

DELAWARE BOTANIC GARDENS

Spring 2023



Executive Director Sheryl Swed and President Ray Sander

Update Report

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DBG's 2023 began much like the ending of our award filled 2022. In January, The American Institute of Architecture of Delaware recognized DBG, SEA Studio Architects and WN Builders for the DBG Public Restroom facility. We received AIA'S HIGHEST AWARD WITH HONOR WITH THE SUSTAINABILITY CITATION for our design's distinctive character and outstanding achievement of implementing the AIA Framework for Design Excellence principles.

The vision and creativity of the SEA architects and the quality craftsmanship of WN builders are appreciated every day by our increasing number of guests who have visited in record numbers to DBG since we opened on March 16.

The DBG Board, Staff and Volunteers are strongly committed to our Delmarva community. Throughout the Season we have designated Free Admission Days to expand DBG's availability to all the members of the community. On these days in exchange for free admission we ask for a food donation for the Food Bank of Delaware. The community response has been amazing. On April 22 EARTH DAY, we set a then-record of 534 visitors who donated 1,383 pounds of food. This achievement was surpassed on May 14 MOTHER'S DAY, when 1,046 visitors donated 2,355 pounds of food for the Food Bank of Delaware.



L to R: Jen Edmonston, Scott Edmonston, Sheryl Swed, Ray Sander, Eric Pfeffer, Daniel Kaynan, and Wanderson Noriega

On those two days, 1,580 visitors came to DBG and generously donated 1.8 tons of food to help those in the Delmarva Community who are experiencing food insecurity.

Another heartening achievement has been the increasing number of visitors who have been attracted to DBG. Since our amazing Mother's Day visitor record, we have been averaging over 100 visitors a day. DBG is no longer a secret.



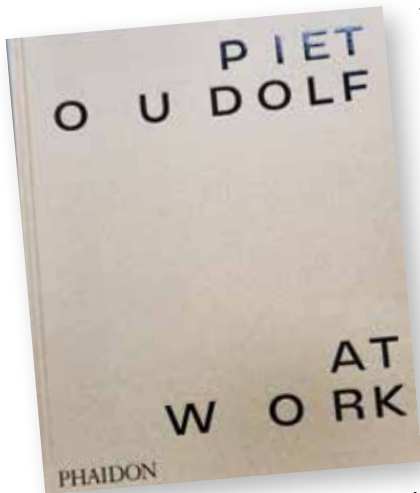
DELAWARE BOTANIC GARDENS AT PEPPER CREEK

30220 Piney Neck Rd.
 Dagsboro, DE 19939
 PO Box 1390
 Ocean View, DE 19970
 delawaregardens.org

Photos by Ray Bojarski, Brent Baker, and Stephen Pryce Lea

(continued)

One of the principal drivers of this attendance trend is the gardens' unique Piet Oudolf design, which is now in its sixth year of bloom and has developed a devoted local following. Piet's extraordinary gift to Delmarva also attracts guests and attention from a wider circle of interests.



PHAIDON Press has just published *Piet Oudolf At Work*, a 288 page exceptionally beautiful overview of Piet's Drawings and Planting Principles, which includes his DBG Meadow. This collection of Piet's body of work has become a best seller at the DBG Gift Shop and is an important addition to the

growing international interest in creating naturalistic environments. A special attraction of this book is the 19 pages of full color photos of the plants Piet has used in his gardens with notations of where they grow best, when they bloom and how large they can grow.



This amazing book has generated follow-up stories in the April issue of *Vogue Magazine* with a picture of DBG and *The New York Times* without pictures of DBG. In addition, the May-June issue of *Flower Magazine* featured DBG with a wonderfully crafted article and a montage of DBG photos.

All this national and international print media coverage has been supplemented by our local coverage and ads in *Coastal Point*, the *Cape Gazette*, *Beach Life Magazine* and *Ocean City Today* newspaper. DBG as a regional resource has been further advanced by coverage by several programs on WBOC-TV, WRDE-TV, and WGMD. In addition, DBG was co-sponsor of Dagsboro Easter Egg Hunt and participated in the James Farm Family Fest & Native Plant Sale, the Good Earth Market Earth Day Celebration, the DNREC Non-point source Conference, and the Brandywine Flower Show.

Our joint marketing with local hotels and inns has opened DBG to those tourists who are visiting the

beaches and who want a garden experience. The Library Fee Pass Program has expanded the opportunity to visit DBG to those in our community who might not otherwise be able to enjoy the natural beauty of DBG.

