

# NHLA

# NEWSletter

Vol. 39 No. 1

Informing and educating members of the Green Industry

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## NHLA Announces Partnership with Greenius

*Providing Members and the Industry With Professional Landscape Safety and Performance Training*

**N**HLA and Greenius, North America's leading training for landscapers, have announced a partnership to help connect more landscapers to high-quality landscape training focused on safety and employee development.

Greenius is an online training tool and Learning Management System (LMS) for Landscape workers for equipment operation. The company uses live-action video, online exams, and an app-based Field Checklist. They also incorporate an employee lifecycle tool with performance review capabilities. London, Ontario-based Greenius is an industry leader with a proven track record of delivering exceptional employee development tools for landscape professionals. They offer hundreds of courses in both English and Spanish with new courses added every year. Offered courses cover a variety of topics important to the Green Industry, including but not limited to maintenance, con-

*Continued on p. 15*

The *NHLA Newsletter* is published by the New Hampshire Landscape Association for its members, free of charge, 10 times a year.

**Memberships:** See enclosed application or the website for a membership application.

**Additional Subscriptions:** Firms desiring additional subscriptions, can purchase them at \$40.00 each. Contact Pamela Moreau.

**Editorial Submissions and Advertising:** Articles and notices for publication should be sent to Carolyn Isaak, Editor. Advertisers wishing to appear in the *NHLA Newsletter* should submit their ads to Annette Zamarchi. The editorial and advertising submissions schedule is online at [nhlaonline.org/nhla-newsletter](http://nhlaonline.org/nhla-newsletter).

The *NHLA Newsletter* seeks to encourage a lively discussion of topics of concern to NHLA members. Opinions and proposals presented in the newsletter are those of the writers to whom they are attributed and are not a statement of official policy by NHLA, unless so stated.

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## Committee Chairs

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## NHLA Welcomes...

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## President's Notes

By David DeJohn, NHCLP

**H**appy New Year! I hope you all were able to enjoy Christmas and the Holidays and maybe even get to relax a little bit. As I'm writing this the weather so far has been mild and except for some rain pretty storm free so hopefully you've been able to catch up and even finish projects.

I know I've certainly taken full advantage and although I'll never be caught up, this weather has allowed me to finish and even start some projects that I wasn't even sure I'd get to. For me 2022 was a tough and chaotic year. Some of it was my own doing, mostly due to poor planning. Some of it was because it seemed that on every job there were last minute changes and add-ons. And some of it was just plain out of my control. But despite all that, I have to say that I have had the most amazing and patient clients one could hope for, and no one jumped ship on me. For that I'm very grateful.

This winter, while I'm building a stonewall I have prepped and will soon start working on, I'll be doing a lot of reflecting on the past season and how I can improve on the next. I'm sure many of you can relate to that; there's always room for improvement, and so I hope for nothing but the best for you in 2023.

As an educational association NHLA has always been an integral part of my career and continues to be an important source of information and networking for me — and hopefully for you and your employees as

As an educational association NHLA has always been an integral part of my career and continues to be an important source of information and networking for me — and hopefully for you and your employees as well.

A simple example of that is the recent maintenance and repair workshop held at North Point Outdoors in Derry. A small group attended, but every one of us came away from it knowing something we didn't know before and are now better able to repair and maintain our own stuff. As always, the NHLA Board of Directors, the Education Committee, and the Certification Committee have worked hard to bring you educational as well as other opportunities to add value to your membership and provide ways to set yourself and your companies apart from the rest of the pack.

This past year we were finally able to get back to in-person events starting with Dinner Meetings in January and March, Twilight meetings, and our first day-long Field Day event, which

by all accounts was a big success. During the past year we also partnered with Greenius and NARFA giving members access to extensive on-line training and comprehensive insurance. We updated the NHLA by-laws so that now all employees of a member company are members of NHLA as well. The logistics of this will take some time to roll out but we're working on that, and we will keep you updated as we move forward with it.

We already have several meetings and events on the calendar for the coming season: a Dinner meeting at the Puritan this month, a Safety/DOS Compliance and First Aid day-long event in March, a workshop on pruning and proper mulching in April (we're looking for a place for

this event, so if anyone has a job site or other spot where we could hold this program let us know), and a possible hardscaping workshop in May.

We also have a venue and tentative date set for our Field Day next September, so watch for more details in the next couple months. We'll be looking for speakers, vendors, and sponsors so if anyone is interested please let us know. And certainly if you have any ideas or requests for Twilight Meetings, speakers or topics that you think would be of benefit, then by all means reach out to me, Mike Barwell, or anyone on the Board.

Well that's it for now. I hope you have a good winter and a very good 2023 Landscape season.

