CHECK- IN: 7:30 - 8:30 AM

WELCOME AND ORIENTATION: 8:30 – 8:50 AM: Dennis Groh

PART 1 – SPEAKER SESSIONS

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<td>1A</td>
<td>Dr. Bert Cregg</td>
<td>What is Spruce Decline and What Can You Do About It?</td>
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Speaker Bio: Dr. Bert Cregg is a Professor of Horticulture and Forestry at Michigan State University. He conducts research and extension programming on trees in landscapes, nurseries, and Christmas tree production. He has published over 100 articles in scientific journals and professional publications and is a regular contributor to the Michigan Landscape magazine and the Great Lakes Christmas Tree Journal. Dr. Cregg earned his Ph.D. in Tree Physiology at the Warnell School of Forest Resources at the University of Georgia. Prior to Joining the MSU faculty in 1999, he was a Research Plant Physiologist for the USDA Forest Service and a Research Project Leader for International Paper.

Class Description: Across the Midwest, many Colorado blue spruce trees have experienced widespread and steady decline. Spruce decline is a syndrome that involves the interaction of site factors and several fungal diseases. Dr. Cregg will discuss the probable causes of spruce decline and approaches that conifer enthusiasts can take to reduce its impact.

1B Bob Fincham The Three W’s: What, Where, and Why?

Speaker Bio: Bob was a science teacher for thirty-nine years. His passion for conifers began in 1974 and led to the start of a mail order nursery business named Coenosium Gardens, which sold conifers around the world until 2015. Bob was one of the driving forces behind the creation of the American Conifer Society, and served as its first President for five years.

Always the educator, Bob self-published five books on cultivated conifers. He has also written for the American Nurseryman, the NARGS Quarterly, Fine Gardening, and the American Conifer Society Bulletin. He has produced three videos on conifers and propagation methods. Bob’s expertise is recognized internationally, and he has presented both at the Fourth International Conifer Convention in England and the Royal Boskoop Horticultural Society in the Netherlands.
Class Description: The Three W’s is a class that focuses upon the behavior of conifers and will attempt to answer questions concerning the following topics by explaining the latest theories:
  o Apical dominance
  o Pendulous growth habits
  o Golden foliage
  o Witches’ brooms
  o Propagation

The presentation will include descriptions and examples of each topic followed by class discussion to expand upon the presented information. If you have ever wondered why conifers grow the way they do, spend some time in this class to have many of your questions answered.

1C Dr. Jeffery Iles Too Large to be a Shrub…Too Small to be a Tree…But Perfect for the Midwestern Landscape

Speaker Bio: Dr. Iles serves as Professor and Chair of the Department of Horticulture at Iowa State University (Ames, IA). He teaches, conducts applied research, and provides Extension programming in the areas of landscape plant establishment and maintenance, woody plant evaluation, and nursery and garden center management. He received his B.S., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in horticulture from Michigan State, Penn State, and Iowa State, respectively. Between degrees, Jeff worked in the retail garden center segment of the green industry, first in suburban Detroit, Michigan, and later in Littleton, Colorado. Jeff is a member of the Rotary Club of Ames and serves on the Board of Directors of the Ames Foundation, Brenton Arboretum, and in his spare time likes to cycle along the many excellent biking trails in central Iowa.

Class Description: Some woody plants seem to have an identity crisis. Neither shrub or tree…too large to use in a traditional foundation planting and too small to stand alone in the middle of the backyard. You know who they are. The witchhazels, Japanese/Korean hybrid maples, viburnums, and yes, even gray dogwood! But these plants do have a place in our managed landscapes, and in this session, we’ll bring them out of the shadows and give them center stage.

1D Panayoti Kelaidis Colorado Conifer Central: Denver Botanic Gardens Evolution as an ACS Demonstration Garden

Speaker Bio: Panayoti Kelaidis is a plant explorer, gardener and public garden administrator associated with Denver Botanic Gardens where he is now Senior Curator and Director of Outreach. He has designed plantings for many of the gardens at DBG. He is particularly noted for the plantings of the Rock Alpine Garden. He has introduced hundreds of native ornamentals from throughout the Western United States to general horticulture. He has taken seven collecting trips to Southern Africa researching the high mountain flora there, as well as travels to the Andes, Central Asia (Kazakhstan and Mongolia), the Himalaya (from both Pakistan and China), as well as travels throughout much of Europe from Spain to Turkey, and most recently, New Zealand. Many of his plant introductions are available through Plant Select®, (a plant introduction program he helped launch along with staff from Colorado State University and nurseries across America). He has lectured in over 140 cities in twelve countries, and has been
Panayoti has been honored with the Boulder History Museum’s 60 Year Living History award in 2004 and in 2003 by being inducted into the Garden Club of America as Member-at-Large. In 2002 he received the National Garden Club’s Medal of Honor and in 2000 the Arthur Hoyt Scott Medal from the Scott Arboretum at Swarthmore College. He has received four awards from the North American Rock Garden Society. In 2004 he was inducted into the Colorado Nursery and Greenhouse Association’s Hall of Fame. In 2009 he received the Liberty Hyde Bailey Award of the American Horticultural Society.

