

Schedule

8:00 Registration opens; refreshments served

9:15 Mary Meyer

Mary Meyer is a professor in the Department of Horticultural Science at the University of Minnesota. Her research interests include native and ornamental grasses, especially *Miscanthus*, *Schizachyrium*, and *Pennisetum*. She is interested in propagation and production of grasses, including cold hardiness and sustainability of grasses for landscaping, especially in northern climates. *Blue Heaven* is a patented new little bluestem grass she released in 2007. Mary also conducts research on alternative low maintenance turfgrasses. She has studied *Miscanthus* and where it has escaped in the United States and authored the website entitled *Miscanthus: Ornamental and Invasive Grass*. She is the author of *Ornamental Grasses for Cold Climates*.

Mary is responsible for the development and coordination of statewide multi-media educational programs in environmental and consumer horticulture. She was the State Coordinator for the Master Gardener program in Minnesota for 13 years. In July 2008, Mary became the Interim Director of the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum.

Winning Combinations with Ornamental Grasses

Learn which perennials and shrubs look best with ornamental grasses in this presentation on winning combinations. Cultural techniques and uses of grasses for difficult sites, such as shade, near water, or on slopes will also be covered. Mary will highlight old favorites and what new grasses are good in a garden setting.

10:15-10:30 Break

Featured Presentation

10:30 William Cullina

William Cullina holds degrees in plant science and psychology and has been working in plant propagation and nursery production for over twenty years. He is the plant and garden curator for the Coastal Maine Botanical Garden, one of North America's newest public gardens featuring 250 acres of forests and gardens along a mile of salt water in Boothbay, Maine. Previously, Bill was the director of horticultural research for the New England Wild Flower Society. A nationally recognized speaker, writer and expert on native plants, Bill lectures extensively to garden and professional groups and writes frequently for popular and technical journals. His first book, *The New England Wild Flower Society Guide to Growing and Propagating Wildflowers of the United States and Canada*, was published in 2000. Additional books include *Native Trees, Shrubs, and Vines - A Guide to Using, Growing and Propagating North American Woody Plants*; *Understanding Orchids*; and *Native Ferns, Moss and Grasses*. *Understanding Perennials* - a book about everything you ever wanted to know about perennials but were

afraid to ask - is due out in June 2009. Bill and his wife, Melissa live with their 6 year old son Liam and 1 year old twins Ronan and Maeve on Southport Island, Maine.

Dancing Under a Curtain of Trees

Whether you garden under a single tree, the shadow of your neighbor's roof or a verdant forest canopy, shade is a constant and sometimes unwelcome companion. Fortunately, our eastern forests are an incredibly rich source of wildflowers, ferns and even mosses born to thrive in the shade. Using breathtaking photography and a horticulturalist's eye, Bill will delve into this world of shady characters, profiling many of his favorite native woodland plants, their wants, needs and uses in the garden.

12:00 – 1:15 Lunch

1:15 Lee Reich

Lee Reich is an avid gardener who turned from plant and soil research with the USDA and Cornell University to writing, lecturing, and consulting. His books include *A Northeast Gardener's Year*, *The Pruning Book*, *Weedless Gardening*, *Uncommon Fruits for Every Garden*, and *Landscaping with Fruit*. He writes regularly for the Associated Press and publications such as *Fine Gardening* and *Horticulture*. Lee's garden has been featured in such publications as the *New York Times* and *Martha Stewart Living*, has won awards from *National Gardening* and *Organic Gardening* magazines, and has been included in "Open Days" tours of the Garden Conservancy.

My Weedless Garden

"Weedless gardening," a novel way of caring for the soil, is an integrated system involving minimal soil disturbance, avoidance of soil compaction, maintenance of a soil cover, and pinpointed watering. It's applicable to soil care beneath trees and shrubs as well as to flower and vegetable gardens. Applications to new plantings and to maintenance of existing plantings will be shown. By emulating rather than fighting Mother Nature, plants become healthier and weed problems are minimized.

2:15 Steve Aitken

Steve Aitken is the managing editor of *Fine Gardening*, a magazine devoted to helping its readers reach gardening success at every step along the way. A Master Gardener, Steve has been with the magazine for eight years, visiting gardens and gardeners across the country. He practices a style of gardening he calls "benign neglect" and requires that his plants be low maintenance and (somewhat) deer-resistant. Instead of caring for his plants like he should, Steve uses his minimal free time to carve out new beds and borders around his Cheshire, CT home.

Plant Combinations That Work

We've all walked around our gardens moving a just-purchased plant from spot to spot wondering, "Should it go here? Or here?" Similarly, we have all looked at a particular part of a bed or border and wondered why it just wasn't working. The solution to these problems lies in knowing how to effectively combine plants. Steve will offer us some

stellar combinations for your garden and explain what makes them work. He will highlight workhorse plants that can form the foundation of any number of combinations and reveal the best way to start creating combinations today.

Break 3:15-3:30

3:30 Len Giddix

Len has been gardening for nearly 50 years. He is a Certified Nursery Professional, and a member of the CT Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) and the Connecticut Horticultural Society. Len hold a Master's Degree in Plant Pathology from Penn State University. He is a sales rep for Prides Corner Farms located in Lebanon, CT and is the co-host of *Garden Talk*, a live, call-in gardening talk show on WTIC-AM 1080, airing Saturdays from noon until 2 pm.

The Geometrics of Successful Vegetable Gardening

Growing your own vegetables is one of the most rewarding pastimes available to the homeowner. It can be perplexing when weather conditions, plant diseases, and hungry varmints work against your success. In this presentation, you will learn to use powerful yet easy to remember geometric learning tools to help you beat the odds and the organisms that would rob you of your hard-earned bounty.

4:30 Adjournment