Happy New Year! 🐛

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## Certification Corner

by Abby Zuidema, NHCLP  
Certification Coordinator



### It's time to show your Leadership in Landscape: Earn Your NH Landscape Professional Certification

New Hampshire Landscape Certified Professional (NHCLP) Exam  
*Date:* Saturday March 4, 2023 1-3 pm (Written portion only)  
Advanced Registration Required. Applications must be received by February 24, 2023. For more information and to download the registration forms visit the NHLA website. Submit your application packet today!

**Winter 2023 Manual Review Course:** Tuesdays 6 - 8 pm, via Zoom  
Jan. 31: Botany, Soils, Fertilizers, Composting  
Feb. 7: Plant Identification, Nomenclature, Hardiness, Native & Invasive Plants  
Feb. 14: Turf, Planting Instructions, Plant Maintenance, Safety  
Feb. 21: Landscape Design, Hardscape, Bidding and Estimating

**2023 Plant Identification Summer Course:**  
Fourteen 3-hour sessions covering the basics of plant identification and identification of each of the plants on the Plant Identification List. Held one evening a week, June-September, at NH nurseries, parks, and estates.

Check out the website for more information. [nhlaonline.org/how-to-become-certified/](http://nhlaonline.org/how-to-become-certified/). Contact: [NHLACert@gmail.com](mailto:NHLACert@gmail.com)

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## NHLA Job Board

See most current listings at:  
[nhlaonline.org/job-opportunities/](http://nhlaonline.org/job-opportunities/)

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The **City of Concord** is seeking a forward thinking, people-oriented **Senior Planner** in the Planning Division of the Community Development Dept. Responsibilities include plan review, staffing transportation committees, and liaison to the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee. Writing, public speaking, plan review, and community engagement skills are highly valued, and a motivation for positive community change. SALARY RANGE: \$62,712.00-\$84,302.40 DOQ. More information and application at: [www.governmentjobs.com/careers/concordnh](http://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/concordnh)

**UNH Extension's Home Horticulture Team is Hiring:** Working in tandem with Master Gardener volunteers, the Home Horticulture Program Manager works statewide to lead gardening and landscaping education and outreach. Home Horticulture staff answer questions, conduct outreach on relevant and seasonal topics throughout the year, and provide engaging horticulture skills-training for NH's gardening public. Contact [Amy.Papineau@unh.edu](mailto:Amy.Papineau@unh.edu), 603-272-6497, [extension.unh.edu/blog/2022/07/unh-extension-seeks-home-horticulture-program-manager](http://extension.unh.edu/blog/2022/07/unh-extension-seeks-home-horticulture-program-manager)

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AVAILABLE AT DEALERS IN YOUR AREA

**Take Advantage of Winter Education**

by *Bill Gardocki*

It's mid-winter. Time to take a break; spend more time with family and friends and think about how you are going to be more efficient and profitable next season. People have different views on how to achieve this goal but for me it really came down to the two "E's": Education and Equipment.

As a former teacher, I always embraced the education end. I go to Hardscape North America in Louisville, KY, in October; the Mid-Atlantic Hardscape Show in Atlantic City in December; and the Northeast Hardscape Show (that is in Springfield, MA, this year) in March. We as an industry must be doing something right to have the three biggest hardscape shows east of the Mississippi. Many of the paver manufacturers will be having their free shows this winter as well. I have already received invites from manufacturers like Genest, Techo-Bloc, Nicolock, and Unilock.

You have heard me say this before, many times, over and over — take advantage of these opportunities. And, it goes without saying, our own NHLA provides opportunities not only in the winter but year-round, covering all aspects of the industry. These are great opportunities to learn something new and network

with your fellow professionals. I challenge you! Take home one tidbit of information that you can utilize in your business to make you more efficient. DON'T FORGET, EFFICIENCY EQUALS PROFITS.

On the equipment end, it took some hard lessons and convincing from my son Tom, that good efficient tools are extremely important. At one point in my landscape construction career, I had 12 employees. The last few years that I was in business I had 4 employees. We were often more profitable with 4 than 12. And one of the reasons was having proper tools. Think about your

In this industry it still comes down to back-breaking work. Try to extend your career and your employees by taking advantage of the latest innovations and labor-saving tools.

wellbeing and the wellbeing of your employees. Let the tools do the heavy lifting and save your back, knees, and fingers. Let's face it. In this industry it still comes down to back-breaking work. Try to extend your career and your employees by taking advantage of the latest innova-

tions and labor-saving tools. I hope to see you and your crew at an educational event this winter! 🌱

— *Bill Gardocki is a past president of NHLA (1994 & 1995). He is now a hardscape educator.*

