

## Meet Our Seminar Speakers!

### **Keynote Speaker: Tim Zimmerman, CNLP**

#### **Seminar: Landscape Design Through a New Lens**

As designers we all get in a rut, using the same varieties again and again as we are comfortable with how they will perform. If it has been a bit since you have gone looking for what else is out there, the last few years have seen an influx of new plants that can expand your repertoire. Going through some common sites and scenarios we all encounter we will discuss what newer options exist to meet customer requests.

Tim has been a sales representative for Medford Nurseries for ten seasons, serving garden centers and landscapers in Western and Central NY and NW PA. He assists with plant selection and procurement for sale and installation, as well as teaching about plant varieties and design regularly at industry trade events. Tim spent 16 years as a designer and salesman with high volume landscape contractors in the Buffalo area, including 13 years as landscape manager with Menne Nursery in Amherst, NY. He lives and gardens with his wife and two kids in Snyder, NY, fighting the bunnies, deer, and clay right along with you.

### **Natalie Carmolli**

#### **Seminar: Beautiful and Smart, Hard-Working Shrubs That Shine**

#### **Seminar: Hydrangea Heroes**

Natalie as a public relations specialist for Spring Meadow Nursery/Proven Winners® ColorChoice® shrubs. Natalie grew up in the floral industry, has a bachelor's degree in the theatrical arts, has earned a Certificate of Mastery in tree and shrub identification from Longwood Gardens, and of course, is an avid gardener. And she LOVES talking about shrubs.

### **Jim Charlier**

#### **Seminar: Designing Delight: Distinctive Buffalo Gardens**

Jim is the creative force behind JCharlier Communication Design, a graphic design studio celebrated for its diverse portfolio, from logos and print advertising to TV commercials and published books. His artistic talent has garnered acclaim, earning him numerous regional and national awards. Beyond his graphic design endeavors, Jim actively contributes to the botanical community. He serves as a board member for the Buffalo & Erie Botanical Gardens and has previously held the position of president of Garden Walk Buffalo, America's largest garden tour. As an international speaker, Jim shares his expertise in horticultural tourism and garden design, captivating audiences with his insights. His latest book, Harry Potter: Herbology Magic: Botanical Projects, Terrariums, and Gardens Inspired by the Wizarding World, features more than 25 engaging DIY projects inspired by the beloved film series, complemented by invaluable gardening insights. Collaborating with garden writer Sally Cunningham, he co-authored Buffalo Style Gardens, Create a Quirky, One-of-a-Kind Private Garden with Eye-Catching Designs, a definitive guide that promises unique and captivating garden designs. In addition to book writing, his garden photography has appeared in many garden books and magazines nationally. Jim maintains a longstanding garden blog at [ArtofGardening.org](http://ArtofGardening.org), chronicling his passion for horticulture and design.

### **Brian Eshenaur**

#### **Seminar: What to Watch for in 2024: Landscape and Nursery Pests We Can Expect in the Coming Growing Season.**

Brian is senior extension associate at Cornell University. Brian's current efforts with NYS Integrated Pest Management Program emphasizes the detection and management of invasive pests and he works to bring sustainable pest management innovations to NY Agriculture producers and residents. His leadership with the invasive spotted lanternfly in NYS has brought national recognition. Brian also delivers extension programming and conducts applied research on pest control solutions for in nursery and landscape settings. With a background in plant diagnostics, his work focuses on insect and plant disease identification and management.

### **Mike Frank**

#### **Seminar: Growing the Leader from Within – A different look at being the best teammate.**

Mike has 30 plus years as owner of Chevalier Outdoor Living, He is past president of PLANT WNY and the NYSNLA, member of SIMA, CEL class of 2000. Mike is currently enrolled in BTA (Break Through Academy). In his free time, he loves gardening, cooking, and long-distance adventure motorcycle riding having completed two unofficial Iron Butt Rides in the past 2 years.

### **Bryce Gossel, CNLP**

#### **Seminar: Choosing the Best Base System for Your Project**

Bryce is with Gossel Lawn & Landscape is a full-service landscape company that designs, installs, and maintains landscapes with proper horticultural practices. He also is a Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional (CNLP). This seminar will be looking at ways we can improve efficiency in our hardscape installation with advances in paver base methods, base compaction equipment, site layout and excavation. And how to choose the best base system for each individual paver project.

