likely to make more time for it.” (Azure magazine, 3.9.22)

**“2 hours a week.** That’s all it takes... Launched by the BC Parks Foundation in November 2020, **Canada’s PaRX Program** lets healthcare professionals prescribe nature to their patients as a way to improve their mental and physical health. The program — which has recently made its way to Ontario, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba — recently announced a new partnership that allows doctors to prescribe free passes to Canada’s national parks.”



*Top Photos: Eric Bishop von Wettberg (left) and Sid Bosworth (right). Center Photo: The Agroecology and Livelihoods Collaborative members. Bottom: A patient spending time outdoors as described in Canada’s PaRX Program.*

(PaRX is now in every province across Canada.)

“The initiative’s main idea — that nature is good for you — is the same sentiment that has driven biophilic design in our hospitals and healthcare institutions, and has long been supported by scientific studies and research theories.”

Maybe the same could apply to gardening? Maybe a discussion to have

with your own doctor or any doctor customers and clients? Check out more details and facts and the science behind nature and health at the PaRX website above. (article quotes courtesy of America in Bloom, photo from PaRX.)



# THE LAB

putting it under the lens . . .



## Observations from the UVM Plant Diagnostic Lab

by Ann Hazelrigg, Phd.

Fall rains bring out fungi in our landscapes and woods. I recently received a picture of an impressive slime mold growing on a peony from a gardener in Maine. The primitive organism does not harm the plant but is using the peony stem as a substrate until it dries up and breaks down.

According to UVM Professor Dr. Terry Delaney, "The fall 2022 mushrooming season benefitted from frequent, drenching rainfalls from the late summer into fall." The UVM Biology of Fungi class (PBIO177) sampled numerous sites each week starting in late August and recorded over a hundred and fifty species in western Vermont. Among the toxic species included the most dangerous *Amanita bisporigera* and its kin and *Galerina marginata*, each that contain deadly amatoxins. Toxic muscarine-containing *Inocybe* spp. were frequent, as well as *Gymnopilus* and *Omphalotus*, with their own toxin profiles. In the edible and delicious group, were Porcini, Hen of the Woods, and Chicken of the Woods (respectively, *Boletus edulis* complex, *Grifola frondosa*, and *Laetiporus sulphureus*). The netted stinkhorn was an amazing (and stinky) find by a student (*Phallus duplicatus*), as was a *Cordyceps capitata* parasitic upon an underground truffle mushroom. In addition to their visible beauty, our sensory experiences of mushrooms collected included tastes of pepper, bitter or nuts, and smells



Above: Slime mold on peony. Photo: Jean Herlihy, Brunswick, Maine.

Below: A bright orange Chicken of the Woods (*laetiporus cincinnatus*) as compared to a Hen of the Woods (*Grifola fondus*). Photos. T. Delaney.

To the right: Ruth Torelli with a destroying angel (*Amanita bisporigera* or similar).



that ranged from watermelon rind to pencil shavings, licorice and more!" The class of twenty students was engaged and enthusiastic about fungi as evidenced by the photos!

Chicken of the Woods (*Laetiporus sulphureus*), an edible mushroom is easily identified by the bright orange and yellow



shelf-like fruiting bodies. Chicken of the Woods is parasitic-attacking live hardwoods and conifers. Once the tree dies, the fungus becomes a saprobe living on decomposing wood causing a brown rot. Chicken of the Woods is often confused with Hen of the Woods (*Grifola frondosa*), although it is a different genus and species. To avoid confusion, Hen of the Woods is often referred to as Maitake. This fungus typically grows as a large circular cluster at the base of oak trees and oak stumps and is also edible when young.

The honey mushroom (*Armillaria mellea*) is another mushroom common in the fall. This fungus causes Armillaria root rot disease in several deciduous or conifer tree species resulting in the fruiting bodies/mushrooms at the base of the attacked trees. Symptoms of the disease appear as discolored foliage, reduced growth and dieback/death. The main part of the fungus is underground and is made up of mycelial threads (like roots of the fungus) that can bundle together and form large black rhizomorphs, hence the common name the shoestring fungus. When actively growing the mycelia can be bioluminescent.

Common fall home invaders are showing up as the weather has turned cooler. Neither causes any structural or health issues in the home, they are just annoying! The Western conifer-seed bug is about ¾ inch and feeds on pinecones in the summer but seeks out warm houses in the fall once the temperatures drop. They hide in cracks and crevices but are attracted to windows during the day and lights at night. The Asian multicolored lady beetle also invades homes when the weather turns cool. The small beetle can have a range of colors and typically has up to 19 black spots, but it can also be without spots. The boxelder bug and brown marmorated stink bug can also be home invaders in the fall but are also only a nuisance. Boxelder bugs are



*Cordycepscapitata* growing on its host, a false truffle (likely *Elaphomyces granulatus*).  
 Netted Stinkhorn (*Phallus duplicatus*)  
 Photos: T. Delaney.



