

2012 North Carolina Master Gardener Conference Presenters
Last updated January 13, 2012

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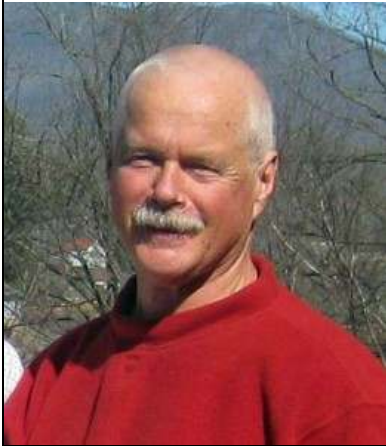
Bill Alexander



A lifelong resident of Asheville, Bill Alexander is Biltmore Estate's Landscape and Forest Historian. He studied forestry and horticulture at Haywood Technical College and earned the North American Certificate in Horticulture through the American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta in 1982. Research, study tours and professional meetings have led him throughout much of the U. S., Canada, Great Britain, and Switzerland. He has worked at the estate for 33 years and his positions have included: Horticulturist, Greenhouse and Gardens Supervisor, Landscape Manger, and Landscape Curator. He is the author of two books – *The Biltmore Nursery: A Botanical Legacy* and *Images of America: Around Biltmore Village* and numerous articles. He was the 2010 recipient of the Sondley Award, which recognizes individuals in the community who have shown appreciation for the history or historic resources of the area. He oversaw the completion of a multi-year project which expanded the status of the Biltmore Estate as a National Historic Landmark. He continues to dedicate his time to research and documentation of the landscape, forest and agricultural history of Biltmore Estate to support its ongoing management and preservation.

Bill serves on the board of directors for the Cradle of Forestry Interpretive Association and an advisory panel for Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest. He is a member of the Forest Guild, the Forest History Society, and the National Association for Olmsted Parks. He frequently lectures and writes on Biltmore Estate's landscape, forest, and agricultural history for diverse audiences.

Ron Arps



Ron Arps has been growing produce on his farmlet in Jackson County for thirteen years, using muscle power and organic farming practices.

Patryk Battle

After 32 years of hands-on study, Patryk Battle, Director of the Mills River Educational Farm, gratefully deems graduation from the School of Passion as impossible. Yet he persists in his studies, majoring in observation and revelation. Along the way, he has written articles for both national and regional publications, and has appeared on both national and regional electronic media. The Harlequin Bugs could care less!

Juliet Blankespoor



Juliet Blankespoor has been sharing her love of plants by teaching about medicinal herbs and botany for over 18 years. She owns the Chestnut Herb Nursery, which specializes in medicinal and native plants, and is the director and primary instructor of the Chestnut School of Herbal Medicine. Juliet's education includes a B.S. in Botany and over 1200 hours of training in herbal programs throughout the US. Her passion is everything green: botany, plant identification, ethical wildcrafting, wild foods, medicine making, and herbal medicine.

Norma Bradley

Check back later for information on this presenter

Dr. Lucy Bradley



Dr. Lucy Bradley works for the NC State Department of Horticultural Science as the Urban Horticulture Specialist. She is the state coordinator for the Master Gardener program and the Plants, Pests & Pathogens bimonthly web based in-service training for horticulture agents and Master Gardeners.

Prior to joining NC Cooperative Extension five years ago, Lucy worked for the University of Arizona as the Urban Horticulture Agent in the Phoenix metropolitan area. There she coordinated the home horticulture education program serving more than three million residents of Maricopa County. She directed the Master Gardener and Jr. Master Gardener programs, school gardens, community gardens, and other urban gardening programs. She grew the Master Gardener program to over 500 active volunteers contributing over 36,000 hours of volunteer service each year. Under Lucy's guidance Master Gardeners cultivated partnerships with elementary schools, public utilities, state agencies, corporations, and individuals to create a variety of exciting programs, including an international award winning urban wildlife habitat at an inner-city elementary school, a national award winning organic market garden run by at-risk youth, an annual horticulture conference which attracted 350 participants, and a landscape design interpretive trail to teach homeowners about important design decisions.

She has co-authored several award winning books including, "Success with School Gardens: How to create a learning oasis in the desert.", "Desert Gardening for Beginners" and "Earth Friendly Desert Gardening". Lucy has served on the board of the American Community Gardening Association, Gardens for Humanity, the Arizona Urban Tree Council, and the Green Education Foundation. Before becoming an Urban Horticulture Agent, Lucy coordinated the Phoenix Coalition for Youth and Families and worked with public agencies, nonprofit organizations, communities of faith and schools to address the needs of children in the inner-city.

