



Spring Newsletter

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Our roots are in the sands of coastal Delmarva

April 10, 2019

Behind the Scenes

News from President Ray Sander & Executive Director Sheryl Swed

Spring has arrived and the gardens are slowly emerging. Since the first of the year, we feel like we have started the final lap of a long five-year endurance race. We really look forward to the Grand Opening Fundraising Dinner on September 12, 2019. We have said in the past that DBG was building a community garden and a garden family at the same time. Here is the proof.

Entry Garden Construction – The Entry Garden is the last major part of our “Phase One” construction plan. Work began on March 7 and should be complete by late May. This project includes the parking lot, Rhyme garden, sidewalk along the lot, and road to the parking lot. As with all our DBG projects this was a team effort. Thanks to Mark Davidson at Pennoni, Chris Baker and Alex Brown at George & Lynch and Mike Petka and Ray deCourcelle at Bancroft. Ray is the onsite construction manager. We also owe thanks to Jeremy Hager and Matt Romano from Coastal Plant Care for trimming the trees along the western border and advising the construction team how to protect the trees nearest the new parking lot.



Left to right Mark Davidson, Pennoni, Sheryl Swed, DBG, Alfonso Clinton, George & Lynch and Ray deCourcelle, Bancroft

The “Hammerhead” entrance on Piney Neck Road and our visitor’s entrance is being funded by all of our Sussex County legislatures. A special thanks to these state legislators led by Pete Schwartzkopf, speaker of the House of Delegates and Senator Gerald Hocker, Senate minority leader. DELDOT is working with George & Lynch and the Sussex County Conservation District on the Hammerhead. The Sussex County Conservation District will receive and disburse the funds for the Hammerhead.



Entry Garden under construction



The Rhyne Garden is taking shape

Anderson Holly Collection – On March 27, the Delaware Botanic Gardens (DBG) received and planted 32 holly trees that were donated from the Charles R. Anderson Holly Collection in Owings Mills, MD.

Ray Sander said, “The Anderson Holly Collection is a world-renown American Holly collection and we are proud that Mr. Anderson chose our legacy garden for the new home to these wonderful Holly trees. He loved to show his trees to the public and our public garden will carry on his educational tradition.”



Hollies are unloaded

Mr. Anderson's daughter, Cathy Anderson, said, "My late father's wish was that a major part of his collection be donated to DBG. He knew his Holly trees would be loved and taken care of at DBG. It was important to him that we enjoy the plants and continue to educate the public about the many Holly varieties. I am so glad these Holly trees are in a good home."

DBG volunteers, staff, and contractors were led by Jeremy Hager. Hager, a DBG Board member, said, "The entire Anderson collection consists of over 120 different cultivars of *Ilex*. DBG choose 36 unique



What a collection!

Hollies from the collection to come to Delaware, which represents over a quarter of Mr. Anderson's total collection of various Holly varieties. The importance of these hollies is allowing visitors to view deciduous and evergreen hollies rarely seen. Hollies ranging in height from 1'-15' and in tree and shrub form now reside at DBG. We are honored to continue the legacy that the Anderson family has started. As with all things at DBG, the tireless efforts of our volunteer board, Foxborough, Inc., and our garden stewards led by Carol McCloud

allowed this project to happen. We are thankful for their service. We are hopeful the wonderful Anderson collection will attract new visitors, volunteers and donors to join the DBG dream."

Sheryl Swed said, "We wish to thank the Anderson Family for this living Holly donation that will greatly enhance the garden's beauty. This tree planting emphasizes the garden's educational mission and the Holly Trees are a home to wildlife as well as enhance our gardens as a place to relax and enjoy nature."



Carol McCloud waters some of the Anderson Hollies



The Holly unloading, digging, planting and watering crew!

Bench & Furniture Campaign – Recently we had a great response to our Bench –Welcome center Furniture Campaign. We received over 50 items, including 32 benches, 4 rocking chairs, 3 tables and 12 table benches. Thanks to all who participated. Also a special thanks to Ron Bass and George Robbins for taking the lead with other volunteers who together assembled the benches and tables for the Garden and Welcome Center over two days on 27-28 March.



