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LANDIS ARBORETUM

THE NEWSLETTER



Dine. Dine. Bid. Save!

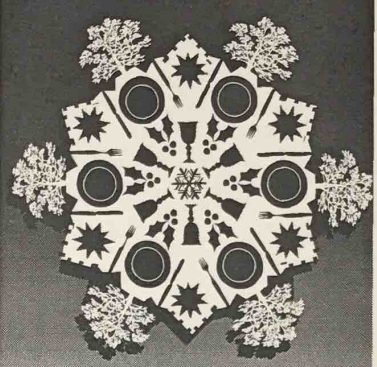
The Arboretum's festive end-of-year fundraiser should be your destination of choice for a celebratory evening among like-minded friends—and great buys for your holiday shopping gift cart. The Annual Holiday Dinner Auction Committee has been working to secure an exciting array of silent and open auction items to make this year's event a memorable one.

The event is scheduled for Saturday, December 6, 4–8 pm at the Holiday Inn Express, Schoharie, NY (conveniently located right off exit 23 on Rt. 1-88). You'd expect fine food, and the Inn has promised to provide it. In addition to hors d'oeuvres and appropriate libation, there will be wonderful music by the Oak Hill Kitchen Merry-makers. Tickets are \$55 for members and \$60 for non-members. Tables of eight are discounted at \$430. Have fun. Be happy. And support our Arboretum.

Reserve early! Don't miss out. Be sure to respond by November 20.

Merrymakers Entertain

Nestled in the heart of picturesque Oak Hill, New York,



LANDIS ARBORETUM'S FESTIVE HOLIDAY DINNER AND AUCTION

at the foot of the Catskill Mountains, the Oak Hill Kitchen is located in what was once an opera house in a formerly buzzing social hub at the turn of the 19th Century. It now stands as a reminder of a culture almost lost that thrived on neighborly friendships. It is also home to a special group of regional musicians.

Elder Council member Carol Wock suggested we go to there to hear the wonderful Oak Hill Kitchen Merry-makers. We did. We delighted in the music—and the fact that the musicians have accepted the Arboretum's invitation

to entertain at the upcoming dinner and auction fundraiser on December 6. A sample of the musical fare is available on the Oak Hill website, www.oakhillkitchen.com/Welcome.html.

Stocking Stuffers and More To Please!

Bask in the warmth of close friends and associates at the Arboretum's annual Holiday Festival Dinner and Auction! It is *the* perfect time to put your best foot forward, your personal glow on high, and quite simply, let yourself go.

Choose from a panoply of auction items presented by popular area auctioneer and Landis friend Randy Passonno, president of Collar City Auction & Realty Management, Inc.

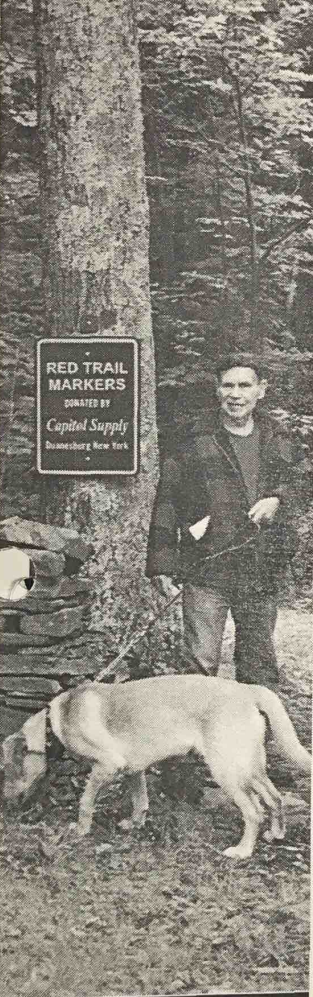
Share your pride and delight by sharing your table with friends and associates whom you wish to honor with a gift membership.

Membership Committee chair Susan O'Handley will offer a one-night-only \$35 gift membership at the dinner through December 20.

Embrace those who have embraced our Arboretum and who support our efforts with their ads in our *Newsletters*. Think of them first and often as purveyors of quality goods and services. Tell them we sent you. Yes. Do support those who support us! It is, after all, good for the heart at any time of the year.

Join Donna Vincent and her committee—Gail Browning, Anne Donnelly, and Marcie Reiff—at this annual Arboretum classic.

Set the mood for your holiday season among friends and associates from Landis, the Capital Region's Arboretum.



Arboretum friend, neighbor, and benefactor Sam Bass enjoys a leisurely walk with Landis mascot Finn, near the entrance to the Bass Woodland Trail. The trail is named in recognition of Mr. Bass' 2001 donation to the Arboretum of 47 acres of land contiguous to the Arboretum's eastern boundary. Trustee Steve Perog and his wife and business partner Cheryl, owners of the Capitol Supply Company (Duaneburg), donated the red markers for the Trail.

Color Trail Map Headed to Print

A beautiful new 11 x 17" full color map of the Arboretum's complete holdings will soon be made available to visitors. It will help our guests better navigate our 548-acres, highlight the location of key collections, and lead them through the two old growth forests. The long-awaited map is the result of countless hours of exacting work by volunteer designer Sue Gutbezahl, the Arboretum's ISA certified arborist Fred Breglia, and members of the all-volunteer Publications and Horticulture committees at Landis.

We are grateful to the Iroquois Pipeline for their support. We are grateful, too, to Miller Printing, Amsterdam, for their care in rendering a product that reflects the splendor of the Landis site.