The Fall 2022 Biology of Fungi class at Pease Mountain, VT (Mt. Philo to south) Photo: T. Delaney. (L) Honey mushroom (*Armillaria mellea*) fruiting bodies. Photo by Shir Goldberg. (R) Brown rhizomorphs of *A. mellea*. Photo: Rosser 1954.

often found on female box elder trees but can also be on male box elders, a few maple species and ash trees. These insects often congregate in large numbers on the sides of buildings in the fall and move inside when the temperatures dip. Brown marmorated stink bugs are a fairly recent invasive insect and are more of an agricultural issue in the mid-Atlantic states where they cause significant damage to peaches and other fruits and vegetables. The best thing to do for all these nuisance pests is either move the offending insect back outdoors or vacuum them up. Some may emit a strong odor if squished. Pesticides are not warranted but sealing cracks in windows and doors will help to exclude the pests.

There is a lot of tar spot on Norway maples this time of year. This fungus disease attacks late season and really does not harm the tree too much. Rake and destroy leaves to reduce the inoculum for next year.

I wanted to include a picture of a spectacular tree in my yard with **no disease or insect issues!** It is a Black gum or Black Tupelo, *Nyssa sylvatica*, and it is an intense riot of color this fall- orange, red, yellow and everything in between. This tree is hardy in zones USDA 4-9 and tends to prefer moist well drained soils but can tolerate some drought. Because the native tree can have an irregular form and does not always grow straight, selections have been made for color, form and growth rate. Some of the cultivars are Afterburner®; Firestarter®; Forum®; Green Gable™; Gum Drop®; Northern Splendor; Red Rage®; Tupelo Tower™ and Wildfire. The foliage is still going strong although the maples have dropped their leaves already.

Now is the time to think about winter protection. I have two young Alaskan cedars that I protected the year they were planted (2020) and skipped



protecting them last winter which was a big mistake. I suspect a combination of cold temperatures and wind caused a lot of browning and desiccation this spring. They have recovered somewhat but are not as full as they would be without the damage, so this year I will put up some burlap barriers to protect them.

Make sure susceptible trees are protected with mouse/rabbit guards this fall. Crabapples and apples are very susceptible to damage although I have seen severe girdling on a maple from a rabbit. I use hardware cloth that I bury in the ground and just leave throughout the year. I also wrap my young maples (not at base, but midway up the tree) with plastic guards so the male deer don't skin up the trees with their antlers. Protect less hardy plants like roses and lavender with barriers filled with straw or other material to ensure they come back in the spring. Strawberries should be mulched with straw around Thanksgiving to protect their crowns from winter damage.

On a final note, I thought I would include a picture of volcano mulch made of rocks. That was a new one for me!



Top: (L) Western conifer seed bug. Photo: Gyorgy Csoka Bugwood.net (R) Asian multicolored lady beetle. <https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/ENT-44>. Bottom: (L) Boxelder bug. Photo: Joseph Berger, [bugwood.org](http://bugwood.org) (R) Brown marmorated stink bug. Note white banding on antennae. Photo: Susan Ellis, [bugwood.org](http://bugwood.org)



Top: (L) Tar spot on maple. Photo: Andrej Kunca, Slovakia, [bugwood.org](http://bugwood.org). (R)-Black Gum or Black Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*).

Bottom: (L) Rock volcano mulch! (R)-Young winter burned Alaska cedar.





# News from the VT Agency of Agriculture, Foods & Markets

By: Stephanie Smith & Benjamin Diller

## Fall Updates and Information from the Plant Health Team at the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets.

Greetings, VNLA members and associates. I hope that you all enjoyed this temperate fall. The swarms of insects like box elder bugs and invasive Asiatic ladybugs trying to get into our homes at this time of year just add to the local color. In this article we have an update on hemp program, which is moving to Federal control, and an informational piece on jumping worms. The jumping worms are covered by our newest Plant Health team member, Ben Dillner, whom some of you may remember worked for Plant Health (then Plant Industry) as a nursery inspector from 2014-2016.

### Vermont – USDA Hemp Program Transition for 2023

The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, (VAAFAM), beginning in 2023 will no longer license and regulate hemp producers in Vermont. All interested producers will need to apply for and obtain a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Domestic Hemp Production Program license and may begin the licensing process before January 1, 2023. To help with this transition, the USDA Domestic Hemp Production Program will host an in-person meeting on November 3 at 5:00 pm-8:00 pm at the Cornwall Town Hall, located at the junction of VT Route 30 and VT Route 74, about 4 miles south of Middlebury.