Ron Bass & George Robbins with Pat & Ernie Okin assemble benches



The Bench Players

Volunteers & Board Bid Farewell – As you know, Gregg Tepper, former Director of Horticulture, left on February 22 to assume a new job at West Laurel Hill Cemetery, which is near his Philadelphia home. He will start a Horticulture program there. We wish him well and our Garden Steward volunteers bid him a fond farewell at the Welcome Center on his last day.



Volunteers at Gregg's farewell



Carol McCloud, Ray Sander, Sheryl Swed and Brent Baker with Gregg Tepper

Search Committee – A DBG Search Committee has been organized to fill the position of Director of Horticulture. We are identifying the needs we project for the operations and maintenance of our existing gardens, as well as the development of new gardens. Participating in this search effort are several of our industry savvy Advisory Council Members, including Rodney Robinson, Landscape Architect, Don Rakow, Associate Professor of Horticulture, Cornell University, and Holly Shimizu, Executive director emerita, United States Botanic Garden. In addition, Bill Cullina, President and CEO of Coastal Maine Botanic Garden, Bill McLaughlin from US Botanic Garden and Kate Markert, Executive Director of Hillwood Museum and Garden are advising us. Board members on the Search

Committee include Carol McCloud, Sheryl Swed, Ruth Clausen, Bob Batley, Ron Bass and Tom Bason. We are committed to finding the very best person for this important position. The good news is that our wonderful and dedicated core volunteers have stepped up to ensure that our gardens are ready for opening day.

Volunteer Task Leaders Step-up – As part of our planning, the Board's Executive Committee recruited Task Leader's for the site. Some of our core volunteers have enthusiastically stepped up to fill that role. Our new Task Leaders are Angela Schaab, Meadow Garden Task Leader and Jan Poli, Folly Garden Task Leader. Thank you! Both Angela and Jan are working closely with our Board Member and Horticulturist Advisor, Ruth Clausen. We thank Ruth for sharing all her horticultural skills/knowledge and insight. Ruth has commuted many hours from her home in Easton, MD to be onsite. In addition, Craig Haggerty has volunteered to maintain our very important accession database, which is used to store the diversity, population and location of all the plant species in the gardens.

Board of Directors Update

News from the DBG Board



From the left: Ron Bass, Ruth Clausen, Jeremy Hager, Ray Sander, Tom Bason, Sheryl Swed, Grant Watchorn, Carol McCloud, Bob Batley, Brent Baker, Scott Thomas and Peter Carter

The DBG Board of Directors have recently approved the following major projects:

1. Approved new DBG admission prices and new membership levels for 2019.
2. Approved \$36,000 budget authorization to complete the Welcome Center Building outfitting.
3. Approved \$13,500 budget authorization to design botanic garden signage for the DBG.

New DBG Leaders

New Board Members – At the January Board meeting, two new Board Members were elected; Jeremy Hager and Scott Thomas. President Ray Sander said, “Both Jeremy and Scott are devoted professionals who bring unique skills and enthusiasm to help drive our effort to ‘Open the Garden Gates’ in September 2019.” Executive Director Sheryl Swed said, “I look forward to working with these two exceptional leaders who bring us an entrepreneurial spirit and commitment to this legacy garden.”

Jeremy Hager – Jeremy Hager is President and Founder of The Land Care Advisory Group and Coastal Plant Care in Ocean View, DE. He is Sussex County’s only ISA Board Certified Master Arborist, and has a passion for educating our coastal community about tree and environmental stewardship. Jeremy holds Master of Science Degree (Entomology) and a Bachelor of Science Degree (Environmental Resource Management, Horticulture), from Virginia Polytechnic and State University. Jeremy has been actively involved in advising the DBG on how to preserve its 12- acre woodland, while the gardens are under construction. He was National Arborist of the year 2008-2009, and is a United States Arboretum Board member, serving on the Strategic Planning Committee. He has continued his community outreach as an active public speaker and writer, sharing his arboricultural expertise.