Panayoti’s parents were from Crete, and he spent four summers on that island and touring Greece as a child, and has returned periodically since, most recently on a research trip funded by Chanticleer Gardens’ scholarship to do a comparative study of the Mt Olympus National Park in Thessaly, and the Ulu Dag National Park near Bursa, in Turkey (the Mt. Olympus of Anatolia).

Class Description: 40 years ago, Denver Botanic Gardens boasted fewer than a dozen species of conifers in its entire collection. Today there are hundreds of accessions. The display and curation of these trees has evolved dramatically as well—the story of conifers here in some ways parallels the growth of awareness across the country.

Session 2: 10:30-11:45

2A  John Amdall  Prune, Don’t Dig: Creating the Perfect-Sized Conifer

Speaker Bio: John Amdall acquired ACS (Addicted Conifer Syndrome) at the Rich’s Foxwillow Pine exhibit at the Chicago Flower & Garden Show in the early 1990’s. Sharon and John built a new home in 1997 and dwarf conifers became the foundation of the landscaping. By 2011, John realized that conifers do not read their labels because the conifers had far exceeded their allocated space. Before digging out and replacing the conifers, John decided to learn how to prune them, including classes at the ACS Conifer College. Today, there are several dozen conifers in John’s garden that will never become any larger and will be part of the garden indefinitely. John will share what he has learned, provide a few basic principles for conifer pruning, and provide a handout to attendees that includes many examples of conifer pruning.

Class Description: Yes, conifers can be pruned. Candling a conifer will slow the growth rate, but only pruning will control the size and shape of a conifer. John Amdall will share what he has learned about pruning conifers and how he has created a 23 year-old garden with the perfect-sized conifers. WARNING: you may never look at a conifer in the same way after this class!

2B  Don LaFond  The Lonely Conifer Garden

Speaker Bio: Don LaFond (Michigan) is a stay-at-home dad and loves gardening. He became interested in gardening when he found out that an English/cottage style garden wouldn't grow in a gravel pit; so, he started rock gardening instead. He likes to collect Daphne and dwarf conifers, but his garden also consists of rhododendrons, trees, shrubs, and other perennials. A favorite
way of gardening has become creating troughs. Don joined NARGS in 1990. He enjoyed being president and vice president of the Great Lakes Chapter of NARGS and has served on the NARGS Board of Directors. His garden received the NARGS Millstream Award for an alpine garden in 2015. He has also received the NARGS Geoffrey Charlesworth Writing Award for the Rock Garden Quarterly.

Class Description: Do you have a lonely conifer garden? Do you and your firs need some friends? Are your spruce's skirts too short? Are your balsams bullies? Let's explore some ways for cone heads to expand their gardening horizons. Don will offer some ideas that rock gardeners use to integrate conifers, herbaceous plants and, of course, some rocks. Rock gardeners are actually much like conifer collectors. Both collect plants and then struggle to make these collections look like a garden. By adding some herbaceous plants and a few strategic rocks with your conifers, you will be able to save some conifers from being chain saw fodder and still have interesting spaces to look at in your garden. By observing nature, we can learn how to make a conifer collection look a little less like a museum and more like a garden.

2C Dr. Martin Stone Natural History, Evolution, and Biogeography of Cultivated Asian Acer Species

Speaker Bio: Dr. Martin Stone obtained a B.S. in Horticulture and an M.S. in Botany at Oklahoma State University. He earned a Ph.D. at Texas A&M in Soil and Crop Science. He has been at Western Kentucky University (WKU) for the past fifteen years teaching ornamental horticulture and plant propagation. In 2008, he was named the Leichhardt Endowed Professor of Horticulture. Martin Stone is the Director of the Baker Arboretum and teaches courses in Landscape Horticulture, Plant Propagation, and Plant Physiology. He has traveled throughout the world with students studying Horticulture and currently teaches each January in Costa Rica.