For registration to Grow Hemp with USDA Domestic Hemp Production Program, producers can get a head start with the USDA application. USDA provides the below basic instructions to start. This process can be done online using our new [Hemp e-Management Platform](#) (HeMP).

There is no fee for the USDA hemp license, but there is an \$18 charge for the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Identity History Summary Check. The process for obtaining this background report is completed through the FBI website and requires fingerprinting. See <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/identity-history-summary-checks>. USDA only needs the results from the report to be uploaded as part of the online application. An FBI report is needed for all Key Participants, as defined by USDA, in your hemp operation.

Instructions to sign up for the HeMP online account can be found at <https://www.ams.usda.gov/rules-regulations/hemp/hemp-emanagement-platform>.

For questions about registering with USDA's Domestic Hemp Production Program, please contact [Farmland.Hemp@usda.gov](mailto:Farmland.Hemp@usda.gov).

### Jumping Worms: A Plant Health Update

Jumping worms are one of the latest invasive pests to catch the attention of Vermont landscapers and nursery managers. "Jumping worm" actually refers to three species of worms, two in the genus *Amyntas* and one in the genus *Metaphire*, none of which originated in the U.S. These worms pose a threat to agricultural and forest health in Vermont through their soil alteration capabilities. Currently, jumping worm species are confirmed in 12 out of 14 Vermont counties, but local distribution is not fully known. The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAFAM) is focusing on outreach and education to limit the spread of these invasive earthworms. Jumping worms spread readily through movement of soil, mulch, and compost, therefore nurseries or landscapers may be at risk of spreading them to customers or into the natural environment.

### Identification and Biology

Jumping worms are usually found close to the soil surface just under the leaf litter or mulch; they do not create burrows like other types of earthworms do. They rapidly consume organic matter and excrete castings that resemble coffee grounds. Living up to their name, jumping worms thrash around violently when disturbed. They can be distinguished from European earthworms by their smooth/ glossy surface (as opposed to a slimy coating), and the milky colored ring (clitellum) that is flush with the body (unlike the raised clitellum of European species). In Vermont, adults die off at the end of the growing season and the tiny cocoons persist throughout the winter. Larvae hatch as soon as the temperature



rises above 50° F and can complete their life cycle in 60 days. (Consult [www.VTinvasives.org](http://www.VTinvasives.org) for images and other ID features).

### Landscape Threat

Researchers and growers are still learning the impact of jumping worms on the Vermont landscape. The worms are widely distributed and have been in some locations for more than a decade, but they appear to be spreading more

recently. Jumping worms consume organic material much more rapidly than other soil organisms and turn it into grainy castings that offer little to most plants. In forests, jumping worm castings can be easily eroded exposing tree roots and creating an understory environment that welcomes establishment of invasive species. Loss of the humic (duff) layer is also a concern for sugar maple tree regeneration in sugarbushes. In the agricultural or residential landscape, the worms deplete mulch layers and damage roots of cultivated plants. Vegetable growers report that jumping worms cause severe damage to crops with no-till management, especially in high tunnels. Even in potted plants, jumping worms can turn well aerated potting media into dense granules which limits drainage and nutrient uptake.

### Observations from the 2022 Field Season

During the 2022 field season, Plant Health staff observed jumping worms at many nurseries. Plant Health was not specifically surveying for jumping worms and these confirmed locations were found during routine inspections. The jumping worms were usually found in the margins of the nursery in leaf litter or mulch. Some were found to be prevalent in areas with balled & burlap stock, probably due to the wood chips used to protect the roots. Nursery managers reported varying levels of concern about jumping worm damage and feedback from customers.

### Pest Management

Jumping worms are difficult to control since they are concealed in the soil, are difficult to identify and their eggs are extremely small and persistent. At present, there are cultural and mechanical controls but no approved chemical treatments. Control methods for infestations include solarizing soil with plastic, light tillage/ hand picking worms, and top dressing treated areas with clean mulch. Incorporating abrasive materials into the soil, such as charcoal, shows some promise



Jumping worm. Photo credit : VT Invasives.

in discouraging worm populations. Jumping worms are unlikely to be fully eradicated on an infested property so VAAFM is focused on limiting their spread to non-infested locations.

VAAFM has identified the following **Best Management Practices (BMPs)** for nurseries and landscapers:

#### General Measures

- ◆ Clean soil from all tools, boots, and gloves prior to working in and

when moving between different growing areas. Use sterilizing agent when applicable.

