



SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday, April 25

Joint meeting of the Master Gardeners
of Bergen and Passaic Counties

1 Bergen County Plaza
1st-floor meeting room
Hackensack

Refreshments at 7 pm
Announcements at 7:20 pm
Program to follow



Larry Weaner
presents

Natural Landscape Design: Meadows, Woods, and Water

Natural gardens can reduce maintenance, improve the environment, and enhance the beauty of any residential property. Through a series of case studies, this presentation details techniques for gracefully integrating native plant compositions and ecological processes into the residential setting. Projects are presented from inception to maturity, providing a behind-the-scenes look at both practical and aesthetic considerations involved in creating and maintaining natural gardens.

Since 1977, Larry Weaner has been practicing landscape design that combines expertise in horticulture, environmental science, and the traditions of garden design. He founded Larry Weaner Landscape Associates in 1982.

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Links are clickable and are noted in **blue**.

His design and restoration work spans more than 10 states and has been profiled in national publications including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Landscape Architecture Magazine*, *Garden Design*, *American Gardener*, *Wildflower Magazine*, and the American Society of Landscape Architects' "The Dirt" blog. Larry has received numerous awards including the Landscape Design Award from the New England Wildflower Society for use of native plants in "exceptional and distinctive landscape compositions."

From the President's Desk



Do you have a passion for horticulture, the environment, or sustainability? And would you like to share your knowledge with others? We are looking to develop our Speakers Bureau and can use volunteers to talk to small groups like garden clubs and other organizations. This is a great way to earn volunteer hours, inspire others, help us raise honorariums, and meet people. Experience is not necessary and we can help you with topics and presentations.

To learn more contact Arnie Friedman at 201-818-2614 or arnie1@mindspring.com. We would love to fulfill every request we receive for a speaker.

A special "thank you" to members who bring little treats to the meetings. Hank Annunziata does a wonderful job at hospitality, and we appreciate the members who help to make the meetings a little sweeter.

Happy gardening.

- **Joseph Cooper**

MG OF BC NEWS



Meet Elizabeth Bisaccio, Class of 2009

By Miriam Taub
Speak to Elizabeth “Liz” Bisaccio about her beekeeping hobby and you’ll learn about nucs (short for “nucleus” and pronounced “nukes”), frames,

smokers, propolis, pheromones, and all the other terminology associated with an apiary.

Liz, 55, who grew up in Vernon, began beekeeping in 2008 after a visit to an organic farm in Vermont owned by a friend of her mother. The daughter, Liz recalled, was a beekeeper. “In the old days I would have pictured a male beekeeper,” Liz said. “A woman beekeeper fascinated me.”

That visit inspired Liz to take the Introduction to Beekeeping course offered by the Sussex County Beekeepers Association. By Easter of that year, Liz had bought her first bees. Liz says all municipalities in New Jersey allow beekeeping though each has different rules for the placement of hives.

Unlike most beekeepers who own hives for the honey, Liz said she owns hives for the pollination; the honey is a bonus. She and her husband, John, a Clifton firefighter, have a vegetable and flower garden on their North Haledon property. In 2016, Liz had two hives, which she likened to children. One hive, she recollected, “was calm as could be,” while the other, even if smoked, “would be nasty if I was trying to take out a frame. They would attack my veil.” (Yes, she has a full-body beekeeper’s suit.) Each hive can have up to 600,000 bees.

Meanwhile, Liz’s connection to gardening began as a child thanks to her great-grandmother, Amy Van Haste. Liz explained that Mrs. Van Haste had created many types of gardens — shade, fern, rose, formal, and grape arbors — on two lots she and her husband owned behind their home in Hawthorne. “She took me around the yard and we looked at the snowdrops and crocuses and bleeding heart and she would open one up and tell me a story with each one,” she remembered fondly. Liz enrolled in the MG Class of 2009 at the suggestion of her friend Karen Pennell, also in the Class of 2009.

This is the second year in a row that Liz said her bees died over the winter. Once it gets warmer, she’ll buy another nuc (a small colony complete with a fertilized queen) for the 2017 season. She is a member of the Sussex County Beekeepers Association and volunteers at the bee booth at the New Jersey State Fair and the 4-H Master Gardeners Fair/Fall Festival.