Class Description: Maples, Acer spp. (Sapindaceae) are a cosmopolitan group of plants that are very frequently associated in gardens with conifers. Conifers and maples are complimentary in texture, color, and growth habit. The small Asian maples are especially popular as conifer companions. This talk will focus on maple evolution, biogeography, global migration, and status as a genus today. However, our understanding of maple evolution is far from complete. We will also talk about some important differences between the most common and popular species in our gardens and other plants in their genus.

2D Gary Whittenbaugh Woody Plants for the Rock Garden

Speaker Bio: Gary Whittenbaugh has been gardening for over 35 years and has lectured extensively on the use of conifers, with emphasis on dwarf/slow growing and unusual conifers. He also lectures on conifer companions, hypertufa troughs and rock gardening. He was President of the American Conifer Society Central Region 2001-2005, and was the recipient of the prestigious ‘Marvin and Emelie Snyder Merit Award for Service’ from the American Conifer Society in 2005. He is an Iowa Master Gardener and received the Lifetime Master Gardener Award in 2005. He is member of the American Conifer Society and the North American Rock Garden Society. Gary, with help from his brother Tom, has created a small garden in Oelwein IA. Articles and photos of the garden have appeared in Garden Gate Magazine including the
cover of the September/October 2005 issue and Iowa Gardening Magazine cover story fall issue 2006. The garden attracts many visitors every year who make the pilgrimage to enjoy their labor of love and take notes on what an extraordinary garden can be accomplished in a relatively small city lot.

**Class Description:** The most complete expression of gardening may be the rock garden. This is especially true if you include miniature woody plants in your garden including smaller dwarf conifers. Rock gardens give us almost limitless plant choices, but most rock gardeners seem to miss the woody plants. The foliage of most of these plants such as Daphne is evergreen so along with the conifers you have a great year-around garden. Gary once read: “Once you get into rock gardening you will always be a Rock Gardener”. He assures you it is an exciting and fun type of gardening. Don’t miss this presentation!

**Session 3: 12:30-1:45**

**3A**  Ron Amos  **Conifer Propagation from Seed at Evergreen Nursery. Principles and Practices for Large or Small Nurseries and Hobbyists**

**Speaker Bio:** Ron Amos received his B. S. and M. S. in Horticulture from the University of Wisconsin Madison. He owns Evergreen Nursery Co., Inc., in Sturgeon Bay, WI, and has been propagating plants for more than 35 years. Ron is a member and Past President of the International Plant Propagators’ Society and has taught plant propagation at the NEW Technical College for 10 years. Currently Evergreen Nursery grows over four million liners per year, of which over one million are evergreen seedling plugs.

**Class Description:** The presentation will cover conifer seed collection, extraction, storage and propagation at Evergreen Nursery. The principles of seed treatment, germination and successful growing will be discussed. The practices and methods used on a large scale at Evergreen Nursery will be examined, and Ron will review how these can be applied to a small nursery or hobbyist.

**3B**  Dr. Bert Cregg  **The Cold Truth About Winter Injury**

**Speaker Bio:** Dr. Bert Cregg is a Professor of Horticulture and Forestry at Michigan State University. Dr. Cregg conducts research and extension programming on trees in landscapes, nurseries, and Christmas tree production. He has published over 100 articles in scientific journals and professional publications and is a regular contributor to the Michigan Landscape magazine and the Great Lakes Christmas Tree Journal. Dr. Cregg earned his Ph.D. in Tree Physiology at the Warnell School of Forest Resources at the University of Georgia. Prior to joining the MSU faculty in 1999, he was a Research Plant Physiologist for the USDA Forest Service and a Research Project Leader for International Paper.

**Class Description:** Winter injury is among the most common forms of environmental damage to conifers. Winter injury may result from a wide array of stresses including extreme cold, temperature fluctuations, desiccation and mammal damage. In this program Dr. Cregg will
describe the how’s and why’s of winter injury and steps that you can take to protect landscape conifers from injury.

3C    Dennis Groh    Asian Maple Musings - Sho Chiku Bai (松竹梅)

**Speaker Bio:** Dennis Groh has been a garden enthusiast since childhood, and an avid plant collector for more than 40 years. He has learned from his many failures. He is a voracious reader and has an extensive library of books on plants. He has been blessed to be able to network over the years with some generous and knowledgeable plant mentors. He has traveled the world to study those plants and talk with those most knowledgeable about growing them. Thus, his contacts in the horticultural world have grown right along with the plants. Dennis does all he can to advance knowledge in the horticultural field. A scientist by profession, he brings an incisive perspective to his gardening, asking "why" and demanding explanations for "how", supported by fact.

