



2024 NNLA Winter Conference

**January 25 & 26, 2024
Innovation Campus
Lincoln, NE**

Join us at the Nebraska Innovation Campus Conference Center in Lincoln for the 2024 NNLA Winter Conference and Annual Meeting! The Nebraska Nursery and Landscape Association is excited to showcase a great lineup of national and local speakers with a wide variety of topics. Join us for an evening reception at the Scarlet Hotel, located right on Innovation Campus. The conference offers an exhibit hall featuring all the latest products and services.

**Vendor and Sponsorship
opportunities are available.**

QUESTIONS?

**If you have questions about
the conference, contact the
NNLA Office at (402) 381-7154
or email
jennifere@youraam.com.**

**View more information at
www.nnla.org.**

Register today online at nnla.org!

CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Parking, hotel room blocks, and other information is available on the NNLA website. Education sessions, meals and breaks are included in the registration price. Attendees Can Earn up to 8.0 NCNLP CE Credits. 5.0 CEs on Thursday and 3.0 CEs on Friday.

NNLA Scholarship Raffle

NNLA will be hosting a raffle to support the scholarship fund during the conference again this year. NNLA uses the money raised from the raffle to award scholarships to horticulture students attending a college in Nebraska. If you would be willing to donate an item, email the NNLA office and then plan to bring your item with you to the conference and drop it off at the registration table.



AGENDA

Thursday, January 25, 2024

8:15 a.m. – Registration Desk Opens

8:15 – 9:45 a.m. – Exhibitor set-up

8:50 a.m. – President's Welcome

9:00– 10:00 a.m. – *Practicing New Naturalism: Site-Specific Plantings in Public and Private Places* – Kelly D. Norris

10:00 – 10:30 a.m. – Break/Exhibit Hall

10:30 – 11:30 a.m. – *Remediating circling roots when planting container-grown trees: Slicing and shaving and bare-rooting, oh my!* – Riley Johnson

11:30 – 1:30 p.m. – Lunch/Exhibit Hall

12:15 – 1:15 p.m. – NNLA Annual Meeting

1:25 – 2:25 p.m. – *Your Ideal Clients: Evaluating Fit* – Mardi Dover

2:30 – 3:30 p.m. – Mixed Bag of Bugs – Jody Green

3:30 – 4:00 p.m. – Break/Exhibit Hall

4:00 – 5:00 p.m. – *Organize your Business: The things no one tells you when you start a company* – Scott Searcy

5:00 p.m. – Registration Desk Closes

5:15 p.m. – Reception at the Scarlet Hotel

Friday, January 26, 2024

8:00 a.m. – Registration Desk Opens

8:25 – 8:30 a.m. – President Welcome

8:30 – 9:30 a.m. – NNLA Women of Landscaping Panel

9:30 – 10:00 a.m. – Break/Exhibit Hall

10:00 – 10:30 a.m. – Announcements and Raffle Drawing

10:30 – 11:30 a.m. – *It Can Be a Peacock Today or a Feather Duster Tomorrow Unless We Change Often* – Don Josko

11:35 – 12:35 p.m. – *Swiss Army Landscaping* – Graham Herbst

12:35 p.m. – Adjourn

Vendors must tear down by noon.



SESSIONS & SPEAKERS

Practicing New Naturalism: Site-Specific Plantings in Public and Private Places

In recent years, the shift towards ecologically driven landscapes has created new opportunities and challenges, often accompanied by big questions for how we do business and engage with our audiences. How do we sell customers and stakeholders on wilder landscapes? How do we shift the narrative of the landscape design and build professions from construction and maintenance to cultivation and stewardship? How do we cultivate new practices and knowledge that can transform our industry's relevance and purpose? Join planting designer, artist and thought leader Kelly Norris for this vibrant exploration of recent and future work at the intersections of horticulture and ecology. His presentation will emphasize the pitch for each commission and the relative success or progress of each project to date with a preview of new developments in the seasons ahead.

Kelly D. Norris is one of the leading horticulturists of his generation. In his practice he explores the intersections of people, plants and place through ecological, site-specific design and art. An award-winning author and plantsman, Kelly's work in gardens has been featured in *The New York Times*, *Better Homes and Gardens*, *Martha Stewart Living*, *Fine Gardening*, *Garden Design* and in numerous television, radio and digital media appearances. His most recent book *New Naturalism: Designing and Planting a Resilient, Ecologically Vibrant Home Garden*, was named one of the Top 10 Books of 2021 by the American Horticultural Society.