### **Clark Janson, CNLP**

#### **Seminar: Water Features 101**

Clark, a Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional (CNLP) is the owner of The Barefooted Gardener. He is passionate about teaching and creating tranquil outdoor spaces, with an ecosystem philosophy, using water features and plants which look tropical but are hardy once established. Clark believes that given our climate, learning from the plantings and projects which don't work is just as important as the successes.

### **Joshua Konovitz, CERP**

#### **Seminar: Plants for Wet Areas**

Joshua has dedicated his professional career to understanding the botanical world around us. A Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner through the Society for Ecological Restoration, his passion is protecting and restoring the ecological function of our landscape. As the Forester for Erie County, Joshua manages the vegetation for 10,000 acres of County parkland, balancing recreational, educational, and economic interests with the conservation of natural resources and ecological communities. Joshua is also the owner of Druid, an ecological contracting company and consultant specializing in conservation management projects in ecologically sensitive communities, and with rare, threatened, and endangered species. From the islands of the Niagara River, to the sphagnum mats of peat bogs, and the riparian corridors in between, Joshua has gotten his feet wet in wetland projects throughout the region.

### **Margaret M. Lapp, MPH, MSLA**

#### **Seminar: Planting Solutions for Changing Sites**

Margaret is an engaging social change agent, who values the interplay of health outcomes, the built environment and access to green space. Lapp is Buffalo Olmsted Park Conservancy's first Arboretum Director and Curator where she oversees the entire South Park Arboretum restoration. The first to combine a Master of Landscape Architecture, from SUNY ESF, and a Master of Public Health, from SUNY Upstate Medical University, Lapp is a knowledge-seeker who values the power of research and multi-disciplinary collaboration. A curiosity for horticulture propelled her from her family's vegetable farm to South America by way of Cornell. As the Cornell University Dreer Award recipient, Lapp designed the first highland ethnobotanic garden, as part of an Ecuadorian Food for Peace project. Lapp is an adjunct instructor in the Horticulture Program at Niagara County Community College where she enjoys teaching Art and History of Horticulture and is studying to become a certified Arborist through the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). Motivated to restore the South Park Arboretum to its original Olmstedian glory, on behalf of Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Margaret invites you to consider giving to the Conservancy as it works toward this significant cultural and historic landscape and its restoration here: <https://www.bfloparks.org/support/arboretum/>

### **Andrea Locke**

#### **Seminar: Woody Invasive Species Management**

Andrea started as Coordinator for the Western New York Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management in January 2014. WNY PRISM works to address invasive species priorities using a coordinated partnership network and with the goal to improve, restore and protect local aquatic and terrestrial resources by improving the effectiveness of invasive species management efforts. Prior to working for WNY PRISM, Andrea worked in the mid-west on a high diversity prairie restoration and as coordinator of a partnership network focused on working with private landowners to help implement stewardship on their lands.

### **Ryan Miller**

#### **Seminar: Cyber Security and Insurance**

As a Retirement Plan Advisor, Ryan specializes in plan compliance, plan design optimization, investment management, fiduciary support, and employee education. With 10+ years of experience, Ryan helps businesses design and manage their retirement plans in order to stay compliant and accomplish company goals. Ryan has worked with dozens of businesses, both large and small, to help their employees enroll and understand their employer-sponsored retirement plans. Prior to Lawley, Ryan worked with retirement plan advisory firms at a large regional investment management firm before switching to the advisory side. Ryan is a Certified Financial Planner (CFP), Accredited Investment Fiduciary (AIF), and a Certified Health Savings Advisor (CHSA). Ryan holds a Life, Accident, and Health license and FINRA Series 7, 63, & 65 licenses. Ryan sits on the ambassador council for Rochester Regional Health and the young professionals board for Villa of Hope.

### **Tom Mitchell**

#### **Seminar: Tree and Shrub Installation**

#### **Seminar: Biological Pest Control (IPM)**

Tom is presently teaching horticulture at Niagara County Community College and previously taught horticulture at McKinley High School for 33 years. Tom teaches the plant protection class at NCCC which results in the 30-hour certification needed to take the state pesticide exam. Tom is the owner of Mitchell Landscaping Inc. Mitchell Landscaping specializes in landscape maintenance. Tom is a past president of the NYS Agriculture Teachers Association and PLANT WNY and served as trustee of the WNYSNLA Foundation.