We are able to do all of this because of the indomitable spirit, the tireless energy and the boundless creativity of our VOLUNTEERS and STAFF and the generosity of our MEMBERS.

We are continuously maintaining existing gardens and developing new features to demonstrate the importance of preserving our precious Coastal Plain and offering replicable "best practice" landscaping, gardening, and plantings. Be sure to follow the news about the Hedgerow and Monarch Meadow Meander Gardens.

These last several months have brought some transitions, mostly good but one sad, Peter Carter. As one of our longest serving and most dedicated Board Members, Peter's sudden passing has created a loss not only for DBG but for his family and his wide circle of friends and associates. We have started the Peter Carter Plant Identification Fund to commemorate his generosity and his commitment to education. Please consider donating to his memory and to his great support to DBG.



Peter Carter

On a celebratory note, we are proud to welcome Sabrina D. Hill to the DBG Board. Sabrina is a native Delawarean who is committed to the public service in her personal and professional endeavors. She will help extend the DBG Community through her extensive experiences in managing commercial real estate, with Federal & State Agencies and nonprofit organizations. Please join with us in welcoming Sabrina to the DBG Team.



Sabrina D. Hill

We hope that you all will read this newsletter and be inspired by DBG's accomplishments and by the plans for new future features.

Come see the amazing Piet Oudolf Meadow— It changes every week!

Raymond Sheryl

SAVE THE DATE September 28
DBG Dinner Party at the Gardens

Our newest naming rights sponsor of the Woodland Ridge Garden is the Charles Zonko Family. The family honored Charles' beloved wife Bonita (Bonnie) Zonko, who was a DBG Champion.

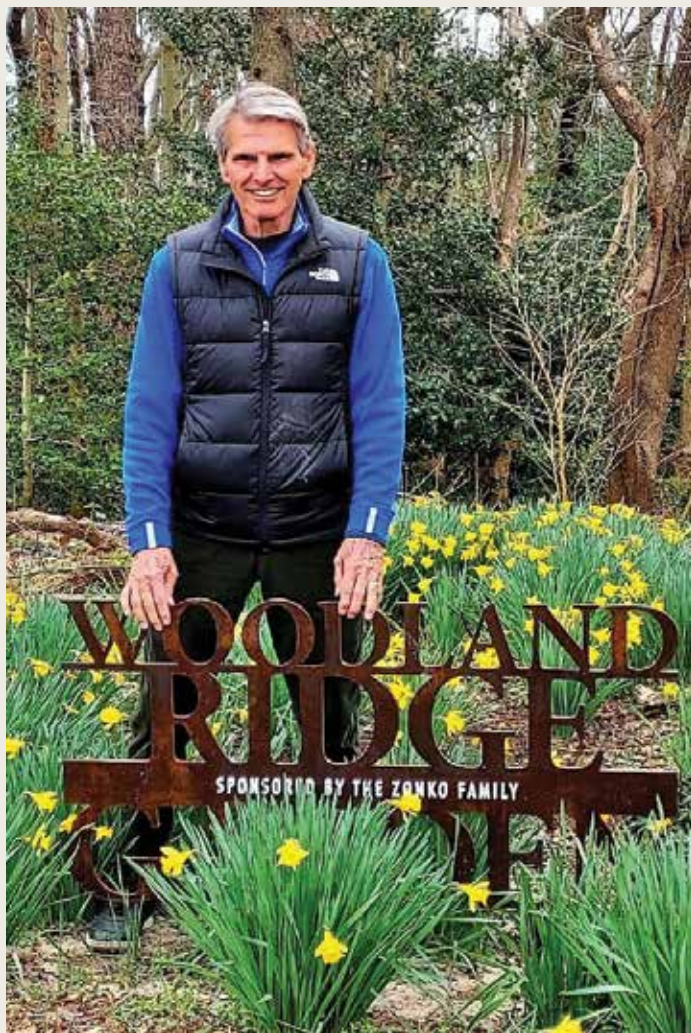
DBG is thankful to organizations and individuals who have sponsored the naming rights to our garden features. Such naming rights provide funds to our operational accounts, including funding staff salaries.