Jeremy Hager



Scott Thomas

Scott Thomas – Scott Thomas is Executive Director for Southern Delaware Tourism, the Convention & Visitors Bureau for Sussex County, DE. He has over 13-years of experience in the tourism industry and serves on the Board of Directors for the Sussex Economic Development Action Committee (SEDAC). Scott excels in the marketing communications arena. He is the former Director of Sales and Marketing at The Inn at Canal Square in Lewes, DE and was the Corporate Events Marketing Manager for Acterna (a telecommunications company) in Germantown, MD. He is a business school graduate of the University of Maryland and resides with his wife, Tammy in Rehoboth Beach, DE.

New Advisory Council Members – At the March Board Meeting two new Advisory Council members – Mark Carter and Lillian Harrison were elected. Ray Sander said, “Both Mark and Lillian bring unique skills and enthusiasm to our new Delmarva public garden. They join the Advisory Council at a critical time as DBG is in the final countdown to “Open the Garden Gates” in September.

Carla Markell, DBG Advisory Council Chair, said, “Mark and Lillian are proven community service leaders whose advice and participation is of great value in making Delaware Botanic Gardens a reality.”

Sheryl Swed said, “DBG is fortunate to have the support and advice of these two exceptional leaders, who bring us a spirit of innovation and amazing passion for this new legacy garden.”

Mark Carter – Mark Carter has provided encouragement, support and advice to DBG leadership from the very beginning. Dogfish Head Brewery funded the first naming opportunity at DBG, the Learning Garden outdoor classroom, which allowed the garden to host its first educational program with students from Sussex Central High School last summer.

This wetland and inland dunes learning garden is the key teaching facility supporting the DBG educational mission.

He is a graduate of the Virginia Military Institute and is a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps. He resides in Milton with his partner Sara and their children. Mark said, “Thanks for asking me to be a part of an amazing project.”



Mark Carter



Lillian Harrison

Lillian Harrison – Lillian Harrison is the President/Executive Director of Elevated Community Development Corporation in Georgetown, DE. Elevated CDC provides job skills training, workforce development programs and job readiness counseling primarily for ex-offenders. Lillian is also the Housing Director for Delaware Community Reinvestment Action Council, Inc. where she assists families as a certified financial coach, foreclosure prevention/homeownership counselor. Lillian attended the University of Delaware, Newark, DE, School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy where she received her certificate for studies in Community and Economic Development. She is a community services leader who has devoted her life to helping people realize their full human and economic

potential. She also studied Computer Information Systems at Delaware Technical and Community College, Georgetown, DE. She resides in Millsboro, DE with her husband, James. Lillian said, “DBG will allow all of us to share in the beauty of nature, and I am proud to be part of this legacy garden.”

Spring Membership Drive

Spring Membership Drive – At this wonderful time of year, the Delaware Botanic Gardens team wants to thank our “Founding Members,” who have been with us when the gardens were just a dream, then a design and finally this year a reality opening to the public. We also invite new members to join us in this Grand Opening 2019 Membership Drive. For the past five years, our “Founding Members” invested their time, talent and money to support the creation of a Delmarva public garden open to all. If you have been thinking of joining us as new members or renewing your membership, there are only a few months left where you can still be a “Founding Member.”

The DBG Board of Directors has just approved our Grand Opening plans and new 2019 membership opportunities, which come with the benefit of Free Annual Admission to the gardens for all of our wonderful members. So, please go to the DBG website at www.delawaregardens.org/membership

and become a member. In short, it is time to join us on this DBG journey as we “Open the Garden Gates.”

DBG Giving Ideas Update

Board Member Ron Bass

In the winter newsletter, I briefly outlined the procedure involved in contributing to Delaware Botanic Gardens (DBG) fundraising using a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD). I will briefly go over that later, but I wanted to note other ways you might consider for contributing to DBG.

Many times individuals thinking about supporting an organization in their estate planning are concerned about the impact it will have on family members that have specific expectations as to where they stand in regard to an estate wherein they anticipate being a recipient. To avoid such issues, people wishing to address any such concerns can do several things.



Ron Bass

Stock – Individuals can gift stock directly to IRA certified organizations without having to sell it and pay any tax that might otherwise be required. Organizations like DBG would receive the stock contribution through your broker. Specific benefits might be different for each contributor, and your broker and or accountant can provide specific details on this process.