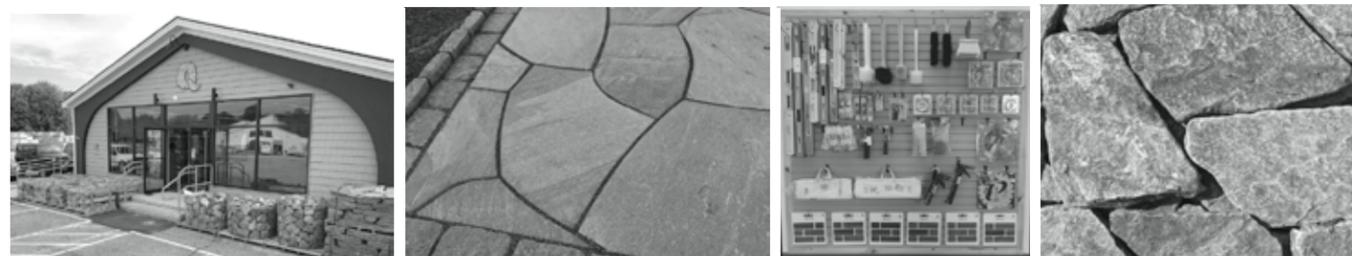


Demonstration and Competition areas at the Northeast Hardscape Expo

... spend more time with family and friends and think about how you are going to be more efficient and profitable next season. People have different views on how to achieve this goal but for me it really came down to the two "E's": Education and Equipment.

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Tuesday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 - Italian Heritage Center, Portland, ME  
& Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 - Regatta Banquet Center, Eliot, ME

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*Barry Cullen – ARDEX New England*

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*Phil Baler – Pave Tool Innovators*

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*Jon Briggs – Alliance Gator*

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*Al Pfannenstien – Anchor Diamond*

### Segmented Retaining Wall Best Practices

*This presentation will address the specifications and construction practices for segmental retaining walls developed since the industry started in the early 1980s.*



*Rich Brooks – Flyte New Media*

### Marketing Your Business in a Post-Covid World

*While there was a surge in home improvement projects that kept contractors busy during the pandemic, things are starting to get back to "normal." Discover what it takes to attract and convert more of your ideal customers as they turn to Google, Facebook, and other platforms to find the right contractor for their needs.*



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## January Dinner Meeting Featuring John Forti

**Date:** Wednesday, January 18, 2023

Registration closes on Wednesday, January 10, 2023.

**Snow Date:** Thursday, January 19, 2023

**Time:** 5:00pm - 8:30 pm

Registration will begin at 5:00 pm. Talk will begin promptly at 5:45 pm. Dinner will follow talk.

**Place:** Puritan Backroom Conference Center - Suite B, 245 Hooksett Road, Manchester, NH.

**Cost:** \$55 for Members, \$65 for Non-members.

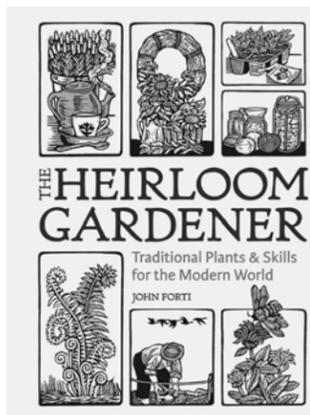
ALL payments must be received no later than January 10, 2023.

If you need to cancel after January 10, you will incur a 20% processing fee. Thank you for your understanding!

**Register Online:** [nhlaonline.org/winter-activities/](http://nhlaonline.org/winter-activities/)

Space is limited to 60 participants, so preregistration is required. Registration is on a first-come, first-serve basis.

**Topic:** *The Heirloom Gardener – Traditional Plants and Skills* by John Forti



This presentation will draw from his new book of traditional plants and skills for the modern world. Richly illustrated with period images and contemporary photographs, his PowerPoint shares inspiration from our long history of heirloom and native plant preservation, garden craft, and homestead lifeways that we can apply to our own gardens and landscapes. Artisanal gardening lifestyles can help us rebuild vibrant local agricultural economies and celebrate sustainable cottage industries, all contributing to our new, homegrown American arts and crafts movement and backyard environmentalism. At a time when we could all use a



John Forti — Photo by Rachael Montejo

little good news, we hope you will join us for a refreshing look at how you can make a difference and build habitat in your own backyard and community.

John Forti is a garden historian and ethnobotanist who has directed gardens for Plimoth Plantation Museum, Strawberry Banke Museum, Massachusetts Horticultural Society, and Bedrock Gardens. As a Slow Food Slow Food USA Governor and biodiversity specialist, his preservation work has helped to restore countless native and heirloom plants and has brought traditional artisanal practices to modern thinking. He has won numerous awards for historic garden preservation, children's garden design, herbal and historical education and the 2021 Award of Excellence from National Garden Clubs, one of the nation's most-recognized nonprofits and largest volunteer gardening organization in the world. His new book was inspired by his posts as "The Heirloom Gardener - John Forti," which go out regularly to millions on Facebook. His website is: [www.jforti.com](http://www.jforti.com)

NHCLPs will earn 1/2 credit for attending.