- ◆ Keep nursery areas free of organic debris and dispose of culled plants at a designated cull site.
- ◆ Maintain cull piles in isolated areas away from natural areas and forest settings.
- ◆ Scout field growing areas and monitor soil for jumping worms regularly. Train employees to identify jumping worms and their castings.
- ◆ Monitor media mixing areas and clean equipment between batches.

#### Potting Media, Mulch, and Compost

- ◆ Source potting media, mulch, and compost from jumping worm free locations (or heat treated)
- ◆ To ensure that these materials are clean, bring internal temperature up to 130°+ F by solarizing in thin layer on concrete or tarp. 130°F is the minimum temperature to kill both worms and eggs.
- ◆ Store clean materials on concrete or tarps and bags of substrate on pallets away from soil.

#### Bare Root Plants

- ◆ Sell plants bare root when possible.
- ◆ Remove all soil from plants before transporting them to limit the spread of weeds and worms.
- ◆ Completely submerge plant roots in water and wash away remaining soil. Actively look for worms. Once roots appear clean, protect roots for transportation and sale.

#### Potted Plants

- ◆ For plants sold in pots/trays, ensure that potting media is sterile or free of weeds and pests. Avoid using non-solarized compost/ mulch or material that may have come from an infested area.
- ◆ Use new pots or sanitize used ones with steam or chemical solution.



- ◆ Place plants on surfaces that worms cannot travel through like concrete, weed mat/gravel or raised benches. Create a barrier between pots and potentially contaminated materials like soil, leaves or mulch.

### Balled & Burlap Plants

- ◆ Plants sold as balled and burlap (B&B) stock may pose a greater risk of spreading jumping worms than traditional potted plants.
- ◆ If possible, store B&B plants on a gravel or weed mat barrier. Use clean mulch/ substrate to protect rootballs.
- ◆ When digging field plants, inspect rootball carefully for signs of jumping worms. Rinse off surface layer of organic matter and remove any worms. Earthworms in the deeper soil layers are most likely not jumping worms.

### Resources

There is still much we don't know about jumping worms and their distribution in Vermont. Dr. Gorres and his team at UVM are doing some important work to give us more control options. Early research has identified some beneficial fungi that could be used as biocontrol. Growers and the public can help ongoing research by submitting pictures of jumping worms to <https://www.inaturalist.org/>. More info about identification can be found on <https://www.vtinvasives.org/invasive/jumping-worms>. For a deeper dive into their biology and behavior see <https://ag.umass.edu/news-events/highlights/jumping-worms-conference>.

The Plant Health team looks forward to collaborating with nursery managers and landscapers to see what control methods are effective. Jumping worm is a case where all different stakeholders need to come together to protect the soil health of the state.



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# The Clock's Still Ticking for TICKS as Winter Approaches

By: Cheryl Frank Sullivan & Margaret Skinner

Autumn is a time when adult blacklegged (BLT)/deer ticks, *Ixodes scapularis*, (Fig. 1) are very active. Spring is another time of the year when the hungry adults seek out a meal. Even in winter, if the conditions are right (i.e., a sunny day above freezing with no snow), they will be on the roam. Nymph (immatures) are the stage that is primarily responsible for disease transmission. That is because of their small, poppy seed-like size which often goes unnoticed. They are most active in the late-spring/early summer. Coincidentally, these are all times of the year when landscapers are busy planting or cleaning up yard debris and therefore are prime targets for these blood thirsty arachnids (yes, ticks are arachnids, like spiders, not insects). We recently conducted a brief [survey](#) of those who grow or work with specialty crops and the landscape industry across northern New England. Over 71% indicated they had been bitten by a tick in the past three years and 86% considered ticks to be an occupational hazard.

Ticks have expanded their ranges across northern New England bringing with them the ability to transmit pathogens that cause human disease. *Borrelia burgdorferi* bacteria is the most important tick-borne pathogen of humans in the US causing an estimated 300,000 human cases of Lyme disease/year. The most recent surveillance data shows ME, VT and NH to be the top 3 states for incidences (confirmed cases per 100,000 people) of Lyme disease, caused by the bite of BLTs. BLTs are the most common tick sent for testing. Anaplasmosis, caused by *Anaplasma phagocytophilum* bacteria, is the second most common tick-borne disease and since 2015, VT has had the highest annual incidence in the US. Earlier this year, a ME resident died of Powassan virus and reports of infections are increasing across the region.



Fig 1: Adult, blacklegged tick.

Fig 2: A bulls-eye rash is a common early symptom of Lyme Disease after a tick bite. Beware, this symptom does not always appear.

