

Keeping it Green

Notes from the SUNY Cortland Sustainability Office

April 2023

Model Garden Upgrade

Good things come to those who wait. Well, the upgraded garden beds outside Cornish Hall and the Library are no exception. A huge thank you to the SUNY Cortland Facilities Operations and Services Grounds Crew and Carpentry Crew for making it happen! The upgraded raised beds were ordered with support from Cortland Auxiliary in the Fall 2022 and were finally installed after spring Break, and spring has sprung.

The SUNY Cortland Garden Advisory Committee is so excited to have this improvement in place. After a few moves and several years, the older raised beds needed to be upgraded. These new beds are higher, allowing for less strain on your back and improved accessibility with stone dust aggregate path.

See link [here](#) for additional information.



The new raised beds came in just in time for a New Garden Activities Course. Jackie Dyke in Recreation and Leisure Studies is offering this new course this spring semester. The 1 credit course is discussing garden safety, soil, hardiness zones, native plant ranges, native vs nonnative plants, annuals and perennial gardening as well as gardening for health, habitat, and pollinators. Students are engaged in active learning by planting seed starts in the campus garden, designing “dream” garden spaces, and field trips to Plantsman Nursery to learn about how garden centers work, how to select plants, and to see some native species.



No Mow May

No Mow May and Low Mow Spring are conservation initiatives to promote healthy habitat for people and pollinators by reducing mowing in the spring. This program helps fragile pollinators by not cutting down early lawn flowers and allowing bumblebees and other solitary ground bees to safely emerge from their overwintering sites without risk of being mowed. Mowing less also reduces noise pollution and our use of

No Mow May cont.

fossil fuels and diversifies the habitat. There are many ways to participate. Just reducing how often you mow is one way to participate, choosing certain areas of your lawn to not mow is another. Another thing you can do to help pollinators is to not clear leaves, sticks, and flower stubble too early.

The City of Cortland is participating in No Mow May initiative. If you live in the city limits you can participate by letting your lawn grow during the month of May. Please register by this Friday, April 21st by calling 607-753-1741 to receive a Certificate of Participation to post on your front door or window. This lets the Code Enforcement Office know that you are participating so you will not receive a lawn code violation if your grass grows above the 6-inch limit. Lawns will need to be mowed by Monday, June 5th.



Red Dragon ReUse

Green Reps / Residence Life & Housing

Every semester, as students wrap up and pack up to clear out of their room on campus, they often have limited time to get organized for moving out while trying to wrap up their academics. This spring, like many in the past, students have an opportunity to donate items as opposed to adding extra things to the trash as they leave. In the tradition of maximizing resources please consider donating items to the designated donation bins in your residence hall when moving out. All items will go to benefit the Cortland Community with the help and support of Cortland ReUse.

This year there will be two donation bins in each residence hall located near the lobby, starting Friday May 5 through the end of finals week. Look for signs and other notices within your residence hall.

One bin will be labeled for the collection of FOOD / School items. These items will go to the Cortland Cupboard:

FOOD items:

- Non-perishable food items
- Excess school supplies, notebooks, pens & pencils
- Miscellaneous Science Lab PPE (goggles, gloves)

The second bin will be labeled for collection of DONATIONS for everything else! These items will go to Cortland ReUse to be distributed out to those in the Community in need:

- Sheets, blankets, towels
- Dishes, silverware
- Lamps, toasters, and other household items
- Rugs
- Laundry soap
- Paper goods
- Sports equipment
- Clothing
- Electronics

NOTE: For students who live off-campus, there are options for you too! Please bring your items for donation to the Cortland ReUse Store located at 245 McLean Rd in Cortland. Their phone number is 607-543-4010 and website: <https://cortlandreuse.org/> Items may be dropped off for donation during their regular hours:

Mon: Closed,

Tue-Sat: 10am - 4pm.

Sun: Noon-5pm

Arbor Day Celebration

Serena Wilk, Student Tree Advisory Committee Member

For this year's Arbor Day Celebration at 11:00am on Friday, April 28th the [SUNY Cortland Campus Tree Advisory Committee](#) will be planting 5 new trees in total, but the 3 main trees that will be part of the celebration Shagbark Hickory (*Carya Ovata*), White Oak (*Quercus Alba*), and Yellow Birch (*Betula Alleghaniensis*) will be planted in the Sperry/Bowers quad and along the north side of Cornish/Van Hoesen. There are two new species being added to campus this year, the Yellow Birch (*Betula alleghaniensis*) and the Shingle Oak (*Quercus imbricaria*). This will bring the total number of unique tree species to

Arbor Day Celebration cont.

40+! A unique and diverse environment for our students, and a way to enhance and diversify all species on campus. This diversity improves the health of our ecosystem, by promoting diversity of insects, birds, fungi, and other organisms. It improves the stability of our ecosystem and resistance to diseases and pests. Having a diversity in the shapes, colors, and forms of trees makes the campus more beautiful and inviting. There are also mental health benefits from having a diversity of tree species on campus. Arbor Day is a great way for members of the campus to be able to recognize the benefits of trees and encourage them to get outside to experience them first hand.

There also will be an Arbor Day Scavenger Hunt that officially begins the Arbor Day Celebration on Monday, April 24th. Trees around campus will be marked and designated as Arbor Day Ambassadors. Students who want to participate will have all week to find as many trees as possible and meet us at the SLC tabling event to claim a prize. Prizes include T-shirts, houseplants, tree pencils, stickers and more. The Arbor Day table will be open inside the SLC near the entrance of the building from 12:00-6:00pm. Students will be able to learn more about the importance of trees in our lives and earn prizes by participating in Tree Trivia or the Arbor Day Scavenger Hunt.



If you have a question or comment about sustainability at SUNY Cortland, an idea for a story, or a sustainability-related event you want to share, connect with us at Sustainability@Cortland.Edu