**QUESTIONS:** Please email Cori Cahow, for questions about the presentation: [organicgirl@gmail.com](mailto:organicgirl@gmail.com) and Pam Moreau, for questions about registration: [nhla@comcast.net](mailto:nhla@comcast.net)

Beat the Winter Blues! Join us on January 18 for this informative, refreshing, and inspiring look at how you can make a difference and build habitat in your communities.

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## Ballot: 2023 NHLA Board of Directors

**PRESIDENT:** (Vote for one) *one year term*

Andrew Pelkey, North Point Outdoors

Write in \_\_\_\_\_

**DIRECTORS:** (Vote for one) *one year term*

Donnie Piccirillo, Pierson Nurseries

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**VICE PRESIDENT:** (Vote for one) *one year term*

Heather Linehan, Linehan Landscape & Property

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**Staying on the Board**

*Past-President:*

Dave DeJohn, DeJohn Landscaping '24

*Directors:*

John Crooks, John's Landscaping of Madbury '25

Cori Cahow, Organic Garden Girl '24

**SEC/TREAS:** (Vote for one) *one year term*

Maria Rainey, Nature's Design

Write in \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Company \_\_\_\_\_

**All ballots must be signed to be counted. Return by March 15 by mail to NHLA Business Manager, 13 Rancourt St., Nashua, NH 03064 OR scan and email to [nhla@comcast.net](mailto:nhla@comcast.net) You may also opt to vote online instead. Online voting will open on March 1.**



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*GREENIUS, Continued from p. 1*

struction, snow, safety, equipment, supervisor training, and more.

This partnership will give New Hampshire Landscape Association members the opportunity to access hundreds of Greenius training courses, tailgate talks, job-site checklists, and employee development tools. Many companies in the industry continue to be challenged by skilled labor shortages.

The Greenius platform provides training courses and tools to help develop the skills of new team members and to help retain employees and foster team member growth within their organizations.

North Point Outdoors has been using Greenius for a few years now. They like the consistent training and accountability. Training can be done anytime, even before the employee steps foot in the field.

As a member of NHLA, you will receive 2-months free (\$250+ value) as well as free customized implementation (\$349 value)!!

Use this referral link when registering:

Referral Link - <https://share.golmn.com/mzsaZ8t>

Referral Code - PAMELAMOREAU25

NHLA and Greenius will be working closely together in the coming months to provide a higher level of standard for safety and performance training to the landscape industry including lawn care, grounds maintenance, snow and ice management, human resources, and business development training. We are excited!

To learn more about Greenius, visit [gogreenius.com/how-greenius-works/](http://gogreenius.com/how-greenius-works/)

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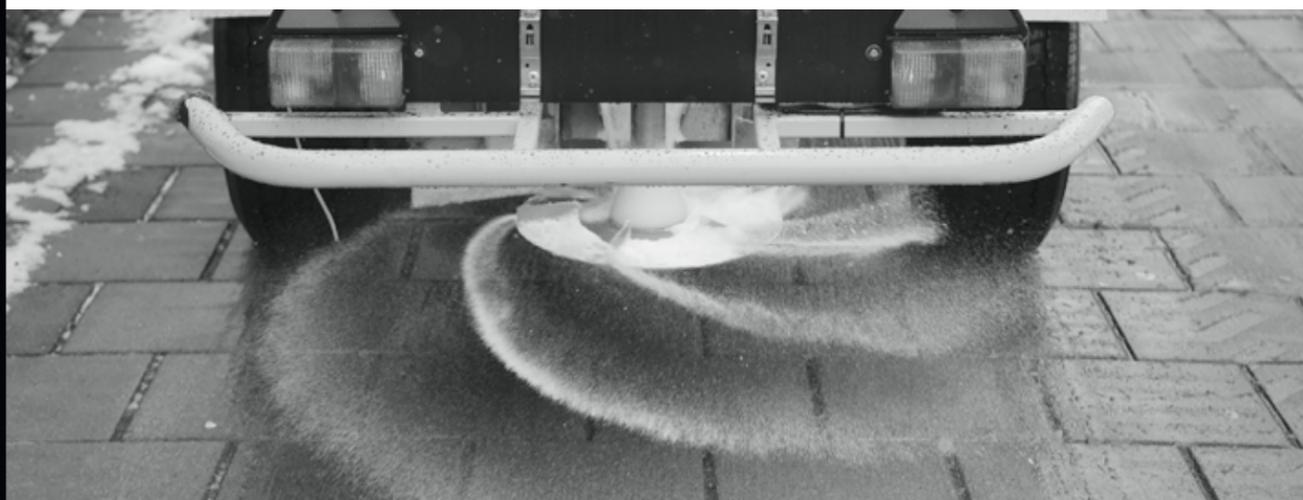
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## A Positive Mental Attitude is Good For Your Business

by Kevin Smith

COVID-19, employee challenges, and supply chain issues can affect our jobs, so it's best to keep a positive mental attitude for your business.