If you have been bitten by a tick, quickly remove it to lower your chances of contracting a disease. Then, watch out for symptoms like headache, fatigue, chills, muscle aches, joint pain or the bullseye-looking erythema migrans rash (Fig. 2). Early symptoms typically begin three to 30 days after a bite but be aware that sometimes no symptoms show up.

The best way to lower your risk for tickborne diseases is to focus on the **prevention** of tick bites. Our survey showed that a diversity of precautions were used by those in the horticultural industry to avoid tick bites. These include performing daily tick checks (82%), wearing long pants/shirts (58%), using spray repellents (48%), tucking pants into socks (22%), wearing treated clothing (12%) or other methods (12%) like washing clothes, showering, essential oils, wearing high boots/gaiters or putting work clothes in the dryer. Be sure to check your pets too as they can be responsible for bringing ticks indoors.

For more information on ticks and tick-borne diseases in Vermont and how to protect yourself, please visit the following sites:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Ticks: <https://www.cdc.gov/ticks/>

State of Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets – Ticks: <https://agriculture.vermont.gov/public-health-agricultural-resource-management-division/plant-health-and-pest-management/ticks>

Vermont Department of Health – Tickborne Diseases: <https://www.healthvermont.gov/disease-control/tickborne-diseases>

To read the results from our “Initial Survey of Specialty Crop Producers about Ticks & Bite Prevention Practices in Northern New England”, please visit the following link:

<https://www.uvm.edu/~uvmticks/Ticks%20Farmers%20Initial%20Survey%20Summary%2010-13-22.pdf>

Our “Tick Resources & Information” page provides information about where ticks can be sent for pathogen testing. <https://www.uvm.edu/~uvmticks/pages/tickinfo.html>

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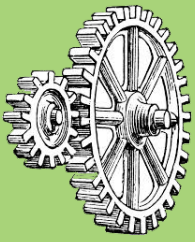
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# THE IDEA FACTORY

tips & trends, food for thought...

## State of Vermont's Wild Bees 2022



The [Vermont Center for Ecostudies](#) in collaboration with [VT Fish & Wildlife Department](#) issued a recent first-ever assessment on the state of wild bees in VT. The report documented 70 new species and 55 species that are in urgent need of more protection. The report addresses current knowledge on the status of wild bee conservation and acknowledges that while the domestic Western Honey Bee is important to VT agriculture and the economy, they can also pose a threat to wild bees. You can read the report and learn more [HERE](#).

The National Garden Bureau's 2023 "New Varieties" plant list is now available. This site has been promoting their member's new plant varieties for over 35 years. Take a look at the list and you will see what their growers and retailers will be offering customers in 2023: <https://ngb.org/new-plants/>.



## VT Forest Health Insects and Disease Observations - September 2022 by VT Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation

**Weather:** September officially starts the first month of the fall season. State-wide temperatures averaged 58.3°F, which was 1.1 degrees cooler than September of last year. Statewide precipitation averaged 5.68 inches, which was 1.79 inches more than September of last year.

**Fall Color Update:** Leaves start to change colors in the fall due to shorter days and a reduction in photosynthesis. Each individual leaf contains pigments including chlorophyll (green color), carotenoids (yellow-orange colors), tannins (brown color), and sometimes anthocyanin (red-purple colors). As the season changes, the days become shorter, slowing down photosynthesis which causes chlorophyll production to degrade and for carotenoids to become visible. Glucose from photosynthesis in the fall gets trapped inside the leaf due to the abscission layer, forming the pigment anthocyanin. Over time, all of the pigments will degrade and leave brown hues caused by tannins. The amount of pigments and their progression though the fall can vary by tree species, and helps make Vermont a kaleidoscope of color.

In this Bulletin you can also learn more [HERE](#) about **Native Forest Stressors**, such as the Spruce Budworm, Tar Spot, and Asian lady beetle to name a few. The bulletin also contains a section **Foraging for Fungi**, a feature on **Chestnut Blight**, and how to detect the invasive **Princess Tree** (*Paulownia tomentosa*). The bulletin concludes with an **Invasive Plant Phenology**. Every second full week of the month, volunteers around the state observe and report invasive plant phenology. The bulletin includes information by county, including photos as well as information on how to get involved.

## Greenhouse Grower Magazine

Check out this recent article on the **2023 Outlook for Plant Pots and Trays** [HERE](#).