Opportunities for future Garden naming partners include:

- **Observation Deck at Pepper Creek**
- **West Woodland Garden Pathway Bridge**
- **The Three Inland Dunes Gardens**
- **Reflecting Pool in Folly Garden**
- **Fireplace in Folly Garden**
- **Two Vernal Pools in East & West Woodlands**
- **The Gallery Garden**
- **Midway Woodland Edge Garden**
- **Oak Grove**
- **Hedgerow Garden**
- **Piet Oudolf Meadow or sections of the Meadow**

If any individual, organization or foundation is interested in sponsoring a garden or feature, please contact Executive Director Sheryl Swed at 202-262-9856 or email sherylswed@delawaregardens.org.

To see details of these exciting naming opportunities, go to delawaregardens.org/support and scroll down to naming opportunities.



Benches Needed

We need new benches for the west woodlands trails, and for the new loop to the west of the Restroom Facility taking you to the Restrooms and Welcome Center Area. The summer period is the perfect time to name a bench after someone special for a gift that will remain for many years to come. There are two types of 48-inch benches — one with a back and one flat bench. The benches can be inscribed with up to 33 characters including spaces. Delaware Botanic Gardens will be engraved on the first line. We also have rocking chairs available again for the Staff/Volunteer Building porch.



Picnic Tables Needed

We also are creating a new Picnic Area at the northwest grassy end of the Rhyne Garden and need sponsors for new six-sided Hexagon picnic tables.

For details please see our website at delawaregardens.org/honor-donations



This year we were off to a running start, including a media blitz during the DBG opening. Thanks to our media partners.



L to R: Stephen Pryce Lea, Ray Sander, Jimmy Hoppa, and Lisa Bryant on set. Photo by Brent Baker

On Monday, March 13, Ray Sander, Brent Baker, Stephen Pryce Lea and Jan Poli went to WBOC-TV studios in Salisbury, MD to videotape segments for “Delmarva Life,” with hosts Lisa Bryant and Jimmie Hoppa. The show was broadcast that afternoon at 5 p.m. The show began with Jan Poli saying, “Hello everyone, I’m Jan Poli with Delaware Botanic Gardens at Pepper Creek, and it’s show time!”

The DBG video then rolled with Lisa talking about the 37-acre site, over drone shots of the Meadow Garden. The show then included a five-minute interview with Ray Sander and Stephen Pryce Lea, talking about the gardens, and Ray presented the hosts with Piet’s book “OUDOLF HUMMELO.” Then a four-minute Spring Container Demo by DBG Designer Jan Poli. It was fun getting the word out on regional television.

It was exciting to open the DBG garden gates on March 16. The staff and volunteers had the gardens in tip-top-shape.

We had a sunny blue sky, but it was very cold—from 34 degrees at 9 a.m. to 58 degrees at 4 p.m. Everybody was happy to be back in the gardens, with the new 200,000 spring bulb show—thanks to the staff and volunteers planting 86,000 new bulbs last fall added to those already planted last year.



L to R: Lisa Bryant and Jan Poli on Kitchen Set. Photo by Brent Baker



Thanks to those docents and staff who braved the cold to open the garden gates. In the Welcome Center, our docents and staff greeted our guests with smiles. In spite of the cold.

On Opening Day, Janet Gallardo of WRDE-TV visited the gardens and broadcast a story on our opening day activities that evening on the 6 O'Clock News.

Also, on opening day, Jason Lee of WBOC-TV's "Outdoors Delmarva" visited the gardens. He interviewed Ray and Sheryl, Jan Poli and Stephen Pryce Lea. The "Outdoors Delmarva" story (delayed because of CBS March Madness) ran on WBOC on Saturday-Sunday, March 25-26 after the 6 p.m., 7 p.m., and 11 p.m. news and on Fox 21 Sunday morning.



In Welcome Center – Opening Day on duty. L to R: Angie Phinney, Carol McCloud, Kathy Johnson, Jane Hines, Stephen Lea, and Nancy Hopmans
Photo by Ray Bojarski



L to R: Sheryl Swed, Angie Dunson, Mike Riska, Kathy Yorkston, Cam Yorkston, and Carol McCloud
Photo by Brent Baker



As a special opening day treat, Vincent Varrassi, DBG Musician in Residence, provided music and songs at the keyboard. Photo by Ray Bojarski

Coming down from the Wilmington area for opening day were special guests: Angie Dunson, Board Member Mike Riska, and DBG's Development Consultants, Kathy and Cam Yorkston. They were greeted by Executive Director Sheryl Swed and Vice President Carol McCloud.