Our lives have changed considerably since the pandemic began in 2020. The lingering variants are causing a more contagious situation than ever before. We all seem to be busier than ever, but employee challenges and supply chain issues have thrown a wrench into our cogs. This can have a significant effect on our jobs, our success, and our peace of mind while at work. In this article, I share some suggested ways to keep a positive mental attitude.

### Promote teamwork and be in the game

Now more than ever it is time for the best teamwork possible. Create a biweekly "huddle" before heading out to the job site. Let your team know they are valued team members, not just a number. Have everyone speak about their successes and difficulties. This is a good way to hear everyone and share ideas. Encourage the team to speak candidly and respectfully. All should recognize the successes of the team and be concerned about any issues.

Spend a few days on job sites to see for yourself the triumphs and troubles your team is having. In other words, walk in their shoes.

These short "huddle" meetings need not last longer than 15 to 20 minutes and will develop camaraderie between team members and the employer/owner. If you are the owner, this shows your team that you are in the game

with them. Spend a few days on job sites to see for yourself the triumphs and troubles your team is having. In other words, walk in their shoes.

### Reward the triumphs and counsel the troubles

Showing you care develops loyalty and respect among team members. Consider holding team-building events. Perhaps close early one day every quarter for a preplanned event. Look at escape rooms, bowling or golf centers as options, for example. [editor's note: Better yet, bring your employees to an NHLA event or Twilight Meeting.] This helps your team see that you are a real person just like them outside of work. Employers and employees that have a culture of teamwork are more likely to maintain a positive outlook.

### Use social media well

Social media is a great place to network and meet others in the trade. It is also a great place to showcase your work and advertise. Many social media groups have great content and maintain professional standards. These groups often share new installation techniques and job ideas from across the country. This type of information is positive and can help you in your business.

Be cautious of toxic content and negative comments. When one gets caught up in this, it can become addictive, nonproductive, and extremely time-consuming. Be mindful with your posts and communication. Be respectful. Think before you comment. Be encouraging. Your mindfulness can have a positive effect

We all seem to be busier than ever, but employee challenges and supply chain issues have thrown a wrench into our cogs. This can have a significant effect on our jobs, our success and our peace of mind while at work. In this article, we share some suggested ways to keep a positive mental attitude.

on others, and it is ultimately a good reflection on you and your business.

### Plan for supply slowdown

Years ago, there was quite an abundance of products and lead times were not so lengthy. Even custom-made fixtures were produced with only a few weeks' lead time. Today, manufacturers and suppliers are experiencing extremely long wait times for both raw and finished materials.

To keep your business on track and your customers satisfied, you may need to change your projections by planning well in advance. Determine which of your local distributors are stocking your go-to products. Check stock on these products weekly. Order greater quantities so your

supply is not deleted. Keep in close contact with your distributors. What is in stock currently might be gone the next day. It may be necessary to look at a larger variety of products. You may need to offer a similar product to your normal workhorse due to stock constraints. To avoid this, you may need to buy early and buy often.

In past articles, we have discussed working with your friendly competitor across town. Perhaps you can put in a bulk buy together on commodity items like wire. I have seen this work out well in the past. Having stock of what you need to be productive and profitable every day is surely a step in the right direction, thus improving everyone's attitude. And remember, having the product on hand to get a job done will help you win jobs over your competitors who may not have planned as well.

In summary, be a role model for others. Your confidence and positive attitude will be seen by all your employees and customers. You and your team are important to a growing industry. Nobody likes working with a grouch. Keeping it positive keeps everyone winning! 🌟🌟

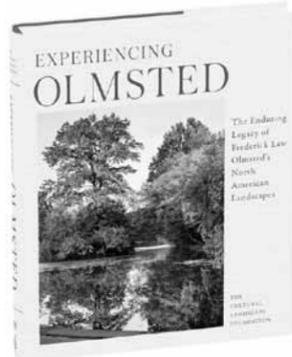
— Kevin Smith is the national technical support and trainer at Brilliance LED LLC, Carefree, AZ, and can be reached at kevin.smith@brillianceled.com

"A Positive Mental Attitude is Good For Your Business" was originally published in the Night Lighting Column of Irrigation & Green Industry. Visit [irrigationandlighting.org](http://irrigationandlighting.org) for more information about Irrigation & Lighting Magazine.