# STRICTLY BUSINESS

*no kidding ...*

## What's Up with Gen Z? and Thoughts on Motivation and Engaging the Team

by Jacki Hart

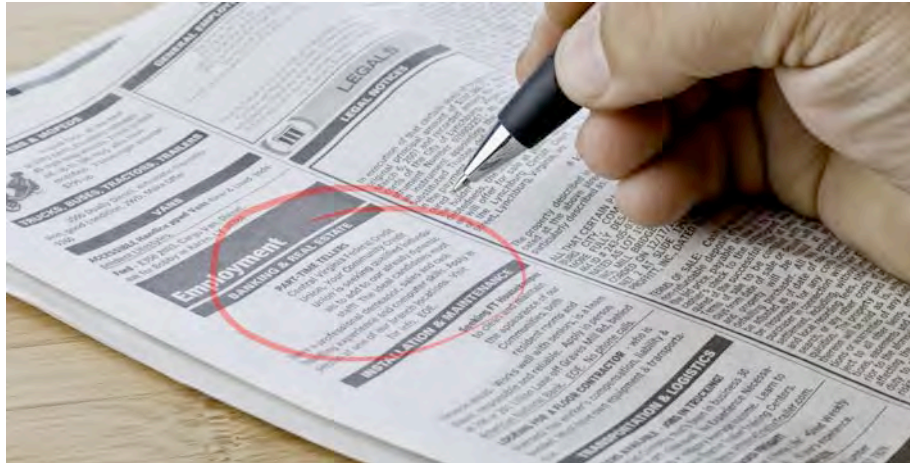
### What's Up With Gen Z?

Ahhh yes. Generation Z. That wonderfully energetic project-focused generation amongst every company, who are under the age of 29. A tricky bunch – if you're an employer over the age of 45. The statistics show (gallup) that they will change jobs at least 3 times more often than their older cohorts – Gen X and Baby Boomers. So what does this mean to you? It means that you have to adjust your recruiting strategy to reflect this new reality. Because, it's not going away any time soon. Job hopping is here to stay. For the most part.

Careers look different now than ever before. We've shifted from Boomers and Gen X learning a trade, graduating college and expecting to have a long career with a single employer – at the end of which we would get the customary gold watch and a pension. The 'status quo' was that companies could count on a steady and long-term work force and their employees would enjoy a lifetime of predictable income and benefits.

Fast forward to 2022, and we find a career-driven generation who know their worth, who are taking advantage of the job seekers market, and who don't accept status quo. If you want to attract, hire and retain them, you have to get with the program. The Gen Z Program and meet them where they are. They're not going to have it any other way.

In the absence of any handy Canadian statistics on this topic, I look south of the border to the Bureau of Labor Statistics for context and research: I found that the median tenure of workers aged 55-64 is 10 years, while of the 25-34 age group – it's 2.8 years. Short term job seekers are here to stay with this cohort looking to change employers in less that 3 years and only a



quarter of them looking for a 5+ year opportunity in the same company.

Also, over a third of them expect multiple job offers every time they look to switch jobs - which they do whenever they're looking for meaningful work where they can make an impact, learn

new skills and build on their work experience for their next gig (i.e. 'what's in it for me if I work for you?'). They are bold and fearless of new situations and aren't afraid to pursue a new opportunity.

Why is this a big deal? Worth noting, Gen Z and Millennials combined make up over 40% of the current work force. And the cost of high turnover might be higher than you think: according to labor statistics by the Center for American Progress, the cost of losing an employee can range from 16% of what you pay them annually, to 213% for highly trained positions. These include costs for people on your team, who already have other work to do, to be attracting, hiring, onboarding, and training new recruits. I encourage you to stop and think about that for a moment... If up to 40% of your team are either leaving or new every three years on average – this cost is having a huge, and possibly uncalculated negative impact on your bottom line – not to mention team morale and customer confidence.

### So now what?

I think that the best way forward is to develop a recruitment team who are focused on developing candidate pipelines and focus on trendy strategies for employee retention. The key is to be building long-term strategies that not only respond to job hoppers, but that stay one step ahead of them.



How can you do this? Here are a few tips to help you attract the right candidates, build a strong hiring brand, and be the winning employer when candidates have multiple offers

1. Create a 'candidate relationship' strategy, to continually foster relationships with candidates throughout their career journey, even if they don't accept your offer – the first time. There are software products out there to help you manage ongoing relationships with candidates. Keep the door open, even if they don't accept your offer. They might be back if things don't work out, or if they decide to give you another try.
2. Promote how candidates will making an impact and enjoy meaningful work. We know that Millennials and Gen Z both prioritize salary and work-life balance as the most important factors when considering a new job. One big difference though is that Gen Z places increased value on job duties or projects where Millennials look for career growth opportunities. Job ads could include specific timelines and plans with actionable first steps a candidate could take once hired.
3. Slow down to go faster. Taking less time to hire is the end goal, after retention. Reduce costs of attracting recruiting and onboarding by creating a 'rinse and repeat' process. Make sure that you 'bake in' questions that identify potential bad hires early on in the process. There's a high cost associated with constantly returning to the drawing board on hiring. There are even higher costs of being short staffed/ limited in fulfilling your client service obligations.