Beneficent Gifts – Family concerns often arise in gifts given through wills. Contributors surely want to be certain that family members are protected when considering a contribution to an organization like DBG. One way to address this is through a percentage process. You should discuss specific details on how to do this, but the concept is simple. In your will it is possible to just state that you want a percentage of your estate to be directed as a gift, while at the same time establishing specific assets directly to one or more family members. In this manner, the family member is protected, but a gift is also established as well without having to quote or consider a specific amount for that gift.

Additional Giving Possibilities – Certainly, there are many other ways to give to DBG. For example, real estate that has appreciated can be given to avoid some taxes that might otherwise be required. Additionally, Life Insurance policies can become gifts directly to the organization or through a designation within the policy. Help on handling such contributions can be provided by your lawyer.

RMD Planning – Often we don’t think about tax issues until the end of the year. But, RMD planning can take place now and avoid last minute hurdles at the end of the tax year.

A gift from an IRA provides a unique tax advantage. When you withdraw money from an IRA, you normally would pay income taxes on that amount, but when you transfer money directly from an IRA to a non-profit organization like DBG, you do not have to pay taxes on the amount you give. And you receive a credit for the amount you transfer against your Required Minimum Distribution.

This process is easy. Simply contact your IRA’s plan administrator in *writing*, requesting a transfer from your IRA to the Delaware Botanic Garden (DBG). Your administrator may have a form that directs such a transfer; if so, he or she can provide the form on-line. Your request should note your

plan account number, the amount you wish to transfer, Delaware Botanic Garden's tax ID number, which DBG will provide along with a contact person at the garden. To learn more about how simple an IRA transfer can be, or for other giving questions contact your tax or IRA advisor.

Volunteers/Outreach/Tours

News from Board VP and Garden Steward & Docents Coordinator Carol McCloud



Carol McCloud

Volunteers – Thank you all so much for your hard work & dedication over this past winter and spring.

What a rewarding, challenging, rainy and cold, burrrrr winter and early spring it has been. Volunteers have been concentrating on getting the gardens and trails in shape for our Grand Opening in September 2019. As you can imagine, we have been literally spreading “tons” of mulch on trails, around trees and in the gardens, cleaning up and planting in the Woodlands and the Meadow Garden.

While we have had some really cold and windy days this winter, Garden Steward volunteers could always find a reprieve in our warm Hoop Houses. In the Hoop Houses, some volunteers have been planting and growing seeds. Many of these plants will be planted this spring in the Woodlands, Woodland edge, Inland Dunes as well as other gardens on the site.

Reorganizing – During the last month, we have been reorganizing and restructuring our volunteer efforts. While our core volunteers have been working hard, we still need new volunteers to join our experienced volunteer team. We have many tasks that range from easy to somewhat difficult. There is something for everyone. We would love to have you join us in the Gardens as a steward.

Flooding in the Meadow – Due to the heavy rains this fall and winter, we had to do some repairs on the Meadow Garden beds. A huge thank you to Sam Cashdollar, DBG Facilities and Grounds Manager, and our super volunteers, Kurt Schaab, Rob Wisniewski and Lester Ferguson. The flooding concerns have been repaired and the beds rebuilt. Now that the repairs are complete, we will be replacing some meadow plants. The good news is that Angela has located almost all the original species of plants we need to replace those that were affected. Once again, the Meadow will look its best this summer.

Important Projects – While it has been mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, I would like to “praise” all the volunteers who helped to unload and plant 32 Holly Trees from the Anderson Holly Tree Collection. This extremely important project was implemented without a hitch. Also, the Benches and Furniture for the Gardens and the Welcome Center (about 50+ items) were delivered and put together by our volunteers. Both projects were completed in 2 and 1/2 days! As we always say, “we have amazing volunteers.” Once again, they have proven how true that statement is.

Task Leaders – We especially want to recognize the task leaders Angela Schaab, Meadow Garden, and Jan Poli, Folly Garden. As noted earlier both Angela and Jan are working closely with Ruth Clausen, Board Member and Horticulturist.