In her career, Liz has worked mostly in food and food management. Her first job was as a cook in a German restaurant. (“Now John does all the cooking; I clean the gutters and garden — role reversal,” she laughed.) She later managed the Burger King at Willowbrook Mall and another Burger King in the Great Falls historic district of Paterson. Most recently she prepared hot meals for three schools from the kitchen at Eastern Christian High School in North Haledon. Liz and John have two children, Brianne, 22, and Kyle, 23, and a border collie-lab mix, Gracie, who accompanies Liz on her walks on nearby High Mountain.

In addition to the bees and garden, Liz loves to travel. California and France are on this year’s itinerary. The Bisaccios also recently purchased a mobile home on Anna Marie Island, near Bradenton, off the west coast of Florida, and Liz is very excited about the prospect of decorating the home after it’s gutted.

Bergen County Rutgers Cooperative Extension Office

Joel Flagler Agricultural/Resources Management Agent & County Extension Dept. Head 201-336-6780
Joe Papa Horticulture Consultant 201-336-6788

Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers, the State University of NJ, US Department of Agriculture, and Bergen County Board of Chosen Freeholders. Rutgers Cooperative Extension educational programs are offered to all without regard to race, religion, color, age, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Rutgers Cooperative Extension is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Vote on by-law change at May meeting

Bylaws, article IV, section 1B to read: “Lifetime Master Gardeners.” This will be a designation to those who have been active, dues-paying members for at least 20 years and who have accumulated a minimum of 1,000 hours over those 20 years. This membership shall leave payment of dues and the number of volunteer/education hours up to the ability and discretion of the member.

This change will be voted on at the May 23 meeting.

SHOWS, CONFERENCES & WORKSHOPS

Gardening for the Birds

Learn the types of plants, bushes, and trees that make a good place for birds to build nests; the plants that provide the best food sources for birds; and which plants provide good nesting materials. Come to Van Vleck House & Gardens for a 90-minute class to help you come up with ideas to create a habitat for migrating and resident birds. Participants will walk through the Van Vleck gardens for inspiration and ideas. The class is Saturday, April 8 from 10-11:30 am.

Registration is required by calling Van Vleck at 973-744-4752 or writing to education@vanvleck.org. Cost is \$10 per person for Friends of Van Vleck and \$15 per person for non-members. Van Vleck is located at 21 Van Vleck St., Montclair. Click [here](#) to visit the Van Vleck website.

HORTICULTURE



From the Green Side

By Arnie Friedman

This photo is from National Geographic. For more photos and an article, click [here](#).

A few times I have mentioned in articles on lawns and grasses that we should be looking to use grass seed mixes that contain tall fescues in place of the common

perennial ryegrasses, and fescues. My reasoning is that tall fescues have been bred from prairie grasses that have deep roots and can survive with much less water.

These mixes are more and more available in our local nurseries especially if you ask for them. The accompanying photo from *National Geographic* really illustrates what I have been talking about. As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words.

Perennial crops ensure that there are living roots in the soil 100% of the time. This prevents soil erosion, reduces compaction, feeds the soil food web, and pushes the soil profile lower.

This picture shows one of the most important properties of many native grasses and ornamentals — their amazingly deep root structure. Compare this root structure to the various types of turf grass we use. If you have ever laid sod, or watched someone else do it, you know that virtually all of the various species we use in our lawns (collectively known as “turf grasses”) have root systems that do not extend below 3 inches in depth, which means they are very inefficient in nutrient and water uptake.

The result: These turf grasses are more susceptible to drought conditions and all manner of diseases. It also means that we have to supplement them with nutrients and water. This is expensive and unsustainable. And, virtually none of our native species of insects are able to make use of these exotic plants. This, in turn, means fewer songbirds in our gardens because songbird chicks typically require a high-protein diet of nothing but insects and larvae until they have fledged.

This is not a manifesto against lawns. But too much cut grass is boring. We spend a great deal more money than may be necessary on feeding, watering, and maintaining a lawn that covers most of the average suburban property. Why not consider shrinking the area devoted to lawn space and expanding the beds? It's cheaper. It's more attractive. It's better for the environment. And the birds, butterflies, dragonflies, and fireflies in your neighborhood will thank you by spending more time on your property.