Dennis and his wife, Carole, have developed an amazing and stunning plant collection in their 1-acre garden. Photographs of their garden have been featured in the Detroit Free Press, the American Conifer Society magazine, and in Adrian Bloom's publication "Gardening with Conifers". In 2005, Rebecca's Garden (HGTV) filmed a segment on the Japanese Maples grown in their garden.

Dennis has lectured on conifers, fall color, rhododendrons & azaleas, woody plants, and Japanese gardens in an attempt to pass on his mentors’ legacy of plant knowledge and to help others avoid his mistakes.

**Class Description:** In Japanese, Sho Chiku Bai (松竹梅) can be literally translated into pine (松), bamboo (竹), and plum (梅) and has special significance in Japan as New Year symbols of good fortune. However, it has also evolved into a common quality rating system where Bai is good, Chiku is better, and Sho is best.

Over the last 40 years, Dennis has planted, grown, and observed over a hundred different cultivars of Asian maples in his garden. Some have survived all 40 years; a few only lasted a year or two before requiring removal. A couple of untypically cold winters have also helped to “thin the herd” of survivors. The latter were expensive lessons. In this presentation, he will share his successes and failures and offer some insights and suggestions. His comments will also include input from other knowledgeable Asian maple growers in the Midwest. The information presented would probably be classified as anecdotal evidence by agricultural extension organizations. However, you can decide for yourself, based on the information and rationale, if what he shares might help you avoid some expensive disappointments.

3D    Bob Iiames    Cohesion vs. Chaos...Creating Design in the Collector's Garden

**Speaker Bio:** Bob Iiames is a groundskeeper at the 173-acre Lange Estate in Ludlow Falls, Ohio. He is a member of the American Conifer Society, Ohio Valley North American Rock Garden Society, and is current president of the Miami Valley Hosta Society. He received the ACS Central Region 2018 Distinguished Service Award. He lives in Englewood with his wife
Karen. As you might imagine, his favorite pastime is gardening. His passion is dwarf and unusual conifers and currently he has more than 400. The gardens also showcase more than 400 hostas, 250 daylilies, rock garden plants, and many other rare and unusual perennials. He hosts Bob’s Garden Fair, a sale of rare and unusual conifers, trees, perennials and handmade garden art, each year on the Saturday of Labor Day weekend. In 2018, there were 18 vendors from five states. Bob has provided continuing education for Ohio’s Miami, Montgomery, and Greene Counties and Hendricks County, Indiana, Master Gardener Volunteers, as well as Miami Valley Green Industry Professionals. He has spoken to numerous garden clubs, plant societies, the Great Lakes Region Hardy Plant Society, the Federation of Garden Clubs, Ohio Association of Garden Clubs, local garden centers, plus he has presented at Hosta College.

Class Description: Are you a plant nut like me? Do you love to buy conifers, Japanese maples and well, plants in general and have to have one of each one you see? Do you get home, walk around the garden, wondering where to plant them so they don't look like soldiers in a row? Join me for a look at some gardens and gardeners that have solved the collector's garden dilemma. See how they turn chaos into order through the use of color, texture, shape and form to create a cohesive look in their gardens. We will talk about how to put it all together so you CAN have one of everything and still have a garden that is beautiful and harmonious.

Session 4: 2:00-3:15

4A Alan Craig Asian Maple Selections at Iseli Nursery

Speaker Bio: Alan Craig is Iseli Nursery’s hardy garden tree expert. He has been a sales representative with Iseli Nursery for 32 years, and in that time has helped shape the plant palette there by introducing or helping to promote many new conifer and broadleaf varieties. Alan has been a passionate promoter of plants for decades, and has helped shape the garden environment of the Midwest. He was a member of the Bickelhaupt Arboretum Board of Directors from 1999 to 2014, and is still active there in an advisory capacity. Alan has been intensely involved with the program at Iseli Nursery, headed by Paul Halladin, of selecting and hybridizing Asian maples, particularly those hardy in USDA Zones 4 and 5 such as the ground-breaking series, Jack Frost® Maples. Alan lives in eastern Iowa and has hands on experience gardening in the challenging climate and temperature swings of the upper Midwest. He resides just outside of the small town of Maquoketa, Iowa, with his wife and daughter, two cats, many plants, and dozens of neighborhood deer.

Class Description: Plant selection and introduction has been an ingrained part of Iseli Nursery since the inception of the nursery in 1975. Jean Iseli, the founder, planted the seed for innovation with his dream for Iseli Nursery. His dream was to create the world’s premier conifer nursery. He also had a passion for companion plants including Japanese maples. Japanese maples are lovely trees for small gardens but unfortunately are marginally hardy in many parts of North America. Japanese maples are rated hardy to zone 5-6 but a closely related species Acer pseudosieboldianumKorean maple is hardy to zone 4. Iseli Nursery has been pursuing a breeding program for many years with the primary goal to develop a line of beautiful hardy landscape trees using Acer pseudosieboldianum Korean maple as the foundation for hardiness combined with the refined beauty of Acer palmatum Japanese maple. This
presentation will share the progress and exciting potential of this tree breeding program from Iseli Nursery.