At 4 p.m. DBG's opening day came to a close as staff and volunteers gathered on the deck to close the Welcome Center doors.

Photo by Ray Bojarski





Frolic in the Folly

On April 14 we kicked off our first major 2023 season event with 91 guests enjoying a stroll through the Folly Garden to view the spring blooms and receive a spring container demonstration by DBG volunteer designer Jan Poli. We auctioned off two beautiful spring flower

containers Jan created. Mark and Katherine Davidson won one of the planters.

Special thanks to Dogfish Head Craft Brewery and Carol McCloud for being sponsors.



Photos by Ray Bojarski



Aquatic Bugs & Beer

On May 18 from 3 to 5 p.m. we held our annual “dip” into the Dogfish Head Learning Garden’s vernal pool to see what creatures live in the fresh water. Our instructor was Jacklyn Toggart, Aquatic Biologist from Envirotech. This was a fun “hands-on” experience to quantify and

qualify the Macro Invertebrates and Aquatic Fauna of the gardens constructed Wetland.

The beer was provided by Dogfish Head Craft Brewery, sponsor of the Learning Outdoor Classroom.



Jacklyn Togg

Photos by Ray Bojarski





Earth Day

On Saturday, April 22 we celebrated Earth Day. This was the first event of the year where DBG offered free admission to people with a food donation for the Food Bank of Delaware.

As reported earlier it was a then-record day with 534 admissions. But most importantly, DBG collected 1,383 pounds of food from our generous guests.



L to R: Tanya Bowe of Food Bank accepting 1,383 pounds of food from Sam Cashdollar, Director of Grounds & Facilities



L to R: Sam Cashdollar, Sheryl Swed and Alison Willocks by food collection trailer. Photo by Brent Baker



Angie Phinney with guests. Photo by Brent Baker

The Piet Oudolf Meadow was the center of attention as the perennial plants began to bloom.

Mother's Day



On May 16, as reported, we experienced major news media coverage of DBG's Mother's Day. It was a sunny windy day with new record-breaking admissions—**over 1,000 guests taking advantage of the free admission, with 2,355 pounds (over a ton) of food donated for the Food Bank.**

Once again DBG was in the television spotlight with WRDE-Coast TV's Carmen Holland interviewing Sheryl Swed. Sheryl talked about food insecurity and how proud she was that our guests stepped up to provide over a ton of food.



Bridget Curran at plant stand with guests. Photo by Brent Baker



Jane Stokes by food trailer. Photo by Brent Baker



L to R: John Snarsky of the Food Bank of Delaware; Sam Cashdollar, DBG Director of Grounds & Facilities; and Tanya Bowe of the Food Bank of Delaware



"We are grateful for the generosity of the Botanic Gardens. Our community is just incredible and always steps up in a big way to help our neighbors in need. Unfortunately, with high prices due to inflation, so many in our community are struggling to put meals on the table. The continued support of the gardens and its visitors help to stock the shelves of our partner food pantries."

— Food Bank of Delaware President and CEO Cathy Kanefsky

QUICK NOTES

Spring brought many visitors with many special events, classes, and tours.



March 30 **Spring Container Class** by Jan Poli



March 31 visit of **Senator Tom Carper**



Hollywood In Meadow

On May 16, the Piet Oudolf Meadow became a Hollywood film set, as the Delaware Tourism Office visited to film a series of new **“Delaware Endless Discoveries”** tourism ads. With a crew of 12 people, there were video cameras, drone cameras and still photographers and “two actors,” who were tourists visiting the gardens. The director and producer would bring a portable video viewer and show the Delaware Tourism officials the video “take” for approval.



L to R: Jaclyn Ott, Delaware Tourism Office Marketing Manager, Mike Pfeifer, Film Director, Jessica Welsch, Director of Delaware Tourism Office, and Jon Applebaum, Film Producer. Photos by Brent Baker



L to R: Sheryl Swed, Stephen Pryce Lea, Nancy Choma, Senior Vice President, M&T Bank, Grace Anne Boyes, Assistant Vice President, M&T Bank, Millsboro Branch and Ray Sander



Learning Garden—L to R: Sheryl Swed, Stephanie Mohr, Matt Meyer, New Castle County Executive & Ray Sander

DBG is a very active member of the Delmarva Community, and we participate in various community off-site activities.



Dagsboro Easter Egg Hunt April 8

DBG was a presenting sponsor at the Dagsboro Easter Egg Hunt.