Remediating circling roots when planting container-grown trees: Slicing and shaving and bare-rooting, oh my!

Container-grown trees are a popular option for arborists and landscapers. However, growing trees in standard plastic nursery containers can lead to malformed root systems, namely circling roots. Over the years, several techniques have been promoted to remediate circling roots, such as slicing, teasing, shaving, and bare-rooting. In this session, Riley will discuss results from over a decade's worth of trials at Michigan State University that compared techniques for remediating circling roots of container-grown trees.

Riley Johnson is an ISA Certified Arborist with Tree Risk Assessment Qualification and a research technician in the Department of Horticulture at Michigan State University. She earned her B.S. in Natural Resources Management from Grand Valley State University and M.S. in Horticulture from Michigan State. In her current role, she works with Dr. Bert Cregg to conduct field research and extension efforts related to landscape tree establishment and Christmas tree production.

Your Ideal Clients: Evaluating Fit

Are you looking to take your design business to new heights? Unlock a secret to success by clarifying your ideal client. Learn how honing in on your client avatar will elevate your brand, clarify your design services, boost referrals, enhance both client and designer satisfaction, and maximize profits.

Mardi Dover is a garden designer, entrepreneur, teacher, and business consultant practicing in Asheville, NC where her design firm Gardens by Mardi specializes in renovating gardens in historic neighborhoods. Mardi received degrees in art history from Davidson College, Social Work from UNC-Chapel Hill, and Garden Design from Oxford College of Garden Design. She studied English art and architecture in London and completed horticulture training at Haywood Community College. Mardi is a North Carolina Certified Plant Professional, a former licensed clinical social worker, and a former North Carolina Licensed Landscape Contractor. She has received Gold and Bronze Awards in Residential Design from APLD, where she served as Virtual Chapter President.



SESSIONS & SPEAKERS

Mixed Bag of Bugs

Insect can be friend or foe, depending on the location, population, and situation. In this session, Jody will provide updates and information about arthropods in the landscape particularly, Emerald ash borer, spotted lanternfly, annual evergreen pests, and then discuss how we can support beneficial insects.

Jody Green is an Extension Educator for Nebraska Extension in Douglas-Sarpy Counties, located in Omaha, NE. She earned her master's and Ph.D. in Entomology from Purdue University. Her primary focus is developing educational programs related to arthropod pests in urban landscapes, while protecting and conserving beneficial organisms and the environment. Jody is active on social media platforms such as Twitter and TikTok, cohosts a podcast called Arthro-pod, and is a regular panelist on "Backyard Farmer."

Organize your business: The things no one tells you when you start a company

Scott will be discussing the steps you need to take to think and act like a business owner instead of simply owning your job. Strategies will include determining roles in the company, how/when to hire, how business taxes work and pitfalls to avoid, budgeting for the year you want to have and creating systems and processes to streamline your company.

Scott Scearcy is a Financial Advisor with Thrivent Financial. For 19 years Scott was the owner and Production Manager of a Landscaping company called CM's A Cut Above in Omaha, Nebraska. He started his company because he wanted the freedom of working for himself and enjoyed being outdoors. As his company grew, Scott realized that he needed to know things that were outside of not only his skillset, but his interests as well. Most of what he knows about running a landscape company was learned the hard way! Ultimately Scott decided to become a Financial Advisor in 2016 with the goal of providing financial and business education and strategies for "regular folks" like himself.

NNLA Women of Landscaping Panel

This discussion style session, moderated by Sheila Schrader, owner and landscape designer of Schrader Landscape Design, focuses on a panel of four women, with long-standing careers in landscaping, who will share their views of the industry, experiences, obstacles, and achievements.

Cindy Christensen

Landscape Designer, ASPM Landscapes

Cindy Christensen brings 25 years of experience in a wide range of residential and commercial landscape projects. Focusing on design/build for the majority of her career including high end residential homes, residential communities, hotels, hospitals and golf courses. For the last several years, much time has been spent on commercial bidding and management. Erosion Control, Seeding and Streetscapes have been a large portion of those commercial projects. She is proficient in Dynascape Design, Structure Studio 3D Software and currently learning Trimble Site Positioning Systems and Modeling. Christensen holds a Bachelors of Science from the University of Nebraska where she studied Horticulture-Landscape Design. She has been a Nebraska Certified Nurseryman & Landscape Professional since 2000 and has worked in Northeast Nebraska for the majority of her career. Cindy is currently on the NNLA Board of Directors and serves on the NCNLP Board.