4B  Glenn Herold  Major Minors: Small and Underappreciated Bulbs in the Landscape

Speaker Bio: Glenn is a former student of Dr. Ed Hasslekus and received his BS and MS (Horticulture) from the UW-Madison. He was Professor of Horticulture and Head Cross Country Coach, Illinois Central College, East Peoria, IL - 1979 to 2011. He is the founder of the Illinois Central College Arboretum, and has served the following society positions:

- President of Central Illinois Hosta Society, 1995-96
- Secretary of the Midwest Regional Hosta Society, 2009-2011
- President of the Midwest Regional Hosta Society, 2011 to 2015
- AHS Region 5 Liaison, 2017-present
- Vice President of the American Conifer Society – Central Region, 2001-03

His gardening interests include: Hostas, dwarf conifers, woodland wildflowers, small maples

Class Description: The area between conifers is the perfect place for bulbs. But your basic tulips and daffodils can be rather mundane. And who wants to deal with the foliage after they are done blooming? This talk will emphasize bulbs that make great alternatives to the bulbs we typically see, many of which have foliage which dies down shortly after bloom. Many provide early color in the garden, while others wait until late fall to make their appearance.

4C  Dr. Tony Reznicek  Filling the Gaps: Integrating Rock Garden Plants With Conifers

Speaker Bio: Professionally, Dr. Reznicek is a botanist, working on sedges, especially in the New World, including Latin America. As well, he works with the flora and biogeography of the Great Lakes region and the northeastern North American flora generally, with a strong interest in rare plant conservation. He also is an avid gardener with varied interests, including rock gardening, native plants and ecologically sustainable gardening, woodland plants, both native and from other areas of temperate forest, especially temperate Asia, and more generally, any evolutionary or ecologically remarkable plant groups. He has been active both the North American Rock Garden Society and its regional chapter.

Class Description: There is an incredible diversity of plant forms, foliage texture and color, and even cone form and color available with conifers, especially dwarfs. But even so, their woody plant life form is limiting, and focus on conifers and the need to avoid large, competing plants near them to prevent marring their symmetry can result in even dwarf conifer plantings looking like a miniature arboretum more than a garden. Carefully selected companion plants, however, can not only help integrate conifer plantings area into a garden whole, but also broaden the palette of color, form, and texture. And, with deciduous conifers, the advantages may be even greater if companion plants are evergreen. Companions of course, also function to diversity the attractiveness of an area to birds and to beneficial insects like bees and butterflies. Because of their cushion, mat, or mounding form, and often evergreen habit, rock garden plants can be ideal
companions for even the smallest conifers. Unfortunately, many plants beloved of rock gardeners have a sometimes deserved reputation for difficulty – some do indeed have quite specific soil and culture requirements. Opening reference works on rock garden plants also typically presents one with hundreds or thousands of species, with little guidance as to suitability or availability for particular areas or conditions, or breadth of tolerance for varied environments. We will try to narrow the array of suitable choices to species well suited to a broad region of the U.S. that are both available and coexist well with conifers, as well as offering some possibilities for their use.

4D Don Wild The Diversity of Conifers

**Speaker Bio:** Don Wild is a hobby gardener of 30 years, who first became interested in conifers while searching for some winter interest in his wife’s garden. He discovered and joined the American Conifer Society (ACS). In the ACS, Don was able to network and learn from some amazing mentors. He eventually served as its president. His many years of contributions earned him the Marvin and Emelie Snyder Award of Merit for Dedicated Support of the ACS. Don and his wife Harriet have amassed an amazing collector’s garden of plants surrounding their home.

**Class Description:** Take a journey through the world of conifers. Develop an appreciation of the wondrous diversity found in this relatively small but important portion of the plant kingdom. Conifers are a basic landscape element in garden design because of their color, form and texture. This Apple Keynote presentation features high quality images demonstrating the unique and special features in the genus, species and cultivars.

**PART 2 - CLOSING SESSION** – An Expert Panel Discussion with Q & A

The panel will be comprised of several CC speakers and other ACS experts. Each panel member will take a few minutes to mention their biggest challenges and then take written questions gathered from attendees during the day. The Closing Session will be moderated by Byron Baxter.

**END OF CURRICULUM**