Ray Sander & Brent Baker



DNREC Non-point Source Conference May 3

Stephen Pryce Lea, and Carol Bason, DBG Volunteer Science Advisor, gave a presentation in Lewes about DBG's Non-Point Source projects, highlighting the Rhyne and new Hedgerow gardens,

L to R: Ben Coverdale, Carol Bason, Asley Barnett, and Stephen Pryce Lea

Library Free Pass Program

The DBG established a Free DBG Admission Pass Program at nine Sussex County Public Libraries last year. This year, so far we have added a tenth Sussex County Library—Milford Public Library and added three Worcester County Maryland public library partners—Ocean City, Ocean Pines and Berlin. If you have a Delaware or Worcester County Library card you can “check-out” a free DBG adult admission pass from partner libraries. This is in keeping with the DBG mission to have our botanic gardens “for the benefit and enjoyment of all.”

Hotel Partner Program

DBG is proud to have recently partnered with Hotel Bethany Beach and Adde Sea Inn. Guests at the hotel and the Inn now receive “complimentary” DBG adult admission passes. Our hotel and Inn partners purchase these admission passes from DBG.



James Farm Family Fest & Native Plant Sale May 6

DBG had an information table at the James Farm Ecological Preserve in Ocean View.



This past winter Carol McCloud, DBG Vice President, made the decision to relinquish the opportunity of Volunteer Director to Stephen Pryce Lea and Tour Director to Elizabeth Rives.

Carol championed the volunteer program during the manual process of volunteer scheduling through the implementation of the new software application Volgistics. She will continue to give guided and specialty tours in the Gardens as well as continue to wear many other hats. We thank Carol for her dedicated service in these important positions, which she held from 2018-2023.

April was Volunteer Recognition Month

On Wednesday, April 19, DBG celebrated with a special Volunteer Recognition Luncheon, with delicious offerings from DiFebo's Market. Ray, Sheryl, and Stephen praised the volunteers. All agreed that DBG would not exist without them. The volunteers reflected on their feelings of accomplishment and on the spirit of friendship, which they experience by volunteering. Please consider joining DBG's volunteers. We need help in the gardens, at the Welcome Center, at Special Events, and on Group Tours. Go to delawaregardens.org and click on the Volunteer button.



Photo by Ray Bojarski

Volunteer Incentive Program

In March, the Board of Directors recognized those Volunteers who met the criteria in 2022 for free admission to the Gardens in 2023. The Board appreciates the significant and meaningful contribution of our volunteer team. We are grateful to all our Volunteers. One way the Board expresses our gratitude is through our Volunteer Incentive Program.

Criteria for Volunteer Incentive Program

- Any volunteer who volunteers **100 hours** in a calendar year, earns **free admission plus 2 accompanying guests** into the Gardens the following year.
- Any volunteer who volunteers **50 hours** in a calendar year, earns **free admission plus 1 accompanying guest** into the Gardens the following year.
- Any volunteer who volunteers **20 hours** in a calendar year, earns **free admission into the Gardens** the following year.

CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE



Staff-Volunteer Pole Building

As you can see from this photo, the construction of the Staff-Volunteer Building is well underway, with completion scheduled this summer. Sam Cashdollar, Director of Grounds & Facilities, has been working closely with Diamond State Pole Building Co. to see this important project to completion this summer.

Congratulations to the following volunteers who met the criteria in 2022 for 2023

100+ Hours

Brent Baker
 Carol Bason
 Ray Bojarski
 Donna Buono
 Jane Carroll
 Jeannette Cowan
 Michelle Garrett
 Craig Haggerty
 Jeff Johnson
 Margaret Kimmel
 Don Klima
 Kathy Lesperance
 Sue Lyons
 Carol McCloud
 Jim Marshall
 Judy Marshall
 Judy Martin
 Cheryl Millet
 Maureen Morano
 Jane Peters
 Jan Poli
 Tricia Precht
 Cheryl Quirk
 Elizabeth Rives
 Tom Rondeau
 Garland Saville
 Sally Scarangella
 Gary Stokes
 Jane Stokes
 Alison Willocks

50+ Hours

Jeanette Akhter
 Tony Broomfield
 Damien Brouillard
 Louise Dorrett
 Lorraine Easton
 Nancy Hopmans
 Kathy Johnson
 Angela Phinney
 Ryan Revel
 Diann Sherwin
 Rob Wisniewski

20+Hours

Marcia Amaimo
 Peggy Dennis
 Les Ferguson
 Sandra Fitt
 Barry Gilbert
 Mary Hall
 George Hammond
 Jamie Healey
 Donna Hoyt
 John Hoyt
 Paul Maggio
 Bonnie McNamee
 Julie Moses
 Joyce Ramos
 Tom Segreve
 Brenda Sharp
 Carl Shuck
 Carole Somers
 Gary Viener

THIS YEAR AWARD WINNERS RECEIVED FREE ADMISSION BEGINNING ON MARCH 16, 2023, AND RUNNING THROUGH MARCH 16, 2024.



