

## **Reclaim Your Turf: Designing Sustainable Landscapes**

A Benefit for the Sustainable Garden, Department of Urban Horticulture & Design

Farmingdale State College, Farmingdale, NY    Saturday April 14, 2018

### Schedule and program

- |                  |  |
|------------------|--|
| 8:30 – 9:00 am   | Registration and continental breakfast   |
| 9:00 – 9:15 am   | Opening Remarks  |
| 9:15 – 10 am     | Keynote: <b>Finding Your Niche: Establishing an Ecological Focus in Brentwood, NY</b><br><b>Presenter:</b> Karen Burke, CSJ, EdD |
| 10:00 – 10:15am  | coffee break   |
| 10:15 – 10:45 am | <b>Reclaiming the American Residential Front Yard</b><br>Presenter: Michael Veracka  |
| 10:45 – 11:30 am | <b>Designing the Resilient Lawn</b><br>Presenter: Dr. Nick Menchyk   |
| 11:30 – 12:15 pm | <b>Rainwater: Don't Let it Go Down the Drain</b><br>Presenter: Mark Scaramucci   |
| 12:15 – 1:15 pm  | Lunch break  |
| 1:15 – 2:00 pm   | <b>Growing Mushrooms in Your Backyard</b><br>Presenter: Dr. Garrett Beier  |

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## **Talk # 1: Keynote**

### **Finding Your Niche: Establishing an Ecological Focus in Brentwood, NY**

Presenter: Karen Burke, CSJ, EdD

Talk description: Demand for ecologically beneficial landscapes is increasing, but there are few built examples on Long Island one can use as models for inspiration and replication. Offering an ecological and spiritual approach, the Sisters of St. Joseph in Brentwood, NY practice good stewardship of the environment by employing knowledge and skills rarely taught in horticulture and design programs. This presentation guides landscape architects, designers, contractors, and others through what is needed to establish future land use decisions intent on conserving and restoring lands utilizing sound environmental practices and management. Participants gain a new understanding of local plant communities, learn about design projects modeled on regional ecosystems, acquire practical design, restoration, and management techniques, and discover new ways to grow their skills and businesses, all consistent with reverence for the Earth.

Presenter bio: Karen Burke, CSJ, EdD, is the Coordinator of Land Initiatives for the Sisters of St. Joseph, Brentwood, NY campus. In 2015 the Sisters of St. Joseph affirmed a Land Ethic Statement to guide their future decisions, based in charism and an awareness of the responsibility for the health of the Earth and in particular for the Long Island Bioregion. For the past three years the Sisters of St. Joseph have been working with various partners such as: the Peconic Land Trust, the Long Island Native Plant Initiative (LINPLI), and others to preserve land and return it to agriculture; to establish seed banks of Long Island native *ecotypic* plants; to build rain gardens that capture and clean storm water runoff; and invest in a solar panel system that is expected to offset roughly 60 percent of the electrical needs on the Brentwood campus. At the core of their work living in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a belief in the power, presence and love of God and that the whole world must work together for the benefit of the planet.

## **Talk #2**

### **Reclaiming the American Residential Front Yard**

Presenter: Michael Veracka

Talk description: Although the front yard is often the most visible part of the residential yard it is often the least attractive and least useful – an expanse of high-maintenance, water-hungry lawn and overgrown foundation plantings. And the typical front yard landscape doesn't enhance the house or provide useful outdoor living space for the homeowner. As new properties become smaller, and as older ones grow shadier, the front yard may be the best place to grow vegetables, flowers or provide a pleasant outdoor oasis. Whether you are seeking a new front yard garden or seeking to improve an old one, this presentation will offer you inspiration and instruction that will help you define your goals and methods to achieve them. In short you'll be ready to reclaim your turf!

Presenter bio:

Michael Veracka is an Associate Professor within the Department of Urban Horticulture & Design at Farmingdale State College. His teaching interests and design practice focus on sustainable design, edible landscaping and the adaptive reuse of urban spaces. Michael is the creator of *The Sustainable Garden*, a new one-half acre demonstration garden within the department's Teaching Gardens focusing on contemporary strategies and practices relating to responsible resource use, conservation and innovation, product development and food production. In 2013 SUNY designated this garden as one of "Six Big Ideas, With Unlimited Potential," highlighting the garden as an example of the Power of SUNY.

**Talk #3**

**Designing the Resilient Lawn**

Presenter: Dr. Nick Menchyk

Talk description: While lawns are ubiquitous in the American landscape, many homeowners lack the expertise to attain successful results: a healthy, vigorously growing lawn. In this primer presentation we will move beyond product application strategies and uncover a systems-based approach for developing a resilient lawn. The discussion will center around three concepts: healthy, biologically active soils; selecting proper grass species and turf grass nutrition; and revised horticultural practices. Learn how to apply this approach to foster a robust and adaptable lawn!

Presenter bio:

Nick Menchyk graduated from Clemson University with a B.S. in turfgrass management and a Ph.D in Plant and Environmental Science in 2007 and 2012, respectively. While a graduate student at Clemson, Nick focused on improving foliar fertilization efficiency, soil nutrition, and the physiology of turfgrasses. At Farmingdale State College Nick plans to continue research focused on best turfgrass management practices.

**Talk #4**

**Rainwater: Don't Let it Go Down the Drain**

Presenter: Mark Scaramucci

Talk description: Harvesting rainwater provides an alternative to using potable drinking water for gardening and other home uses. In this presentation you will learn practical methods to capture a portion of your own water for landscape applications. You will learn tips to save money by reducing household water usage and keeping your plants healthy with non-chlorinated rainwater. Collecting rainwater on your site reduces flooding and pollution to local streams, rivers, and lakes.

Presenter bio: Mark Scaramucci is the principal owner of Permascape Designs (<http://www.permasapedesigns.com> ). A certified permaculture designer, Mark's ecological design practice creates functional, interdependent systems serving both nature and its living habitats. His work focuses on storm water management, indoor/outdoor air quality and energy-use reduction.

## **Talk #5**

### **Growing Mushrooms in Your Backyard**

presenter: Dr. Garrett Beier

Talk description: While the shady part of your yard can be challenging for gardening, it is the perfect place for growing specialty mushrooms. What are mushrooms? Gain an understanding of what fungi are and why they produce mushrooms. Learn about all of the steps involved in backyard mushroom production so you can do it at your own home. Both log production and mulch bed production will be covered. A live demonstration of shiitake log production will be given.

#### Presenter bio:

Garrett Beier is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Urban Horticulture and Design at Farmingdale State College. He received his PhD and MS from the University of Minnesota, where he worked on the interaction of plants and fungi. During his time there he gained experience cultivating mushrooms for both indoor and outdoor production.