Lucy earned a Master's Degree from Purdue in Industrial Organizational Psychology as well as a Master's Degree in Botany and a Ph.D. in Plant Biology from Arizona State University. She is an ISA Certified Arborist.

Marilynn Brandenburger

Marilynn Brandenburger is a professional artist and teacher whose nature and landscape paintings in watercolor and mixed media are in collections throughout the United States. Her beautifully illustrated journals reflect her love of nature and provide inspiration for her paintings. Marilynn holds a master's degree in art education and has been happily teaching adults to draw and paint for more than 30 years. You can see examples of her own watercolor journal sketches on her blog: www.brandenburgerstudios.com/blog.

Joe Bruneau

Joe Bruneau first started making baskets after taking an Appalachian Craft Workshop hosted by Warren Wilson College in 1983. As a student in the art program, he had the opportunity to study other types of basketry before finding his two favorite varieties to weave, the melon basket and the potato basket. For over 28 years, Joe has enjoyed playing with color, texture, and shape with his baskets. Materials typically used for the frames are grapevine, honeysuckle, bittersweet, wild rose, smilax, and wisteria, along with hand-dyed rattan for the body of the basket.

Joe has taught workshops in Western North Carolina, including at the NC Arboretum in Asheville, Brevard College, the Kanuga Conference Center in Hendersonville, Columbia College, for the Transylvania Community Arts Council in Brevard, and at Blue Ridge Community College in both Flat Rock and Brevard, as well as giving private lessons.

Joe's baskets can be found at the Gallery of the Mountains in the Grove Park Inn, Asheville, NC, and at Number 7 Fine Arts & Crafts Cooperative in Brevard, NC, where he is also currently the gallery manager. In 2006, one of his potato baskets was featured in the HGTV Dream Home Giveaway.

Randy Burroughs

Randy Burroughs is a horticulturist and landscape architect turning botanist/naturalist. He finished school working under Dr. Michael Dirr at the University of Georgia Botanical Gardens in 1980 before becoming City Horticulturist of Greenville, SC, from 1980-86. He then apprenticed at Arbor Engineering from 1986-96, and became Manager of the Botanical Gardens at the University of North Carolina – Asheville from 1997-2001. He has been in private practice near Asheville for 15 years. Promoting healthier gardening is his life's work.

Bill Cullina



William “Bill” Cullina (kul-EYE-nuh) is the Executive Director at one of North America's newest and most exciting public gardens, The Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens in Boothbay, Maine. A well-known author and recognized authority on North American native plants, Cullina lectures on a variety of subjects to garden and professional groups and writes for popular and technical journals. His books include: *Wildflowers; Native Trees, Shrubs, and Vines; Understanding Orchids; Native Ferns, Mosses, and Grasses*; and most recently, *Understanding Perennials*, published in 2009. He and his wife, Melissa, live with their three young children on Southport Island along the central Maine Coast.

Nancy Duffy

Nancy Duffy is a residential garden designer with her own business, Muddy Boots Garden Design, which she started in 2002. She is a trained horticulturalist and North Carolina Certified Plant Professional, and is a devotee of great design of all kinds. She lives in Asheville, NC, where she works and experiments in her own garden.

Dr. Ron Gehl



Dr. Ron Gehl joined the NCSU Department of Soil Science faculty in January 2008 and is based at the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research and Extension Center in Fletcher. His research and extension responsibilities focus on nutrient management for improving crop productivity and crop quality throughout North Carolina, particularly in the Mountain and Western Piedmont regions. Recently, his research efforts have focused on production and fertility management of potential biofuel crops in the Southeast/Mid-Atlantic region.

Dr. Gehl was born and raised in a farming community in southeast Indiana. He received a B.S. degree in Natural Resources and Environmental Science from Purdue University, specializing in soil conservation, an M.S. degree in Plant and Soil Science from University of Tennessee with a focus on precision agriculture methods for soil management and fertility, and a Ph.D. in Agronomy from Kansas State University, where his work focused on nutrient management of Kansas row crops and precision agriculture, particularly nitrogen management for corn. After receiving his PhD, he worked as a post-doc in the soil microbiology group at Kansas State. He came to NCSU from Michigan State University, where he was an Assistant Professor and Extension Specialist on soil fertility and nutrient management.

Cynthia Gillooly



Cynthia Gillooly is a floral designer with over 30 years of experience. Her life-long love affair with flowers started as a small child in her Lebanese grandfather's garden and continues to this day. Cynthia's enthusiasm for everything floral is a passion that she loves to share with others.

From 1986 until 2001, she was the owner and operator of The Golden Cricket Florist, specializing in creative natural designs. During those years Cynthia also taught floral design classes at Asheville Buncombe Technical College. She currently owns and operates Saracena Designs and also is a floral designer for B.B. Barns Garden Center in Arden, NC, where she is known as the orchid goddess. Through Saracena Design, Cynthia also creates interior plantscapes for individual and commercial customers as well as floral design services.

