

January 2014



WEST MICHIGAN NURSERY & LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION

WMNLA News

President's Message

2014 - Are You Ready For a Great Year?

I recently spoke with Amy Frankmann, executive director of MNLA, and she reported that nearly all the green industry professionals she queried over the last few months reported a better year financially in 2013 than in 2012. I agreed with her, as mostly all the people I've talked to reiterated that sentiment. This bodes well for all of us in the green industry, as it seems like the overall economy is improving and people are loosening up with their discretionary income.

I've personally noticed many more new houses being built lately than over the last 3-4 years, which is good news for all of us who provide products and services to homeowners. 2014 looks to continue the upward trend, and my question for you is... are you ready?

I mean that literally, as in what if the upcoming year is so good that you are unprepared to handle extra workload and demands of more business? Having too much business can be just as much a problem as not enough.

An example from my experience this past season was that the farm I usually buy sod from was sold out in early September. They completely ran out of product during the fall planting season, and they couldn't grow another crop fast enough so they had to turn customers away at a time when demand was high. I had to look elsewhere for the product, and they lost a lot of potential fall sales.

There were times in my own business this past season where we had to turn potential clients away as well, due to our small staff not being able to take on additional work. I wasn't happy about turning clients away, but I did vow to be better prepared this season in anticipation of 2014 being a great year. One of my goals for 2014 is to be prepared for a great season and to put the pieces in place that will allow us to capitalize on all potential new opportunities while also satisfying all our existing customers to the high level they've come to expect. So here's to a great upcoming year... are you ready?

Paul Kiefer

Paul Kiefer owns Specialty Gardens, LLC in Grand Haven and is the 2013/14 President of WMNLA. Contact him with comments, ideas, & questions at (616) 502-9815 or specialtygardens@charter.net.

WMNLA Scholarship Application Available Online

Attention all High School & College Students in Ottawa, Kent, Allegan, Newaygo, Muskegon and Oceana interested in a degree in a Green Industry field..

The WMNLA Scholarship Application through the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation is available for completion online at : <http://www.ghacf.org/scholarships.htm> Students should go to this page to see available scholarships and then go to the application tab to click the link to begin the E-grant process.

The printed and signed application, transcript and page one of the FAFSA must be stapled together and postmarked to GHACF no later than March 5th, 2014. All of these instructions are on the online application also. For questions contact: Barbara Post, Director of Donor Services and Scholarships, Grand Haven Area Community Foundation, 1 South Harbor, Grand Haven, MI 49417. 616-842-6378.

March Garden Day Saturday March 15, 2014

A Celebration of Gardening!

*Sponsored by the West Michigan Nursery and Landscape Association
Grand Haven Community Center
421 Columbus St., Grand Haven Mi 49417*

8:00 Registration and Check In

View exhibits, indoor gardens and Silent Auction.

9:00 Session 1

‘The Know Maintenance Approach : The Concept’ with Roy Diblick. Roy is co-owner of Northwind Perennial Farm in Burlington, Wisconsin. He has been growing traditional and native perennials since 1978. His garden designs emphasize plant relationships to maintenance strategies and costs. His new book ‘The Know Maintenance Perennial Garden’ will be available for purchase.

10:30 Session 2

‘The Know Approach: The Plants.’ with Roy Diblick. Roy’s thoughtful, fresh design uses contemporary styles and diverse perennial plantings while responsibly addressing maintenance concerns. Roy uses regionally dependable perennials to create endless natural plant patterns and calculates the necessary investment-both in time and money to maintain them.

11:45-1:15 Lunch Break/Break Out Sessions

“Discovering Daylilies” Carol DeVries, Advanced Master Gardener, Past President of the Grand Valley Daylily Society

“Introduction to Square Foot Gardening”, Dirk Jonker, Jonkers Gardens

“The DeVos Japanese Garden at Frederick Meijer Gardens and Sculpture Park”, Ed McKee, Horticulture Manager, Frederick Meijer Garden & Sculpture Park

“New Plants: Perennials, Annuals & Shrubs”, Heidi Grasman, owner Garden Crossings

“Garden Accoutrements: Dressing up Your Yard: Great Ways to add Pizazz to your Garden”, Jan Landry, owner Huntree Nursery

“Inspiring the Next Generation to Love the Garden”, Sarah Koert, past horticulturist at Morton Arboretum Children’s Garden

1:45 Session 3 Vegetable Soup:

“ A Potpourri of Vegetables”, Rebecca Finneran and Pam Cater

Rebecca and Pam will illustrate how you can harvest and enjoy a wide range of tasty vegetables regardless of how small or limited your garden space is. Rebecca Finneran received a Bachelor of Science in Horticulture with an emphasis on Landscape Design from Michigan State University in 1983. She has been a MSU Extension horticulture educator since 1987. Rebecca helps the green industry and consumers learn about horticulture, the environment and pesticide safety.