# Books of Note

**Experiencing Olmsted**  
*The Enduring Legacy of Frederick Law Olmsted's North American Landscapes*  
 by *The Cultural Landscape Foundation, Charles Birnbaum, Dena Tasse-Winter, Arleyn Levee*  
**200 Iconic Landscapes That Define North America**

Frederick Law Olmsted is the father of American landscape architecture. His firm, and the successor firms that sprung from it, worked through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to



shape some of our most beloved green spaces, including national, state, and city parks, suburban neighborhoods, and academic campuses. He is most famous for creating New York's Central and Prospect Parks, Stanford University's campus, and the Capitol Grounds. What is less known and surprising about his legacy is that he worked widely across North America.

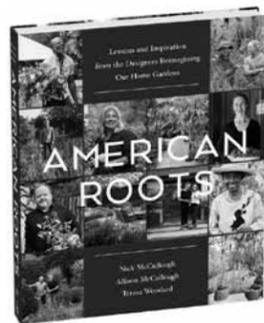
By highlighting 200 iconic landscapes, many of which are still open to the public today, *Experiencing Olmsted* brings a fresh approach to the firm's work and philosophy. It highlights not only grand city parks, but also other public venues born out of a desire for social equity. Olmsted was an early voice for parks as democratic spaces that could be reached on foot by a large percentage of any city's populace. He viewed parks as re-

storative places — what he termed “the lungs of a city.” Brimming with contemporary and archival photography as well as original drawings and plans, this truly remarkable record brings these places to vivid life.

**American Roots:**  
*Lessons and Inspiration from the Designers Reimagining Our Home Gardens*

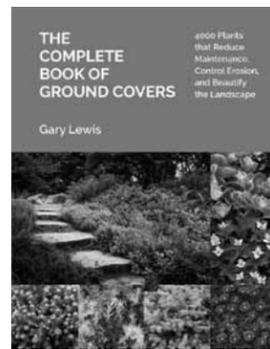
by *Nick McCullough, Allison McCullough, Teresa Woodard*

In recent years, bold designers have begun championing an American design aesthetic that embraces regional cultures, plants, and growing conditions. In *American Roots*, Nick McCullough, Allison McCullough, and Teresa Woodard highlight designers and creatives with exceptional home gardens, focused on those who push the boundaries, trial extraordinary plants, embrace a regional ethos, and express their talents in highly personal ways. Covering all the regions of the country, the profiles



dive into design influences, share the back stories of the gardens and their creators, and include design tips and plant suggestions.

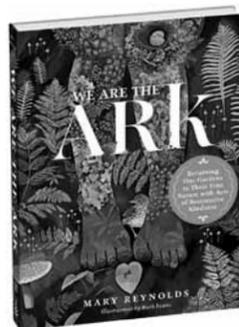
*American Roots* is a beautiful invitation to reconsider how we define the American garden, filled with guidance and encouragement for anyone looking to dig more deeply into garden design.



**The Complete Book of Ground Covers**  
*4000 Plants that Reduce Maintenance, Control Erosion, and Beautify the Landscape*  
 by *Gary Lewis*

Ground covers are widely thought of as utilitarian — we turn to them when we have a problem that needs a solution. Yet these plants also offer a diverse range of beautiful and intriguing options with a variety of colors, textures, and forms. They can unify a landscape, knit together plantings and hardscape, and add extra layers of beauty, dynamism, and surprise. As a replacement for lawns, they can reduce our use of water, fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides, carbon-based fuels, and transform a yard into a diverse landscape of habitat and food for native insects, birds, and other wildlife.

In this meticulously researched reference, nurseryman Gary Lewis profiles more than 4,000 ground covers that can perform these roles with aplomb. No matter what kinds of conditions you are facing — shade, dry soil, heavy clay, excess moisture — there's a ground cover that will thrive and beautify any garden you are designing. Comprehensive, practical, and copiously illustrated, this indispensable volume belongs on the shelf of every designer, landscape architect, and serious gardener.



**We Are the ARK**  
*Returning Our Gardens to Their True Nature Through Acts of Restorative Kindness*  
 by *Mary Reynolds*  
 Illustrated by *Ruth Evans*

Individuals can't save the world alone. But if millions of us work together to save our own patch of earth — then we really have a shot. How do we do it? With Acts of Restorative Kindness (ARK). An ARK is a restored, native ecosystem. It's a thriving patch of native plants and creatures that have been allowed and supported to re-establish in the earth's intelligent, successional process of natural restoration. Over time, this becomes a pantry and a habitat for our pollinators and wild creatures who are in desperate need of support.