TRIPS AND TOURS

Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture Blue Hill Farm

Wednesday, May 17, 10:30 am
630 Bedford Road, Pocantico Hills, NY 10591 (if using GPS, enter Tarrytown, NY 10591)
Blue Hill Farm tour \$25 pp; buffet lunch \$40 pp

For those who do not want the buffet lunch, an alternative lunch option will be offered within five minutes of the farm. E-mail josie_ko1@hotmail.com to sign up.

Mail payment to:

Master Gardeners of Bergen County
Attn: Bruce Walenczyk
P.O. Box 542
Glen Rock NJ 07452-0542

Registration deadline is April 30 for tour/tour and lunch.

VOLUNTEER SITE NEWS

The Hermitage

Work has continued through the winter including gallon-jug planting and maple syruping. Bottling the syrup required a lot of boiling. It takes 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of syrup.

We tapped 15 trees and collected about 10 gallons a day for two weeks. We boiled down sap at home to a more manageable volume; then we had the big “boil off” in the kitchen at the Hermitage. The syrup is incredibly sweet and tasty and is available for a limited time. Contact Monica Buesser at mkbuesser@gmail.com for details.



Clockwise from top left: Hermitage syrup; Noel Schulz and Arta Pagano pouring; Melody Corcoran at the stove; from left: Lynette Stewart, Dominick Badolato, and Lynette Stewart.

New projects are blooming at the Hermitage this spring. A Girl Scout working on her Gold Award will create a Victorian rose garden and a children’s vegetable garden. The scout hopes to get a dumpster to get rid of any debris from the shed demolition. The old shed was taken down, and most of the wood is being recycled and reused.

A landscape plan is being created by Eric Rohsler of Rohsler’s Allendale Nursery. He is creating a beautiful plan that uses hardy, deer-resistant plants. The plan will be implemented in sections as funding allows. Donations will be accepted for each plant in this landscape plan and the donor’s name will be put on a temporary marker. Master Gardeners will install the plants probably in late May to early June.

The Hermitage is located at 335 N. Franklin Tpke., Ho-Ho-Kus.

- **Monica Buesser**

Thielke/Glen Rock Arboretum

Come to the Thielke/Glen Rock Arboretum seasonal Weed Warrior Day stewardship project Sunday, April 2 from 10 am-1 pm. Local expert Elaine Silverstein, along with other knowledgeable volunteers, will be on hand to share their wisdom about weeds and other invasive plants that may be homesteading on your property. Rain date is Sunday, April 23 from 1-4 pm.

No experience is necessary; training will be done on site. Wear boots, and dress for the weather. Bring gloves, kneelers, pruners, and water though extras are available if you don’t have them. Visit the [website](#) for more information and how to become a member or visit our Facebook page. The arboretum is located at 460 Doremus Ave., Glen Rock.

Spring StoryWalk®

Visit our new spring StoryWalk, Plant the Tiny Seed, at the Thielke/Glen Rock Arboretum. Author Christie Matheson has written many books and magazine articles for adults but is best known for her interactive children’s books. You may remember her from our fall StoryWalk, Tap a Magic Tree.

In Plant the Tiny Seed, children will help the tiny seed grow into a zinnia in a garden full of buzzing bees, curious hummingbirds, and colorful butterflies, as the children wiggle their fingers to water the seeds, clap to make the sun shine after the rain, and shoo away a hungry snail. Adding to the fun, children will seek out each page of the story as they walk along the beautiful trails of the arboretum.

StoryWalks are free and are an excellent opportunity to explore and build reading confidence in children.

- **Carolyn Gretchen, publicity chair, 201-893-1664**

Washington Spring Garden



We have been busy at Washington Spring Garden taking care of some long-overdue pruning of our mature shrubs. We

meet on Thursday mornings at 8:30 am and work until 12-12:30 pm.

We will have much to do but the accompanying photo shows our reward in the not-too-distant future.

Contact Suzanne Danzig at suzannedanzig@gmail.com for more information.