Robyn Josephs

Robyn Josephs is a multimedia artist and spiritual nurturer with a current focus on fibers and paper and book arts. Growing up in a tribe of crafty women, Robyn was knitting before she could read. Using color, structure, and texture, Robyn enjoys helping others to discover their inner fiber nature. Robyn facilitates workshops and retreats on arts and spirituality and has been a resident artist at Pendle Hill and Open Connections. Her work is in many private collections. Robyn lives in Montreat and is currently working At Nice Threads Fiber Gallery/Studio in Black Mountain.

Bryce H. Lane



Bryce H. Lane has accomplished much in his distinguished horticultural career, not the least of which is having gardened on the same property for 28 years. His current professional duties are:

- North Carolina State University Alumni Distinguished Undergraduate Professor
- Undergraduate Coordinator, Horticultural Science
- Host of the Emmy-winning UNC TV Show, “In the Garden With Bryce Lane,” a “how to” gardening show for the home gardener

Bryce grew up in Western Massachusetts, worked his way through seven years of high school and college at the Hadley Garden Center, earned a B. S. in Plant Science from the University of Massachusetts in 1979, and an M.S. in Ornamental Horticulture from The Ohio State University in 1981. He joined the NCSU Department of Horticultural Science faculty in 1981 as instructor and has been the Undergraduate Coordinator since 1987. He has taught Home Horticulture, Principles of Horticulture, Interior Plantscapes, Plant Identification, and Garden Center Operations. He also served as Interim Director of the JC Raulston Arboretum from 1997 – 1999.

He has received numerous awards, including:

- The NC State Outstanding Teacher Award (3 times!)
- The NC State Alumni Distinguished Undergraduate Professor Award
- The American Society for Horticultural Science Distinguished Educator Award
- The North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture Teaching Award of Excellence

Bryce has been married for 34 years to his High School sweetheart Sue. They have two married daughters, Sarah & husband Lee, and Meghan & husband Scott, three grandsons, Lane, Tate, Ellis, and two granddaughters, Paige and Daphne.

Peter Loewer

Check back later for information on this presenter

Lori Loftus



Lori Loftus has been a member of the Lake Lure Artists since 1996, a member of the Rutherford County Visual Arts Guild since 2008, and a member of the Nature Printing Society since 2006. She has come to love everything the Nature Printing Society has to offer: new friendships, exciting techniques, and methods of printing.

Lori has taught several nature printing classes for the Nature Printing Society annual workshops and The Rutherfordton Visual Arts Center including: Gyotaku Direct and Indirect Methods, Foilography, Monotype Printing with an etching press, and printing with a West Virginia Stomp and Bottle Jack press.

Paul Merten

Paul Merten is an entomologist with the USDA Forest Service. He is the Non-Native Invasive Plant Species Coordinator in the Forest Health Protection department for State and Private Forestry for the Southern Region. He has 19 years of experience working in Natural Resources at the private, state, and federal levels.

Alan Mizeras



Alan Mizeras is in his tenth year with the NC Extension Service Volunteer Program in Henderson County. He is recognized as a local expert in native plant rescue and was one of the principal organizers of the Henderson County Native Plant Rescue Group in September 2005. He currently serves as Coordinator for the group. Alan is a biologist by training and has an extensive collection of rescued plants at his home on 4 acres in Horse Shoe on the French Broad River.

John Murphy

Since 1999, John Murphy has been the director of the Bullington Center, a nonprofit horticultural education center in Hendersonville, NC, where he conducts educational programs for all ages, including those with special needs. He is a licensed teacher, a registered horticultural therapist, and has an MS in horticulture from Penn State University.

Debbie Roos

Debbie Roos is an Agriculture Agent for the Chatham County Center of North Carolina Cooperative Extension, where she is responsible for programming in the areas of commercial vegetable production, organic production, alternative agricultural enterprises, beekeeping, pollinator conservation, and forestry. Debbie delivers educational programming to growers through regular workshops and her award-winning Growing Small Farms website (www.growingsmallfarms.org).

Steve and Kit Schmeiser



Steve and Kit Schmeiser live in Fairview, where they are in the fourth year of restoring a meadow, woodland, and stream to a wildlife-friendly habitat. Steve is a founding member and Past President of the Mountain WILD! Chapter of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation. He has completed training as a Habitat Steward with the National Wildlife Federation and as a Master Stream Steward. Kit is also a founding member of Mountain

WILD! and serves as a Board Member. She has been a Board member and Chair of the Education Committee at the Botanical Gardens at Asheville.