Angela Schaab



Craig Haggerty, Carol McCloud
& Jan Poli



Kurt Schaab & Rob Wisniewski



Volunteer mulchers from the left Ilene Silver, Tina Donofrio and Maureen Kugler

Thank you!

New "Open Day" Challenges – Working with the Futures Team, it became apparent that we needed to survey our Garden Steward Volunteers to see if it is possible to open on a limited basis. In March, we asked if they would be able to volunteer to help us staff the garden on "open days" this summer and fall. About 40 volunteers responded yes. Along with other applicants we've received, we will soon have meetings with these volunteers to go over roles and responsibilities. If it is possible to open on a limited basis, the Docent Volunteers will be key to ensuring that our visitors have a first class experience at DBG.

If you are interested in volunteering to be a Hospitality or Garden Docent, please contact me at carol.mccloud@delawaregardens.org. I look forward to hearing from you.

Volunteer Staff Training – Once we’ve identified our Hospitality & Garden Docents, we will be providing specific training for each position.

Tours – We offer small (15 to 20 guests) private tours of the gardens. We request a \$250 donation. Please contact me if you are interested in a private tour at carol.mccloud@delawaregardens.org.

In the Garden

News from Ruth Clausen Board Member & Horticulture Advisor - Author



Ruth Clausen

The past few months have been difficult both for gardeners and for plants. The almost daily temperature swings have caused some plants to break dormancy prematurely, only to have the tender new growth vulnerable to frost damage. Fortunately, the mulch applied by our faithful volunteers protected most plants, especially in the Meadow and Woodland areas. Some of the grasses in the Meadow appear to be dead, but more and more are putting up new young leaf blades indicating life. I think the perennials will make a good show again this year.

While we are searching for a Director of Horticulture, it is imperative that the Garden is still managed and maintained as well as possible. Thank you to our Task

Leaders. Jan Poli is overseeing the Folly Garden. She is making sure that it is at its best for the April tours lead by Carol McCloud. Jan will be installing some new plants over the coming weeks. We are fortunate to have a Hoop House Team “babysit” the very young seedlings and plugs in the hoop houses, when we experienced such inclement weather. Many of these have already been planted out in the Folly or Woodland gardens or are being hardened off prior to permanent planting. Angela Schaab is overseeing the Meadow, and will need lots of help to keep the weeds under control again this year. There is a huge stash of seeds in the soil, remaining from countless years of farming, so we can expect to be on weeding patrol for many years to come. It is critical that we remove stray weeds, including their roots, before the flowers go to seed and the cycle starts all over again.

Folly Garden – Late last fall, we were fortunate to receive a large donation of spring-blooming bulbs from the noted bulb company, Brent & Becky’s Bulbs of Gloucester, VA. These bulbs were planted by our volunteers in the collection of bulbs already in place. Most of them were from Carrie Preston’s prize-winning exhibit at the Philadelphia Flower Show a couple of years ago. Species crocus, anemones, snowdrops (including the rare ‘Shropshire Queen’), netted iris, squills, and tiny daffodils were among the first to bloom bringing color to the area. ‘February Gold’ mini-daffs were particularly attractive nestling at the base of the wrought iron fence. Full size daffodils, left over from the ruined farmhouse garden that became the Folly, put on a spectacular display somewhat later. Bear’s foot hellebore, from volunteer Peggy



Galanthus woronowli (Snowdrop)

Peggie Ravida, and Lenten rose 'Glenda's Gloss' are still showy. The stunning leaves of the latter makes it well worth growing just for its foliage.



Iris Reticulata

Woodland Garden – At the Knoll, coral bells (*Heuchera Dale's Strain*) and foam flowers (*Tiarella cordifolia* 'Brandywine') have been planted out from the hoop houses. These are situated across from the witch hazels (*Hamamelis*) that displayed their spidery flowers in late February. The path from the Folly towards Pepper Creek is lined with native spring ephemeral and other species, including trilliums, hepaticas, and shooting stars. The evergreen, intricately netted leaves of downy rattlesnake plantain (*Goodyera pubescens*), a terrestrial native orchid, are looking healthy. Volunteers also weeded this area carefully to avoid disturbing later-emerging species. The never-ending supply of dropped sticks from the trees found homes in the "bird's nests". I hope that some of our native birds will build their own nests in our manmade ones. Sam, along with our volunteers, spread mountains of mulch in the

central woodland border and into the woods as far as where plants were installed last year. This is heavy work and not a very fun job, but there has been very little natural groundcover in this area, hence the weeds have taken hold but are now smothered. Ongoing work on the trails included raking, replacing log edgings, and grading. Sam and his loyal band of volunteers also graded and cleaned out the peripheral turf areas of the meadow, along with places disturbed during holly planting, prior to reseeding them.