While I realize that even the best hiring questions can't prevent you losing a great worker who prematurely heads for the exit, I believe that you can proactively minimize the risk of an unexpectedly open critical position.

So, as you head into the next season, ask yourself, 'What can we do to best ensure our business isn't caught flat-footed when it's time to find a quality replacement or make an addition to our growing team?' 'What can we 'rinse and repeat' in our recruiting process?'

## Thoughts on Motivation and Engaging the Team

After 5 years of focusing my attention on the behaviour differences between generations in the workplace, I've come to a few conclusions. Let me explain. There's a long list of reasons why I've come to believe in these conclusions – which I don't have the space to explain here. Instead, I'll share the highlights (*I'd like to say 'Coles Notes', but my Millennial and Gen Z readers might roll their eyes and stop reading.*)



### 1. The 'Millennial Problem' isn't a problem in the least. It's an opportunity.

For the last 10 years, many employers have thrown their arms up in despair and frustration at trying to understand how to work with Millennials. It's actually not that

hard. And, they're not lazy. They're not self-entitled either. Millennials are highly creative, and prefer to work as a part of the 'hive mind' collective. They want to collaborate. And they need encouragement – in real-time, and often. They are now in their late 20's through early 40's.

The employer / employee clash comes when Gen X and Baby boomers are operating with the old paradigm toward work in our profession – commit to the company, show up, work hard, pull your own weight, hit the targets/metrics you're told to achieve, get your cheque, and as for feedback, well no news is good news now then isn't it!? Well, actually, no, not any more. If you're a Gen X (early 40's thru late 50's) or Baby Boomer (60-ish thru early 70's), then you're likely frustrated with the 'attitude' of most 'young people' that you hire because of the work ethic you perceive them to have.

And the Millennial employees who find themselves in the midst of companies led like that, run screaming in the opposite direction, in search for a workplace where they will be treated as a collaborative and valued person on the team – from day one. As for the 'show up' part – Millennials are social, and community minded – they crave being valued and appreciated. If there's something in their personal life or circle that trumps your targets and budgets, then they're likely not showing up for you every day. And they dislike conflict – so if they know they'll get 'in trouble' for taking a day off – they just won't call in and get the hassle, they just don't show up and then based on the reaction when they return to work – they either shrug it off or leave altogether. They rarely will work the long hours in a day



or week that you might. But they will work as hard, if you meet them on their terms. Paid time off is a great example of helping Millennials feel more committed to the company. Paid time to do a community / volunteer project can be a very sticky benefit to offer.

## 2. Gen Z is wired differently than Millennials. Very differently.

This cohort (now in their mid 20's and younger) aren't as 'needy' as millennials may seem. They aren't as set on being a part of a collaborating, co-creating group. This generation has a bit more independence. They want to know how they are doing, and measure their own progress or success on individually assigned projects or goals – or on their own 'part' of a workday team plan.

And, this generation is also highly curious, and extremely protective of their life-work balance. Note that 'life' comes first here. They are timid, curious, social and a bit flighty. Easily intimidated. Sensitive to criticism of either themselves or of others around them, if it is not accompanied with coaching for improved results. They aren't afraid to learn but they insist on feeling they've been set up for success. If they don't, they'll bolt for the door. Culture therefore, is critical. This generation needs to feel autonomy – a tough challenge for employers running crews, and welcoming 'entry-level' workers into a company that's set up with a hierarchy of levels of authority and control.

The companies that are successful engaging this vibrant, bright and curious generation, are those who have shifted the leadership paradigm around the meaning of 'hard work' and 'life balance'. And if you want to have success building the team you need, then get with this program – Life Work Balance. Ask them what that means to them, and engage in the conversation.

## 3. Motivating the team is only a challenge when the generation trying to motivate has a different paradigm around what's meaningful and important.

I was recently coaching a husband and wife business owner Millennial team. They were asking for advice on motivation. After proudly describing a bonus system they'd devised for their teams, including how the shared 'leader board' displayed employee 'points' earned on performance each month – and who was 'leading/winning' the contest, I asked them if the program worked. They both laughed and said it was an absolute failure. One of the terms they kept using was 'here's the numbers we need to meet'. BINGO. Externally defined, meaningless goals in a bonus system based on achieving numbers that were meaningful to the owners – not to the team. AND, a system designed to publicly shame those who were struggling to meet or compete with the targets. Doomed to fail.