Would you like to learn about the gardens and have fun at the same time? Join a tour!

A popular, enjoyable, interesting way to learn about the Delaware Botanic Gardens is to take a 1.5-hour tour from our passionate, knowledgeable guides.

Offered at 10 a.m. every day the Gardens are open, you will stroll through the Piet Oudolf meadow learning about the world-renowned Dutch plantsman's unique design aesthetic; soak in the peaceful, relaxing vibe of the Folly Garden with its newly built fireplace and reflecting pool; marvel at the views of Pepper Creek at the promontory on the Knoll; appreciate the wildlife – real and sculptured – throughout our 12-acres of woodlands, and; understand the many ways the Delaware Botanic Gardens is helping the environment with a living shoreline and stormwater best management practices in the Rhyne Garden, rain garden and woodlands.

To book a tour (20 guests maximum), please use this link on our website: delawaregardens.org/hours-admissions, or you can come as a walk-in on the day if spaces remain.

Our prebooked large group tours are a wonderful option for garden clubs, homeowners' associations, schools, environmental education groups, birding clubs or bus tours to connect with others in nature. So far this season

we have hosted 10 large groups, all raving about the Gardens, the fascinating tour content and our well-informed guides. We have another 10 large group tours scheduled throughout the fall.

To book a large group tour, please contact Elizabeth Rives at riveselizabeth@gmail.com.

You won't want to miss the specialty educational programs that allow you to dive deeper into particular areas of interest with subject matter experts. Go to our website delawaregardens.org/new-events to sign up for the fascinating programs listed below and to learn about others offered throughout the summer and fall:

- Late spring, early summer, summer meadow, and fall **gardening for wildlife** tours with director of horticulture and educational programming Stephen Pryce Lea;
- **Edible plants** – identification and uses;
- **Invasive plants and pests** – identification and control;
- **Terrapin gardens** – learn about habitat loss and how you can help;
- **Pollinator ID** and conservation.

The staff, tour, and educational volunteers look forward to your visit to the Gardens!



Photo by Ray Bojarski

A great start to the 2023 season, thanks to the hard work completed over the last few months by our team of dedicated volunteers and staff. The garden proudly re-opened its gates in March to an excited audience who interacted with DBG onsite and across our vibrant social media channels.

A mild winter followed by a warm spring provided the gardens with a colorful array of blooms, thanks to the 200k spring bulbs planted over the last few years. Our spring blooms have attracted positive feedback from guests who particularly enjoyed the succession of spring

bulbs, enticing many of our members and their guests to return weekly to see the latest flowers emerge.

As mentioned, the 2022 Fall planting of 86k spring bulbs added to the naturalized bulbs throughout the Piet Oudolf meadow garden and resulted in a colorful springtime arrival for our guests. An additional 25k dwarf daffodils planted to line the parking areas were a treat for both our guests and the early-season spring pollinators. As the daffodils have faded, native shrubs, maple trees, and over 1,200 perennials along the banks of the Rhyne have sprung into life.

The Folly transformation was completed this winter with Sam, Jeremy, and Jan Poli working together. This resulted in a beautifully restored foundation wall, fireplace ruin, and crevice garden emerging at its base. Many of our spring visitors were delighted with these additional Folly Garden features.



Photo by Ray Bojarski

The Knoll Garden: Planting began with gusto in early April and was completed by early May. Volunteers enjoyed the shade of the Knoll as the trees leafed out rapidly in these warming temperatures. We will continue to observe and hand water these plants switching to irrigation as backup during extreme heat conditions.

The Point: Added additional plantings that are tolerant of the fresh/salt water mix, and occasional flooding, relying on plants and their roots is essential to help limit shoreline erosion and enhance this idyllic setting.