These ARKs will become the seeding grounds for our planet's new story. They will be sanctuaries for our shared kin — the rooted and unrooted — and safe havens for the magic and abundance of the natural world. Most importantly, the ARK-building actions are within our control and laid out here in *We Are the ARK*. In these inspiring pages, discover how one person's actions can effect big change in this world. Even the tiniest postage stamp patch of land matters! Together we are building a patchwork quilt of life that will wrap its way around this planet.

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 Thurs., March 9 • 9am-1pm



### Educational Session Hours

Tues. March 7 • 8am-5pm *Pre-Conference Seminars*  
 Wed. March 8 • 8am-11am & 1pm-4pm  
*Golf, Sports Turf & Grounds, Equipment Techs.*  
 Thurs., March 9 • 8-10:45am & 1pm-3:30pm  
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# The Surprising Story Behind New England's Stone Walls

from the Appalachian Mtn Club website ([outdoors.org](http://outdoors.org)),

written by Matt Morris, AMC Digital Marketing Coordinator

Take a walk through the countryside or forests of New England and there's a good chance you'll come across a stone wall. Maybe even several stone walls. Sometimes they mark clear property lines that stand today, while other times they're deep in the woods — a man-made oddity in a seemingly wild place.

At one point in the mid-1800s, experts estimate there were about 240,000 miles of these stone walls across New England. But why?

## The Aristocrat's Livestock

The story of New England's stone walls starts hundreds of years ago and thousands of miles away, in Spain. There, medieval shepherds bred a unique kind of livestock — Merino sheep — which produced incredibly soft wool (and is used today in many hiking/outdoor clothes). To control the international market of this valuable product, the Spanish government had a strict embargo on the export of sheep. For centuries, flocks in Spain, and the profits from their wool, were controlled almost exclusively by the nobility.

Then, in 1808, Napoleon Bonaparte invaded, and everything changed.

The Napoleonic Wars created chaos in Spain and left it helpless to enforce its embargo. Rather than fight the inevitable or, perhaps even worse, let the French profit from their flocks, Spain elected to end the Merino sheep embargo. William Jarvis, the U.S. Consul to Portugal, saw a business opportunity. A former merchant, Jarvis began buying

up sheep and sending them back to his property in Weathersfield, Vermont. By 1810, he had brought about 4,000 Merino sheep to Vermont, according to ecologist Tom Wessels in his book *Reading the Forested Landscape: A Natural History of New England*.

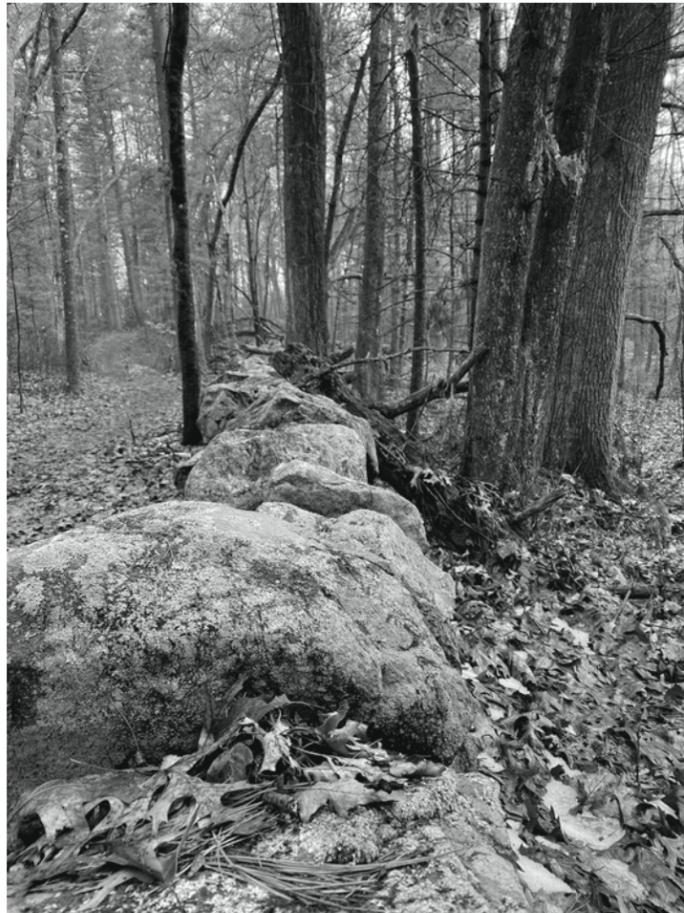
The decision altered New England's economy, and environment, for years to come.

