



PG. 2

A message from Matthew

PG. 3

Our featured landscape: The Ceremony Lawn at Figure Eight Island Yacht Club

PG. 4

The science of Turf Geeks – and what it can do for your lawn

PG. 5

Our most important asset: NSG employees

### NSG Fall Calendar

**October** – Hurricane cleanup. Tree and shrub pruning. Preparing the turf for fall and winter with pre-emergents and fertilizers.

**November** – Planting winter flowers. Pruning. Installation

**December** – Leaf clean up. Pruning.



## #WILMINGTONSTRONG

At North State Gardens, we have many things to be thankful for in the aftermath of Hurricane Florence. Our families, employees, and community have come through this disaster with sweat and tears but also with courage and grace. The resilience of our city is humbling. A lengthy clean-up process is well underway: the sun is shining, and we are moving forward into autumn. ***A heart-felt thank you to all of our clients who wished us well during a very difficult and anxious time. You make what we do worthwhile.***

Have a look at the Fall Calendar to the left to see our landscaping and maintenance priorities in the coming months.



Hello Friends,

I guess it is no surprise that Hurricane Florence has dominated our thoughts here in the Cape Fear region over the past few weeks. I have been through quite a few hurricanes but this one was unique. Florence drew a bead on Wilmington from many miles and many days away and then would not leave once it got here. Someone likened it to being stalked by a ravenous tortoise while tied to the ground and unable to move.

Personally, my house took a bit of a hit with water coming through the roof and about 18" of surge in the garage and stairwell. Luckily the office and other business assets made it through relatively unscathed. I feel fortunate as some of our employees' homes were flooded and their lives turned upside down.

Many of you have generously expressed an interest in helping our hardest hit employees and your gift would be greatly appreciated. You can donate today by calling our office at (910) 270-4702 or by contact my wife and operations manager with this link: [beverly@northstategardens.com](mailto:beverly@northstategardens.com). It will take some time, but we will get everyone back on their feet and made better than ever.

Also hard hit were our plants and trees in the area. One silver lining to all the rain that came with the storm is that it washed the salt spray off of plants and turf. The wind desiccated a lot of foliage, but many plants are leafing back out already. The fate of many maritime forest trees like Cherry Laurel and Red Bay will be a question mark, however. Hurricane Fran killed a lot of these trees to the ground, and the damage we have today looks somewhat similar.

This quarter, we will be featuring a project we did a couple of years ago for the Figure Eight Island Yacht Club. The Club needed an outdoor venue for hosting weddings and with the guidance of Club leadership, we designed and created a space that is now referred to as "The Ceremony Lawn." We will go into some specific goals, challenges, and solutions in the feature.

We are very excited about the success we had with our Turf Geeks lawn care program in 2018. Turf Geeks offers a scientific and highly customized nutrient management plan for your lawn. After limited trials this first year, we are believers in the technology, and we hope that all of our lawn care customers give it a try in 2019.

I am certainly looking forward to cooler weather and the end of hurricane season! Please know that North State Gardens is working diligently to get your properties cleaned up and back to normal; the natural beauty of our coastal region will return.

*Matthew*



## UNDERSTATED ELEGANCE

 In 2015, we began design and planning for a new functional lawn space at the Figure Eight Island Yacht Club. Coinciding with an expansion of their pool facilities, Club leadership saw the need for an upgraded event space for weddings and celebrations. Much screening and ornamental planting was required, but the main feature of the space needed to be a durable lawn sized to accommodate a 40' x 80' tent. Also, an elegant entry walkway was essential along which a bridal party could approach the ceremony space.



Desiring to preserve all of the mature existing plantings possible, we installed a paver walkway that winds through a grove of Yaupon Holly and Pittosporum, minimizing the need for plant removal. The walk is lined with interesting ornamental plantings including elephant ear, Leopard Plant, Tree ferns, and annual flowers. The dense plantings conceal the eventual destination until almost the end of the walkway, stimulating curiosity, and then the walk suddenly opens up into the expanse of lawn and the waiting wedding guests.

