



About me: I am the author of 15 mysteries, most of which use garden club settings or horticultural plots. I write the popular 'The Principal Undergardener' blog, which addresses gardening as a non-gardener who loves gardens.

Since 2014, I have spoken to more than 750 organizations; mostly in New England but increasingly across the country. Recent engagements include NGC's Deep South convention and annual meetings of the Connecticut,

Michigan, and South Carolina garden club federations.

Also, for three years, I ran the Massachusetts Horticultural Society's activities at the Boston Flower & Garden Show, including the building of a major landscape exhibit that is the subject of 'Flower Show Confidential'.

My Fee is \$200 if I have the opportunity to sell books (I give 10% of sales back to sponsoring non-profit organizations). If no book sales are permitted at a venue, my fee is commensurately higher. No travel fee if you are within an hour's drive (roughly 35 miles) of Medfield; \$35 fee up to 75 miles; negotiable thereafter. If my fee seems suspiciously low, it's because my goal is to attract new readers to my writings.

How to contact me:

Neal Sanders
(508) 359-9453 email: Neal02052@gmail.com

on the web at:

www.TheHardingtonPress.com
www.ThePrincipalUndergardener.blogspot.com

"The comments we received on "Gardening Is Murder" were resounding: "The best speaker we have had in years."

**Veronica Fesser
Springfield (Illinois) Civic Garden Club**

Programs by Neal Sanders 2024-2025

Gardening Is Murder

A laugh-out-loud
presentation on
gardening

*Gardening Is
Painless
(and other lies
we tell ourselves)*

More hilarious stories
drawn from my
gardening escapades

Create Your Very Own Hometown National Park!

An acolyte of Doug Tallamy (that would be my wife) gets her spouse to build – from scratch – a half-acre (mostly) native plant/pollinator garden. It is an inspiring true story, told with great humor

Flower Show Confidential

Behind the scenes at a major flower show as a 1200-square-foot exhibit is built in just 66 hours

Strong Independent Women

The source of the inspiration for my books, told humorously

'Gardening Is Murder' has been presented to more than 700 organizations since 2014. It is a 'spouse's point of view' of gardening and is filled with humor and insight from someone who gardens less from an abiding love of horticulture than for the love of a spouse. Good horticultural advice is dispensed, bad advice is debunked. Your members will leave with a better appreciation of what is going on in the mind of their helpmates. The talk is adapted from my widely read blog, 'The Principal Undergardener'.



Some of the topics I cover include:

- Why so much gardening advice on the internet is awful
- Why you *never* compute the value of your gardening labor
- Proof that wildlife doesn't watch Walt Disney movies
- Why it requires digging three holes to plant one thing

Comments from those who have seen my talk are uniformly enthusiastic. "Our members see themselves" is a consistent theme. This is an ideal program for 'spouse night' and member recruitment.

* * * * *

If your organization enjoyed hearing 'Gardening Is Murder', then they'll love **'Gardening Is Painless (and other lies we tell ourselves)**. It is in the same format and mines the same rich vein of gardening as a source of 'drawn-from-real-life' humor.



I cover revelations such as 'rock walls grow to consume all available building material'. I provide reasons why you should never hesitate to pay a delivery charge for trees or 'enable' a gardener; why Slinkys won't stop squirrels from raiding your feeder, and why giving a flower show ticket to a gardener can injure your back.

* * * * *

'Flower Show Confidential' takes an audience from the inception of a major flower show exhibit (ten months before the event) and into the intense, three-and-a-half-day 'build'. Not just a dry recitation of facts, it's an eye-opening look at the meticulous planning that go into every aspect of an exhibit, such as showing how plants are 'forced' to be at the peak of perfection on a certain day. It is also a story of the



volunteers who give hundreds of hours to ensure every detail is correct, and every plant groomed to perfection.

This richly illustrated talk centers on the building of a 1200-square-foot Massachusetts Horticultural Society exhibit at the

Boston Flower & Garden Show. By the close of the presentation, the audience will feel like they helped build the exhibit – but without the aches and pains.

* * * * *

"Create Your Very Own Hometown National Park!" tells the true story of two people – both in their 60s – doing what no one in their right mind should undertake: building a half-acre pollinator-friendly native plant garden that contains not a square inch of grass. My wife, Betty (a Lifetime Master Gardener) designed the garden; the two of us planted it beginning in 2015 and continue to maintain it.



The garden follows the principles laid down by naturalist Doug Tallamy – a piece of land that provides a home for desirable species, yet is usable by human. The talk describes how the garden was conceived and executed, and how it has evolved as it matures. All this is told with humor. When her schedule permits, Betty accompanies me in order to correct inaccuracies and offer her own version of events.

* * * * *



'Strong Independent Women' describes how my background shaped my writing subjects. I speak about the writing process; especially about the 'aha' moments that inspire a book. This is not a garden club talk, but had found resonance at libraries, Councils on Aging, and civic groups. Like my other

talks, this one is laced with humor.

All presentations are approximately 45 minutes in length and are richly illustrated.