## "Sheep Fever"

In addition to their soft wool, Merino sheep are strong foragers — ideal for grazing on New England's rocky terrain. Soon, other farmers across the region were following Jarvis' lead, switching from growing to herding and maintaining larger and larger flocks. The mass adoption of Merino made economic sense for these farmers. Americans' demand for the novel new wool was extensive. And, thanks to an American boycott on British goods after the War of 1812, New England farmers were in a unique position to control the market.

By 1840 there were 1.7 million sheep in Vermont and 600,000 in New Hampshire — or two sheep for every person in the Granite State. To keep the growing number of sheep fed, farmers radically altered the forests around them to suit their needs. In all, about 75 percent of New Hampshire was clear-cut for grazing, according to state geologist Ron Chormann. Parts of Vermont, Connecticut, and Massachusetts saw similar transformations.

As landowners cut deeper and deeper into the forests, they found themselves faced with seemingly



**Moving rocks and boulders was extremely physically demanding labor, with stones typically placed by hand. For the most part, wall construction was done by the individual farmers and landowners.**

endless piles of rock. These stones would be upturned each winter by frost heaves, the process where deforested soil moves around when it freezes and thaws. This natural process meant areas that had been cleared by a farmer could be littered with newly exposed rocks just months later.

Constructing long and tall walls from these stones solved two problems. In addition to defining property lines and helping to

control their livestock, the walls were handy place to clear the new stones that kept appearing on their property. Moving rocks and boulders was extremely physically demanding labor, with stones typically placed by hand. For the most part, wall construction was done by the individual farmers and landowners. However, in some cases, wealthier landowners would hire local Native Americans or even use slave labor.

## The End of the Wool Boom

The end of "sheep fever" came quickly. In a five-year period — from 1835 to 1840 — wool prices dropped by more than half, from 57 cents a pound, to 25, according to the Salisbury Historical Society.

The end was brought on by factors both close to home and far away. Years of over-grazing had left the soil depleted and caused erosion and flooding. Poor soil quality made it harder for farmers to keep the larger flocks they'd grown accustomed to, and many farmers moved away from the region, mostly to the Midwest.

Factors outside of New Eng-

**A**t one point in the mid-1800s, experts estimate there were about 240,000 miles of these stone walls across New England. But why?

land also contributed to the bust. In the South, the invention of the cotton gin (and use of the unpaid labor of enslaved individuals) made cotton a more affordable alternative to Merino wool. New England farmers also faced new competition from shepherds in Australia and Argentina — where flocks of Merino sheep were also

being introduced.

In the aftermath of the sheep bust, much of the land that was abandoned and left to revert back to forests. In some places, especially in Vermont, farmers converted their pastures for dairy farming. In both cases, many of the stone walls were

left untouched. Today, these walls stand as a unique part of New England history and an important reminder of the ways humans can negatively alter their environment in a short period of time. The damage to the soil and biodiversity of New England caused by clear-cutting lasted long after the sheep were gone.

— You can find out more about the Appalachian Mountain Club's mission of fostering the protection, enjoyment, and understanding of the outdoors by visiting their website at [outdoors.org](http://outdoors.org).



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“Anyone who thinks gardening begins in the spring and ends in the fall is missing the best part of the whole year; for gardening begins in January with a dream.”

—Josephine Nuese, author of *The Country Garden*

See the NHLA website for Newsletter copy and advertising deadlines:  
[nhlaonline.org/nhla-newsletter/](http://nhlaonline.org/nhla-newsletter/)



# Calendar

■ **JANUARY 18**

NHLA Dinner Meeting, John Forti presenting. See page 13

■ **JANUARY 25**

2023 Grow Maine Green Expo, Augusta, ME Civic Center, [melna.org](http://melna.org)

■ **FEBRUARY 7**

Genest Bootcamp, Italian Heritage Center, Portland, ME, register at [mailchi.mp/genest-concrete/bootcamp2023](http://mailchi.mp/genest-concrete/bootcamp2023)

■ **FEBRUARY 9**

Genest Bootcamp, Regatta Banquet Center, Eliot, ME, register at [mailchi.mp/genest-concrete/bootcamp2023](http://mailchi.mp/genest-concrete/bootcamp2023)

■ **MARCH 3-5**

The Vermont Flower Show, Champlain Valley Expo, Essex Junction, VT, [vnlavt.org](http://vnlavt.org)

■ **MARCH 4**

NHCLP Exam, see page 5. (Review Course Jan. 31-Feb 21, also see page 5)

■ **MARCH 7-9**

New England Regional Turfgrass Conference & Show, RI Convention Center, see page 19 and [www.NERTF.org](http://www.NERTF.org)

■ **MAY 5-6**

NH Farm, Forest and Garden Expo, Manchester, NH, [nhfarmandforestexpo.org](http://nhfarmandforestexpo.org)

■ **AUGUST 1**

SAVE THE DATE: Annual NHLA Golf Tournament