Woodland Tree Planting: The Tree for Every Delawarean Initiative (TEDI). \$17,500 was received for planting under-canopy trees and reforestation, including Oaks, Red Buds, Dogwoods, Birch, and Silver-bells along the woodland trails. Staff and Volunteers planted trees with Sam ensuring we have irrigation in these locations to promote the continued success of the trees.

Azalea Walk: The expansion is underway thanks to a donation from the Barefoot Garden Club whose members donated \$5k to help us complete the Azalea Walk planting.



Photos by Stephen Pryce Lea



We are removing the lawn grass to reduce the unsustainable weekly mowing of small lawns areas. Instead planting a selection of deciduous piedmont Azaleas in this location; the Azalea's will benefit from the shade of the woodland edge. This Fall, we will be under-planting this area with native perennials for long-season interest.

The Hedgerow Garden: We are excited about the new Hedgerow Garden. We broke ground in early spring with Sam and Jeremy marking out the site, with Sam completing the initial groundwork, generating a lot of interest from guests enquiring about the new garden area upon arrival at the gardens. The area will be revisited in the Fall to plant the foundation trees and shrubs with assistance from Del-tech interns. Funded by DNREC to the sum of \$74,400 and donations by the Gardens, the Hedgerow Garden represents an essential storm water best management practice that will help re-purpose and filter rainwater and its pollutants.

Monarch Meadow Meander: Building upon the success of DBG pollinator pathways, we are expanding our temporary wildflower seed bank into the adjacent 10-acre north meadow which had previously been mowed throughout the growing season. This area has been tilled and leveled with Jeremy and Bridget sowing wildflowers and planting pollinator-attracting annuals to create our first Monarch Watch Waystation. Meandering pathways will invite our guests and their families to experience an all-immersive wildflower meadow teeming with activity, a great resource for our educational classes, particularly Butterflies and Blooms but also our new pollinator and wildflower classes.

Plant Fund Raising: *Do More 24* and *Giving Tuesday* collectively raised over \$5k for propagation facilities development. Plus, the latest Plant Sale on Mother's Day raised another \$1.4k towards plant purchases.



The horticultural team focuses on raising replacement plants for the meadow, Rhyne, and seasonal garden development with annuals and tropical plants. Along with improved facilities, the extra funds also bring additional volunteer and staff opportunities for training and development.

This talented horticultural team raised several hundred Bee Balm and coneflower plants. They will be planted along the Rhyne banks over the next few weeks, replenishing those lost in past winter storms.

Living Plant Collection: DBG living plant collection and rare plant conservation is important and aligns with our mission statement, enabling us to preserve and conserve endangered species creating sustainable eco-systems where these unusual plants can thrive.

Plant Collection Documentation: Bridget Curran, DBG's Assistant Horticulturalist has been busy curating and taking the lead on Iris BG plant data collection software, improving plant labeling and record keeping to ensure all changes/additions are recorded. Bridget recently completed a 30-page document that outlines the policy, structure, and method guidelines that determine the ongoing management of the botanic gardens living plant collection. Currently under review, once editing is complete the policy will be available for anyone interested in how DBG will conserve, preserve and expand upon its living plant collections.

Rare Plant Collection Update by Bridget: Last year, DBG started a fundraiser to raise money to acquire native, rare plants to add to its collection. These plants are state listed rare to varying degrees and are intended to 1) increase the diversity of DBG's native plant collection 2) educate the public on rare plants of Delaware and the Coastal Plain and 3) enhance existing and future collections.

We have started the process of acquiring plant material including whole plants, seeds, and bare-roots. The following seeds have been purchased and are currently being cold stratified: *Lobelia spicata* (pale-spiked lobelia), *Veronicastrum virginicum* (Culver's root), *Drosera rotundifolia* (round-leaf sundew), *Verbena alternifolia* (wingstem) among others. Seeds will be sown in the first week of June in the hoop house to grow out.

Lobelia spicata is one of two rare lobelias now at DBG, the other being *Lobelia elongate* (long-leaf lobelia), totaling now five species of Lobelia in DBG's collection. We hope to showcase the Lobelias collectively in an exhibit next year. Another rare plant, purchased through the fundraiser, *Helianthus divaricatus* (woodland sunflower) has been planted in the west woodlands. Lastly, *Sedum tematum* (woodland stonecrop) has also been planted along the trail of the west woodlands. Seeds will be collected from each this year to increase the quantity of each of these plantings.