Erin Thompson

Erin Thompson was born in Charleston, SC. She has fond memories of her grandmother's camellias and the fragrant smell of the tea olives in the spring. This love of plants led her to devote her life to designing memorable landscapes for her clients. She is a believer in continuous improvement, and currently takes horticulture classes at NC State University. She just completed testing as a Certified Plant Professional.

Erin and her husband, Cory, own Thompson Landscape Professionals in Tryon, NC. Bravo Interiors and Outdoor Living by Bravo, which features outdoor furniture, have joined the Thompsons to create The Marketplace. Erin's business life is her passion, and she strives to serve others by creating landscapes to be admired for years. Cory and Erin have a son, Ethan, a fourteen year old who attends Spartanburg Day School.

Brian L. Upchurch

Brian L. Upchurch is the founder and owner/operator of Highland Creek Nursery in Fletcher, NC. Highland Creek is a wholesale nursery specializing in the propagation of unusual, rare, and new woody ornamentals. He frequently gives lectures and seminars at local, regional, and international meetings on topics such as grafting, marketing, research, and production practices. He travels extensively in Europe and the Far East, sourcing new plants for his nursery. He has published frequently in *American Nurseryman* and other trade journals. He also organized the International Maple Society Symposium in Tokyo, Japan, in November 2008.

Among his many accomplishments::

- 1998 Recipient of the North Carolina Association of Nurseryman Rising Star Award
- 2000-2004 Board of Directors, North Carolina Association of Nurserymen
- 2004-present, Board of Directors, North American Branch International Maple Society
- 2008-present, Vice President, North American Branch International Maple Society
- North Carolina Certified Plant Professional
- Active member of the International Plant Propagators Society; the International Maple Society; and the North Carolina Nursery and Landscape Association

He has been married to his wife, Linda, since 1988. they have two children , Davis and Peyton.

Mark Weathington



Mark Weathington is the Assistant Director and Curator of Collections at the JC Raulston Arboretum. He earned undergraduate degrees in Horticulture and Sociology and his master's degree in Horticulture from VA Tech. He has served as Director of Horticulture for the Norfolk Botanical Garden and horticulturist at both the VA Aquarium and the Atlanta Botanic Garden. Mark has traveled extensively searching for new plants to diversify the American landscape. His travels have taken him to China, Taiwan, Japan, Ecuador, and throughout the U.S. Mark writes and speaks on a variety of topics in horticulture. He has recently revised and updated the *Propagation Guide for Woody*

Plants at the JC Raulston Arboretum. He has been published in *Horticulture*, *Carolina Gardener*, *American Nurseryman* and *VA Gardener* magazines, as well as *The Mid-Atlantic Gardener's Book of Lists*. In addition, he writes two weekly columns for *The Virginian-Pilot* newspaper and features for several regional newspapers.

Andy White



Andy White is president of Wayside Landscape Services, Inc., in Asheville, NC. He has owned landscape companies in Ohio and North Carolina for over 30 years. Andy is a nationally recognized, award-winning landscape designer; for 10 different design/build projects, his firm has won a total of 12 national and state awards over the past fifteen years, including ALCA Grand and Distinction Awards, and NCNLA Grand and Merit Awards. He was an Oakland Award Recipient in 2009. This award is given by the North Carolina Nursery and Landscape Association (NCNLA) to individuals in recognition of a lifetime of outstanding contributions.

His work has been featured in many publications, including American Nurseryman, ALCA Advantage, Landscape Contractor News, Lawn and Landscape, Carolina Gardener, and Builder/Architect. Andy has been a regular monthly and bimonthly landscape feature columnist for Builder/Architect magazine for past 13 years. He is a frequent contributor and consultant to other industry publications, including Lawn and Landscape, Nursery Notes, and the Asheville Citizen-Times.

Andy is registered in NC as a landscape contractor, consulting arborist, and general building contractor. He is a licensed irrigation contractor and licensed pesticide applicator. He is a certified member of the Association of Professional Landscape Designers, is a Landscape Industry Certified Manager, and is a participating member of numerous industry organizations including NCNLA and PLANET.

Andy earned a BA in Zoology from Miami University in 1975 and an MS in Ecology from the University of Tennessee in 1977.

More information is available at www.waysidelandscape.com.

Marc Williams



Marc Williams is an ethnobotanist. He has studied plants intensively while learning to use them for food, medicine, and beauty. His training includes a bachelor's degree in Environmental Studies concentrating in Sustainable Agriculture from Warren Wilson College and over a decade of work at a multitude of restaurants and farms. He has traveled throughout 23 countries in North/Central America and Europe and 49 states in the USA. Marc also holds a master's degree from Appalachian State University in Appalachian Studies concentrating in Sustainable Development/Planning and Geography. See further information at www.botanyeveryday.com.