Meadow Garden – A walk through the meadow garden reveals many of the pollinator-friendly perennials have already emerged. Among others, penstemons, yarrows, sea hollies, and betonys or woundworts are looking healthy. Betony, *Stachys* 'Hummelo', a signature plant of our famed Dutch meadow designer Piet Oudolf, was named for his home and nursery 'Hummelo'. Its dense spikes of 2-lipped, rose-lavender flowers will bloom for several weeks in early summer. This perennial has been awarded the Perennial Plant of 2019 by the Perennial Plant Association. The beds and paths around the meadow are being kept groomed and we hope to get help, perhaps outside professional help, with these tasks. The last of the ornamental grasses still standing will be cut back. By mid-June (13th) the meadow will look sensational for the "Sip and Saunter" party. We are expecting many of our members, friends and neighbors to come and see how the Meadow has grown and matured over the past year. I think you will be surprised and pleased. The plants in the meadow are suitable to grow in your own residential garden, so come and see what particular ones appeals to you. A few plants, like the "crazy pollinator attracting" mountain mint, have done a little too well and need to be kept in check. We'll look forward to your visit soon.

Save the Dates

Three major DBG events are coming up fast, please put them on your calendar and sign-up.

Friday, May 17th - the first lecture at the Dogfish Head Learning Garden is "Bugs and Beer" presented by Todd Fritchman from Envirotech. Join us at the DBG for the lecture and enjoy refreshments compliments of Dogfish Head Brewery. From 1:00 to 3:00 pm. Tickets are \$25 and available on the website at www.delawaregardens.org/new-events/2019/3/17/bugs-and-beer.

Thursday, June 13th - In mid-June, we invite you to “Sip and Saunter” through the Piet Oudolf Meadow, which will be in full bloom. Our sponsor is Dogfish Head Brewery. Tickets are \$125 and available on the website at www.delawaregardens.org/new-events/2019/3/22/sip-and-saunter.

Thursday, September 12th - Save the date and become a sponsor for the DBG Grand Opening Dinner Party presented by Chef Ronnie Burkle of SoDel Concepts under a beautiful tent from Coastal Tented Events, with special wines from Banks Wine & Spirits, appetizers and selected beer from Dogfish Head Brewery, music by Vincent Varrassi with special guests, renowned Meadow Plantsman Piet Oudolf, and Honorary Co-chairs, Carla and Jack Markell. Sponsorships are available on the website at [www.delawaregardens.org/new-events/2019/3/22/2019 Grand Opening Dinner](http://www.delawaregardens.org/new-events/2019/3/22/2019%20Grand%20Opening%20Dinner). If you would rather fill out our Sponsorship form, you can download it [here](#). Single tickets at \$250 and tables of 10 at \$2,225 will be available soon.

Let's work together to Open the Garden Gates

All photographs that are not attributed were taken by Ray Bojarski

..... *Upcoming Event*



BUGS & BEER

**FRIDAY, MAY 17
1-3 PM**

Lecture by Todd Fritchman at the Dogfish Head Learning Garden. Enjoy Dogfish Head beer and assorted cheese and crackers. \$25

Tickets available at delawaregardens.org



DELAWARE
BOTANIC
GARDENS
AT PEPPER CREEK

..... *Upcoming Event*



SIP & SAUNTER

**THURSDAY, JUNE 13
5 PM**

Sponsored by Dogfish Head Brewery

There will be assorted beers and a seasonal cocktail. \$125

See the meadow in full bloom!

Tickets available at delawaregardens.org



DELAWARE
BOTANIC
GARDENS
AT PEPPER CREEK