Panelists continued...



SESSIONS & SPEAKERS

NNLA Women of Landscaping Panel - *Continued...*

Christine Karloff, MS, NCNLP

Sales Manager, Urban Roots Nursery

Christine Karloff is a horticulturist residing in Omaha, Nebraska. She spent a year with the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum before taking a position with the Nebraska Forest Service and the School of Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska - Lincoln (UNL). Christine earned her bachelor's degree in horticulture from UNL with an emphasis in both landscape design and plant science, at which time she became a Nebraska Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional (NCNLP). She earned her master's degree in horticulture from UNL with an emphasis in plant physiology. She is currently the sales manager for Urban Roots Nursery in Gretna and an adjunct professor at Metro Community College.

Ashly Neneman

General Manager, Sun Valley Landscaping

Ashly Neneman is an experienced professional in the green industry, with over 13 years of dedicated service. As the General Manager of Sun Valley Landscaping, Ashly has displayed exceptional leadership skills and a deep passion for cultivating a thriving team. With a strong background in landscaping, Ashly brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to the field. Ashly's love for growing a team is evident in their ability to nurture talent and foster a collaborative work environment. She continues to make a significant impact in the world of landscaping while serving on the board of directors for the Nebraska Nursery Landscape Association and the Professional Development & Standards Advisory Council for the National Association of Landscape Professionals.

Sheila Schrader

Owner and Landscape Designer, Schrader Landscape Design

Sheila Schrader is owner and landscape designer at Schrader Landscape Design. She has been designing landscapes in southeast Nebraska since 2009 after graduating with a BS in Horticulture, Landscape Design from UNL. Sheila started her landscape design business in the fall of 2020. She works remotely with regional landscape design-build companies that don't have a designer on staff or have more design work than they can currently manage. She also collaborates directly with local homeowners that share her passion for environmentally conscious landscape design and want their landscapes to reflect their values. Sheila has served on the NNLA board since 2019 where she is currently the treasurer and is on the NCNLP committee. She is NCNLP certified. Sheila is also a member of the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum and the Association of Professional Landscape Designers. She volunteers her horticultural and design expertise in her community as part of the Malcolm Garden Club.

Nancy Sohns, NCNLP

Co-Owner, S&N Landscape Design

I have a passion for plants and overall landscape construction. With an associate degree from Metro Community College and 22 years of industry experience ranging from retail garden Center, re-wholesale and production, inventory, sales, logistics, owning a retail store to owning and operating a landscaping company for 17 years, I feel like I've seen and experienced a lot of the landscaping industry. I've traveled all over the country, touring nurseries, garden centers, botanical gardens and conservatories. I love connecting with others, sharing stories, troubleshooting business and getting to know parts of the industry I am not as familiar with.



SESSIONS & SPEAKERS

It Can Be a Peacock Today or a Feather Duster Tomorrow Unless We Change Often

This session will offer thoughts on where labor and technology are going in the green industry.

Don Josko is currently the owner of Horticulture Guy Consulting. He previously was a territory sales and technical greenhouse and nursery production specialist and has over twenty years of landscape design, installation, and plant maintenance experience. Don has presented nationally and internationally and holds certifications in South Dakota for Nursery and Landscape and Arborist and is a certified Phytomonitor technician. He was a department head and instructor of horticulture at Southeast Technical Institute in Sioux Falls, SD for thirteen years.

Swiss Army Landscaping

There is so much that our yards have to offer beyond their attractiveness. Help your clients look beyond beauty and connect with the nature around their home. Join Graham Herbst from the Nebraska Forest Service to explore the concept of functional landscapes that engage and provide for us. He will cover what makes landscapes function well and explore plants that provide food, medicine, crafts, and other uses.

Graham Herbst is a native Nebraskan from Omaha. After working in the landscape and arboriculture industries, he moved to the Nebraska Forest Service to promote innovative Urban Forestry projects as the Community Forestry Specialist for Eastern Nebraska. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for Midwest ISA. Graham loves growing, planting, and caring for trees, connecting people with information and opportunities, and exploring each corner of the great state of Nebraska. He wants to hear from tree advocates about forestry challenges and opportunities in Nebraska communities.

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