The team btw are mostly younger Millennials and Gen Z over 20.

The solution we discussed was Gen Z-based thinking: Stop talking about gross profit or job costing targets up front. Start talking about what is scheduled for any given crew for a week, and let them figure out how to get the work done on time, and to standard. Consider setting in place more of a 'salary' than 'hourly rate'. It's easier than you might think.

Seriously, as an employer, if you were to turn it around into a Gen Z context – and say 'I'll pay you \$X.xx per week for the season. Some weeks will be heavier than others depending on the time of year. The attention to detail has to be met. The schedule will be reasonable. If you and your team mates can figure out a way to get the work done at or above standard, in less time, then you get paid time off. ' I.e. be super efficient and diligent, show up and dig in, and you can get hot or rainy days off, or half days, or Fridays off , or start later each day – etc.

Individually motivated to get what they want – more time off – and steady paycheck. BINGO.

If you're struggling with finding the motivation miracle – My suggestion is simple: Look in the mirror. If you see any grey hair, odds are that your company might be running 'behind the times'.

**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.*



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# THE PLANT LOUNGE

wiry stems, hairy leaves and bodacious blooms. . .

## *Allium thunbergii* 'Ozawa'

by Mark Dwyer, Landscape Prescriptions by MD

When we consider late-blooming perennials in the garden, we're typically interested in flower color that contributes from very late summer into early fall and hopefully up to that first hard frost. Some of the various goldenrods, asters, perennial mums and late-blooming monkshood typically come to mind for me in the Midwest. However, one of my favorite perennials that I don't even expect to bloom until early autumn is the 'Ozawa' Japanese onion. I typically get my best photographs of peak bloom for this compact selection of Thunberg's onion (*Allium thunbergii*) in early October. What's amazing is that I can photograph this bulbous, clump-forming perennial well into November and December where it still captures attention in the cold landscape as a dormant but ornamental contributor.

This species ornamental onion is native to Japan, Korea and coastal China and has wide adaptability in our gardens. Reaching only 12" tall when in bloom within thin, grassy foliage, 'Ozawa' really shines with loose, globular, purple-pink flower clusters. Prominent orange anthers are noteworthy at peak bloom and late season pollinators will appreciate the flowers as well. 'Ozawa' is considered to have slightly larger flowers than the straight species as well.

Flowering time in the Midwest is typically late September through October. 'Ozawa' will shrug off light frosts and even when hard frost arrives, the foliage turns a yellow-orange and the flowers are "freeze-dried" a nice pink that extends in to



winter. I've photographed shriveled 'Ozawa' flowers still showing pink, hovering above snow in December!

This perennial does best in full sun although very light shade can be tolerated. Well-drained soils are ideal and the best selections I've observed of this plant have been in sharply drained rock/alpine gardens. Heavy and overly wet soils should be avoided. 'Ozawa' is also effective in mass plantings and along border edges where it will steal the autumn show! Deer and rabbits should leave this plant alone and it has very few insect or disease problems.

Propagation is primarily by division although seed grown selections are not uncommon. With the late bloom time, it's rare to observe reseeding in cooler climates and I'm not aware

that this variety is a prolific reseeder in other locations. I'm surprised this variety is not more commonly found in retail situations.

### Why Grow *Allium thunbergii* 'Ozawa'?

- Late blooming in the garden
- Attracts pollinators late in the season
- Durability in a wide range of settings
- Excellent in rock gardens and the front of the border
- Long lasting cut flower

### Specifics:

**Name:** *Allium thunbergii* 'Ozawa'

**Common Name:** 'Ozawa' Japanese ornamental onion, 'Ozawa' Thunberg's onion

**Description:** This bulbous perennial variety features very late, purple-pink flower clusters (12" height) that start in very late summer and extend beyond light frost. The thin foliage offers nice texture and turns orange in later fall. This is truly one of the latest blooming perennials.



**Hardiness:** USDA Hardiness z 4-9

**In the Landscape:** Consider using this variety in areas where the late season color is most appreciated. 'Ozawa' has value in mass plantings, as a specimen(s) in the rock garden and as one of the latest blooming, pollinator-friendly perennials in the landscape.

*Reprinted with permission from Nursery Management Magazine.*

**About the Author:**

**MARK DWYER** is currently the Garden Manager for the Edgerton (WI) Hospital Healing Garden after 21 years as Director of Horticulture at Rotary Botanical Gardens (Janesville, WI). He also operates Landscape Prescriptions by MD, a landscape design and consultation business. [mcdwyer@zoho.com](mailto:mcdwyer@zoho.com) Visit: [www.landscapeprescriptionsmd.com](http://www.landscapeprescriptionsmd.com).



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