L to R: Donna Bueno, Stephen Pryce Lea and Elizabeth Rives at West Woodland Garden

Tree Data Collection: Elizabeth Rives has worked tirelessly with Donna Bueno and Craig Haggerty to capture all the mature tree data from the woodland. Elizabeth with volunteers have captured the type, height, girth, and tree canopy of 75% of the woodland trees. This essential data will help us re-wild the woodland with regionally appropriate trees to maintain its local character and preserve trees often lost to invasive and competitive species. Elizabeth has recently expanded the team with several additional volunteers including: Michelle Garrett, Margaret Kimmel and Ryan Revel all keen to learn how to capture this essential data.

Education Program Updates



Education Committee. Photo by Brent Baker

A great start to the 2023 season has increased demand for classes, tours, and garden programs which have all been well received. The education team has met several times to manage program updates. DBG has already enjoyed several sold-out classes, including the following:



Spring bulb meadow tours with yours truly, **Director of Horticulture** were well received with meadow tours throughout the season.



Jan Poli's Spring Planter Demo and **Elizabeth Rives' Wonders of the Woodland** were both fantastic classes well attended. *Photos by Ray Bojarski*

Upcoming Classes

Our Team is excited about upcoming classes, including garden craft classes for children and adults.

Bugs and Bogs: Kid's macro-invertebrate identification hosted by DBG Education Team. A child-friendly version of bug identification poolside. Led by volunteers, this fun and action-packed learning opportunity combines the man-made wetland with the naturally occurring vernal pools.

Kid's Crafts: Fridays in July, a chance to have fun while learning about gardening and nature, kid's garden crafts and activities, are led by volunteers with different classes each week throughout July.

Butterflies and Blooms: July through August, wander through pathways of wildflower meadows and watch butterflies and wildlife at play. Learn about pollinators and essential flowers that attract and nourish them. Return of our popular volunteer led class, Margaret Kimmel leads a class that is both educational and fun for all.



Volunteer Onboarding and Communication: We are streamlining and simplifying the signup process for new volunteers. Alison Willocks has been working with Nancy Hopmans to improve this process, saving time and resources by enabling volunteers to register directly with our Volgistics software. We have been able to speed up the process and ultimately encourage more volunteer sign-ups. Updating The Welcome Center Docent Handbook is being done by Michelle Garrett who has created a digital version (under review) of these documents to save time, use less paper, and reduce waste.

DBG Seasonal Staff Appointment: We are thrilled to introduce Amanda Goebel to the DBG team. Amanda, a seasonal contracted gardener, works alongside the DBG staff and directs volunteers with seasonal maintenance and gardening opportunities. Amanda is a keen re-wilder with experience working, supervising volunteers, and managing point-of-sale and front-of-house operations.

A few months into the 2023 season, Delaware Botanic Gardens is getting rave reviews, positive feedback, and media attention on multiple platforms resulting in record-breaking attendance numbers and happy guests.



Amanda in Meadow Garden. Photo by Brent Baker

Party in the Garden

Thursday, September 28, 2023

- Delicious coastal foods presented by **SoDel Concepts**
- Wine presented by **Bin 66**
- Music under the tent by Musician in Residence, **Vince Varrassi**
- Viewing the Magnificent Meadow Garden created by **Piet Oudolf**



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

\$10,000 EVENT SPONSORS

- 10 dinner tickets
- Business logo (or name) in newsletter, website, program and social media
- VIP tour of the Gardens with DBG President Ray Sander and Executive Director Sheryl Swed
- Meadow Garden Circle Gift Membership

\$5,000 BLAZING STAR SPONSORS

- 6 dinner tickets
- Business logo (or name) in newsletter, website, program and social media
- VIP tour of the Gardens with Director of Horticulture, Stephen Pryce Lea
- Meadow Garden Circle Gift Membership

\$2,500 PURPLE MILKWEED SPONSORS

- 4 dinner tickets
- Business logo (or name) in newsletter, website, program and social media
- Family Gift Membership

\$1,000 CONEFLOWER SPONSORS

- 2 dinner tickets
- Business logo (or name) in newsletter, website, and program
- Dual Gift Membership

\$500 SEA HOLLY SPONSORS

- 1 dinner ticket
- Business logo (or name) in newsletter, website, and program
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For more information: Sheryl Swed at sherylswed@delawaregardens.org

I cannot sponsor but would like to help with a tax-deductible gift of \$ _____. Check enclosed.