### **Kristy Schmitt, CNLP**

#### **Seminar: Ferns for Fascinating Gardens**

Kristy currently works at Tripi's Landscaping and lives in Buffalo with her husband and her daughter Linden (and several fish and cats). Prior to Tripi's she spent 9 years as the Director of Education at the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens. Kristy became a CNLP in 2017 and has been an active member of PLANT WNY since 2015 when the Botanical Gardens became involved with Plantasia and the Children's Garden. One of her many plant passions is mosses and she enjoys sharing her enthusiasm for the botanical world with people of all ages. She has a background in botany and biology with her B.S. from SUNY-ESF and her masters in Science Education from Syracuse University.

### **Mike Shadrack**

#### **Seminar: Which Hosta Where**

Mike is president of the Western New York Hosta Society, has been a member of The American Hosta Society since 1992 and has served in several Board positions. He has also been a member of the British Hosta and Hemerocallis Society for 22 years, is former chairman and currently executive bulletin editor. Mike is a former Board member of the Buffalo and Erie County Botanical Gardens. He is a board member of Gardens Buffalo Niagara and chair of their Events Committee. Mike has been growing hostas since 1986 and has been trying to hybridize almost as long. He maintained a large collection of modern cultivars at Smug Creek Gardens in Hamburg, NY. He is also an accomplished photographer; his photos of hosta varieties and gardens have been published in UK and US catalogs and magazines. In addition, he supplied the illustrations for the Royal Horticultural Society, Wisley handbook, Hostas. He is co-author and photographer of the book, The Color Encyclopedia of Hostas, released in April, 2004. The book was named the "2005 Reference Book of the Year" by The British Garden Writers Guild. The sequel – Timber Press Pocket Guide to Hostas - was released in September, 2007. In addition, a French hosta book, Les Hostas was published in early 2007 with Mike as photographer and co-author. In 2010 Timber Press published a new edition of The New Encyclopedia of Hostas with updated descriptions and photographs of new cultivars. In 2010 he co-authored, with Kathy Guest, "The Book of Little Hostas" also published by Timber Press.

**Steve Sypniewski, Lifetime CNLP**

**Seminar: Dos and Don'ts of Winter Pruning**

**Seminar: Alternatives to Using Glyphosate in the Landscape**

Steve, a lifetime resident of WNY, followed his father's footsteps into the green industry. Steve worked for several Buffalo area landscape firms, including his own, with experience in a wide range of services, including design/build, maintenance, and tree service. He is a Lifetime CNLP, an ISA Certified Arborist, and a NYS Certified Pesticide Applicator in category 3a. He is currently the assistant campus planner and arboretum manager at SUNY Buffalo State.

**Jennifer Watson**

**Secure Act 2.0 and What You Should Know About It**

Jennifer, CPCU, AAI, AIS, ACSR, has been working to protect business owners of NYSNLA and its regions for over 20 years. As a Business Insurance Advisor with a focus on the nursery/ landscape/ snow removal industry, she gets below the surface to understand what's keeping you up at night, goes above and beyond and brings together the right resources to get you where you want to be – all with passion and commitment that you won't find elsewhere. Jennifer lives in Rochester, NY and obtained her B. S. in Economics from St. John Fisher College. Her clients say one of the biggest reasons they continue to put their trust in Jennifer is because she acts with transparency and they know she always has their best interest in mind.

**Sharon Webber, CNLP**

**Seminar: Ornamental Grasses**

Sharon is a horticultural consultant, educator, and trainer. As a NYS Certified Nursery & Landscape Professional with over 30 years of experience, she specializes in assisting residential and commercial clients with solutions for a wide array of gardening and landscaping needs staying true to her commitment to being a good steward of the environment. Her career in horticulture began over 30 years ago at The Plantage, Inc. on Long Island where she worked for the iconic plants-woman Lois Woodhull. Eventually, Sharon returned to her hometown and established Earth Lines, a landscape maintenance and design/build company where she served as owner/operator for many years. Sharon went on to enter the education arena as a Cornell Cooperative Extension Horticulture Educator and as an Adjunct Instructor in the Horticulture Program at Niagara County Community College. Wholesale plant production on Long Island, landscape/design build work, teaching and public lecturing make up the fabric of Sharon's career. Additionally, she is a past president of PLANT WNY; co-founder of Plantasia Garden and Landscape Show; PLANT WNY's Person of the Year (2000); and past president of Grassroots Gardens of Buffalo. Her proudest moments include being one of the first women to be elected to the PLANT WNY Board of Directors (1996) and during her tenure as President, spearheading the creation of Plantasia with the help of her fellow Green Industry professionals.