In order to fit the large tents necessary for events, we had to dig in to an existing berm and build a retaining wall. This allowed us to preserve the large existing plants that help screen the tennis courts.



For the turf we chose Celebration Bermudagrass which has very good traffic tolerance. We maintain the turf similar to a golf fairway by cutting it with reel mowers at a short mowing height. The lawn has seen some serious foot traffic with hundreds of revelers dancing the night away and yet has proven resilient so far!

Heavy plantings of screening plants help create the space and conceal service areas of the pool bar and the tennis facilities. We chose Spartan Juniper and Japanese Ligustrum for the screen along with Sabal Palm, Variegated Pittosporum, and Limelight Hydrangea for additional interest.

# NSG AND : A SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIP



One of the most perplexing problems a coastal landscaper deals with is turf management – most importantly, how to keep it healthy and lush in our salty, sandy and often harsh environment. At North State Gardens, we sincerely believe we have found the answer to this conundrum and – as we have always suspected – the answer lies in science.

Agronomist Marcus Thigpin, founder of Turf Geeks, adapted technology commonly used in the agriculture and golf realms to the residential lawn. He has used his time tested process to great effect for major golf courses such as Eagle Point, Quail Hollow, and The Atlanta Athletic Club.

Over the past year, North State Gardens has been working closely with Turf Geeks running dozens of successful client trials, and we’ve had striking results. Using Turf Geeks technology, North State Gardens employs a process which creates a made-to-measure fertility and pest management plan for your individual property. A lawn is a living entity: differences in soil and pH can occur in different areas. Using satellite imagery, a map of different ‘zones’ of a property is created. Soil samples taken from each zone are then rigorously analyzed in a lab to determine what nutrients and in what amounts are needed in that particular area. Results can vary from zone to zone with some areas requiring more nutrients than others depending on the soil type. Finally, the recommended nutrients are carefully applied zone by zone. This process is being managed by NSG Lawn Care Specialist Jake Dillman. Jake says, “The Turf Geeks program is an excellent alternative to sodding in some situations, and it really allows turf to thrive in places it hasn’t been able to in the past!”



Over time, the pinpointed application process will correct problems in soil pH to optimize turf growing conditions, eliminating the need for expensive blanket fertilizer treatments or the installation of new sod. We have closely studied the research and methodically tested the program; the evidence shows this process to be a viable and economical solution to an unusually thorny but solvable problem.



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*“A recent guest to our beach house asked us, “Where did you buy the artificial grass, it looks great”. Please pass this high praise on to your people and fingers crossed that we have finally figured out how to keep the grass looking great. Thanks for the best looking lawn on the island.”*

▪ Frank Genovese

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## MEET THE PROFESSIONALS ON YOUR NSG TEAM



### Patty Perez – Horticulture Crew Leader

Patty worked in agriculture before coming to NSG over 15 years ago. She is originally from the Mexican state of Chiapas, and became a United States citizen in 2009. Patty takes great pride in her job and loves to see the beneficial changes her work can make to the overall health of a garden – especially to the flowers. Patty loves caring for flowers, fertilizing and weeding to perfection. Making our clients happy is her top priority. To relax, Patty enjoys spending time with her daughters and caring for the flowers in her own garden. She and her daughters also relish taking dance classes together: bachata, cumbia, merengue, and sometimes zumba. Patty's future plans include going back to school to learn more about her chosen profession. She continues to be a vital resource for our company.



### Melanie Johnson - Horticulturist

Melanie came to NSG from Florida where she owned a small landscaping business. After graduating from Southern Illinois University in 2014, Melanie first worked as a horticulture intern at Disney's Magic Kingdom, and then as horticulturist for the entrance and children's gardens at Chicago Botanic Gardens. Melanie loves creating outdoor environments that our clients can enjoy. She is an enthusiastic environmentalist, and she shares that passion by nurturing beautiful landscapes. Melanie's goal is to transform more properties into gorgeous outdoor living spaces that clients love and use daily. In her free time, Melanie likes going on adventures with her two dogs, Dixie and Charlie, hiking and exploring the beaches of our coastal region.