Pam Cater received a bachelor of Horticulture with an Integrated Pest Management specialization from Michigan State University Pam owned Hidden Grove Greenhouse & Nursery for 21 years. Pam spends her retirement playing in her own gardens.

March Garden Day Expo Registration for March 15, 2014

WMNLA will host the Annual **March Garden Day Expo** to the gardening public of West Michigan on **Saturday, March 15** at the **Grand Haven Community Center**.

This day long event allows WMNLA a great opportunity to market our professional members to consumers in advance of the Spring season.

Over 250 people attend this event from Ada to Zeeland, Allegan to Whitehall, and Allendale to West Olive and all locales in between. Proceeds go to support the **WMNLA Scholarship Fund** and the **Horticulture Education Grant Fund**.

A Standard Booth space of 10’x 10’ is available. **Early Bird registration cost is \$60 before February 1, 2014, after this date the cost is \$75.** Reserve your space early and take advantage of the “early bird” price.

Exhibitor move in will be on Friday, March 14, from 1-5:00 PM and Saturday March 15, from 7-8:00 AM. Tear down will be at 3:30 PM on Saturday.

Contact **Pam Cater**, **wmnla2013@gmail.com**. Or call **616-402-4885** to reserve your space.

WMNLA 2014 Landscape Challenge Winners!



Winning Design Team for MNLA Landscape Challenge
Rebekah Vandenberg and Jon Mellema, Shoreline Landscape & Maintenance;
Kelly Karp, Landscape Design Service;
Ryan Bose, Bartlett Tree Service;
Matt Mellema, Mellema Nursery LLC; not pictured, Scott Menghini, Landscape Design Service

New Website for WMNLA!!

Classifieds! Employment Opportunities!

Look for our newly redesigned website at www.WMNLA.com. We now have the capability to offer our members the opportunity to post employment openings and equipment for sale. Classifieds will run for one month at the low fee of \$5.00 per ad. Limit postings to 3-4 sentences with the optional ability to post a photo. Contact Pam Cater at wmnla2013@gmail.com. for information.

Call for Board Nominations

We need to elect *two* new board members to serve the next three-year term commencing in June 2014.

Finishing their terms are **Jon Mellema, Forever Green Sod LLC and Shoreline Landscape and Maintenance ; Tony Hamilton, Berry Family of Nurseries and Paul Kiefer, Specialty Gardens.**

Our goal is to have balanced representation from the green industry. Contact one of the current board members if you have interest in serving on the WMNLA Board of Directors or if you have any suggestions for nominees that you think would serve WMNLA well.

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**WEST MICHIGAN NURSERY &
LANDSCAPE ASSOCIATION**

P.O. Box 96
West Olive, MI 49460

For advertising, business news, submission
of articles and WMNLA member news:

Contact Pam Cater at

(616) 402-4885

Email:wmnla2013@gmail.com

**Mark Your
Calendar!**

**Saturday March
15th, 2014**
“March Garden Day”
Grand Haven Community Center

2013-14 WMNLA Board of Directors

Paul Kiefer, President, Specialty Gardens
Matt Mellema, Vice President, Mellema Nursery
Tony Hamilton, Treasurer, Berry Family Nursery

Lisa Denison, Secretary, Landscape Design Services
Mike Teunis, Member At Large, BFG Supply
Dirk Jonker, Member At Large, Jonker's Gardens
Jon Mellema, Member at Large, Forever Green Sod, LLC
and Shoreline Landscape and Maintenance

“Social Media for Green Industry Businesses “

Presented by Christopher VanOosterhout, Muskegon Community College

Wednesday, February 12th

11:30 a.m.—2:30 p.m.

At The Grand Hall

Harbourfront Place,

**Grand Haven \$15 per person,
includes lunch**

Send 3, 4th employee is free

Door Prizes!!!!

Christopher VanOosterhout is an e-commerce consultant with 18 years of experience helping organizations across the United States build effective eBusiness operations. His experience includes work with all types of businesses from sole proprietorships to multi-billion-dollar corporations and a broad portfolio of non-profits. He speaks to a wide

cross-section of business, trade and community groups on issues related to eBusiness, privacy, digital security and computer literacy. In addition to his consulting work he is a full-time faculty member at Muskegon Community College where he leads their Web development degree program and teaches social media and computer literacy courses. For more information visit:

www.vanoosterhout.com

Social media is surrounded by hype and well-reasoned justification. While social media "cheerleaders" (often trying to sell you a product or service) tell entrepreneurs their business venture is doomed without social media,

cynics can be heard saying it is a waste of time and a distraction. Who should you listen to and how do you sort the fact from fiction? In this session we will take a realistic look at real world facts about how social media can help your business. We will also have an honest discussion about the potential pitfalls and draw backs. You will leave with some creative examples of how the nursery and landscape industry can use social media to their advantage.

RSVP by February 5th

**Let us know you are coming so our hosts
can prepare!**

**WMNLA member businesses & staff are
welcomed!**

**RSVP to Pam Cater at
(616) 402-4885 ♦ wmnla2013@gmail.com**