- Suzanne Danzig

HORTICULTURE GRAPEVINE

- April 3** **7 pm, Sun Dial Garden Club**, Meadowbrook Elementary School, 50 Piermont Ave., Hillsdale. Speaker: Patricia Libutti. Topic: Propagation of culinary herbs.
- April 6** **7:30 pm, Garden Club of Harrington Park**, Harrington Park Library, 10 Herring St. Speaker: Terrence McGarty, author and owner of Telmarc Gardens. Topic: Daylilies.
- April 7** **2 pm, Demarest Garden Club**, United Methodist Church social hall, 109 Hardenburgh Ave. Speaker: Rick Mikula, the "butterfly guy."
- April 11** **7 pm, Ramsey Area Garden Club**, Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, 55 Wyckoff Ave., corner of Woodland Avenue, across from the Ramsey Library. Speaker: Carol Anton, floral designer and member. Program: Demonstration of a spring floral arrangement.
- April 12** **7:30 pm, Bergen-Passaic Chapter, Native Plant Society of New Jersey**, New York-New Jersey Trail Conference headquarters, 600 Ramapo Valley Road, Mahwah. Speaker: Eric Rohsler, Rohsler's Allendale Nursery. Topic: Native plants. (Native plants will be available for purchase.) Contact: elasil@optonline.net.
- April 12** **7:30 pm, Oakland Area Garden Club**, Oakland Senior Center, 20 Lawlor Drive. Speaker: Marc Gussen, director/naturalist, Closter Nature Center. Topic: Suburban wildlife and how it affects the plants we choose.
- April 12** **7:30 pm, Wyckoff Area Garden Club**, Monroe Room, Wyckoff Public Library, 200 Woodland Ave. Speaker: Donna Dorsey, co-owner of Goffle Brook Farm & Garden Center, Ridgewood. Topic: What's hot this year in gardening.
- April 18** **7 pm, Backyard Garden Club**, River Vale Library, 412 Rivervale Road. Speaker: Marc Gussen, director/naturalist, Closter Nature Center. Topic: Hydroponics.
- April 18** **7:45 pm, Glen Rock Garden Club**, Municipal Annex, 678 Maple Ave. Speaker: Celeste Stapleton, Rohsler's Allendale Nursery. Topic: Deer-resistant plants and shrubs.
- April 19** **7:45 pm, Allendale Garden Club**, Brighton Gardens, 5 Boroline Road, Saddle River. Speaker: Jean Epiphan. Topic: Ferns.

- April 19** **7 pm, Hasbrouck Heights Garden Club**, library meeting room, 320 Boulevard. Speaker: Alina Bee. Topic: Succulents - a planting demonstration with samples.
- April 21** **3-8 pm and April 22, 9 am-3 pm, Bergen County African Violet Society**, Old North Reformed Church, 120 Washington Ave., Dumont. Topic: Ultra violet circus. Contact: Sharon Lynch at violetmom@optonline.net or 201-784-9501.
- April 24** **7:30 pm, Ho-Ho-Kus Garden Club**, Community Church of Ho-Ho-Kus, 400 Warren Ave. Enter on Sycamore Avenue, parking on street. Speaker: Ron Binaghi, owner of Stokes Farm, Old Tappan. Topic: Pros and cons of organic vs. conventional flower and vegetable gardens with examples.
- April 27** **7:45 pm, Bergen County African Violet Society**, Old North Reformed Church, 120 Washington Ave., Dumont. Convention DVD and African violet pests and prevention. Contact: Sharon Lynch at violetmom@optonline.net or 201-784-9501.
- April 28** **8 pm, Fyke Nature Association**, Allendale Municipal Building, 500 W. Crescent Ave. Speaker: Edith Wallace. Topic: Native plants of DeKorte Park - feeding the birds and butterflies.
- April 29** **9 am-noon, Garden Club of Harrington Park**, Harrington Park Library parking lot, 10 Herring St. Plant sale and annual fundraiser featuring many homegrown plants.

Deadline for the Horticulture Grapevine is the 25th of the prior month.

- To submit information about garden club meetings, contact Lucy Malka at lhalka@optonline.net or 201-791-3562.
- To submit information about plant society meetings, contact Catie Farahat at cwfarahat@scatteringlight.com.

The Master Gardeners of Bergen County does not share or sell its email/ mailing list to non-members or to other organizations. Our membership information is confidential and for use by members only. We ask our members not to share our list with non-members or to use it for any unauthorized purposes as it is for official MG use only. When sending an email to the MG list, address it using the "bcc" option instead of "to" in order to keep the list of recipients from being visible.

Please share photos of your volunteer work or of your garden. We would all like to see photos of Master Gardeners at work either at volunteer sites or in home gardens.