THE LANDIS ARBORETUM NEWSLETTER is published quarterly for its members. The Arboretum's mission is to foster the appreciation of trees and other plants and their importance in our environment.

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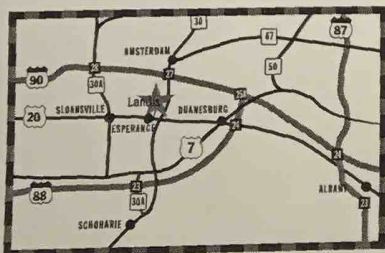
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The Arboretum is located one and one-half miles north of Route 20 in Esperance. Follow the signs from the village to Lape Road. The Arboretum is one-quarter mile straight ahead. Visit our website for more information and directions.



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Jeff Schworm



It's been a fast and furious summer, and with our awe-

some August events and fall plant sale now in the history books, we anticipate the cool weather to bring about a reflection on what we've done and a resolve to make plans to do it all over again . . . even better.

Our Summer Soirée had the best attendance ever—in

Initiative championed by our benefactor and friend, Carol Wock. With this project in mind, many of our board members are actively seeking donors and vendors to fund, or at least assist us with, many of our critical operational costs. This is a difficult process in a very difficult time. If you are able to help in any way with this effort, please let me know. Great ideas are valued almost as much as great gifts!

ed resources, and our member volunteers obviously enhance their efforts. The Landis Arboretum is about as "plugged in" to the local communities and Greater Capital Region as it can be. Landis is also an influential presence among national arboreta. This treasured living museum is a priceless paradise in a cluttered and uncertain world. The excitement here can come from a single favorite tree or area, or immersion in the BG database, or fixing equipment or a building, or checking out the view, or hiking, snowshoeing, bird-watching—or joining the fun on the Board of Trustees.

Come to think of it, we really do have room for some great people on our Board of Trustees. If you want to get *very* "plugged in" yourself and feel like you're ready for the power surge, we would like to talk to you! Yes, there are meetings e-mail and even committees with actual work to do, but then there's the FUN (like preparing a pulled pork barbecue or something for our great volunteers) of sharing a little bit of yourself and being a part of the whole crazy, wonderful, and exciting world of Landis Arboretum.

Photo by SCredit: Patsy Nicotia, Times Journal, with permission.



the pouring rain! The Lape Day/5 K run combination seemed to work well (photo above), and this year's fall sale, by early indications, appears to be another best. Our educational programs are generally well attended, with some standouts in attendance, such as the geocaching experience.

There are also multiple efforts moving forward to attract new membership—the life blood of any organization. At the same time, please be assured that we will "bend over backwards" to keep you interested and involved. Thom, Fred, and Vicki do a great deal with limit-

As I look forward to an upcoming Star Party and think about the many successes and wealth of offerings and opportunity here at Landis, I am also bewildered that we find ourselves in a struggle for economic survival. In response, we have enacted a short term plan of action that includes staff furloughs and other painful decisions, but every decision was made with the intent of controlling operating costs and establishing a more solid financial foundation.

Another focus of this financial initiative is the Operations Underwriting

Master Gardeners from six local Cornell Cooperative extensions met recently at the Arboretum for the second annual Master Gardener Invitational.

Designed to acquaint and intrigue Master Gardeners with the resources and natural beauty of the Arboretum, the day featured a walk through the Old Growth Forest led by Fred Breglia and a walk of the Miller Native Plant Trail led by Ed Miller himself. The Cornell Cooperative Extension of Fulton and Montgomery Counties acted as host for the event and provided a delicious combination of salads and



desserts. Sandwiches from the Western Turnpike Deli completed the meal under the direction of Cindy King and Marcie Reiff. Judging from the many favorable comments about what they learned in the Old Growth Forest and Miller Native Plant Trail on such a beautiful fall day, the Master Gardener Invitational was a huge success.

Photo of Fred by Sonia Janurone



COLLECTIONS NEWS

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly

Fred Breglia, Director of Horticulture and Operations, Renaissance man, and recent newlywed. He is a regular guest on WAMC's "Vox Pop" horticulture program. Fred is also a 40 Under Forty honoree by the Capital Region's Business Review; cofounder and president of the NYS Old Growth Forest Association; and a board member of the NYS Champlon Tree Project Inc.

Good news first

Governor David Paterson has signed into law the "Bruce Kershner Heritage Tree Preservation and Protection Act." The measure, sponsored by Senator Mary Lou Rath and Assemblyman Sam Hoyt, is aimed at protecting the remaining old growth trees and forests in New York State.

Award-winning environmentalist Bruce Kershner of Amherst passed away in February 2007. He was the author of 12 nature books, including *The Sierra Club Guide to the Ancient Forests of the Northeast*.

This law was desperately needed, and its passage is the first step in preserving the remaining stands of old growth that are left in New York. Hopefully other states will look to New York as a role model for similar laws.

Working with Senator Mary Lou Rath and Assemblyman Sam Hoyt to help create this very important law is just one of the many ways

Landis Arboretum is helping to foster the appreciation of trees and their importance in our environment.

Although most of the primeval forests that once covered New York State and the entire Northeast were cleared many years ago, there still remain vestiges of this original forest tucked away in overlooked corners of the state. It is estimated that there are approximately 400,000 acres of old-growth forest in the state, primarily in the Adirondacks, but

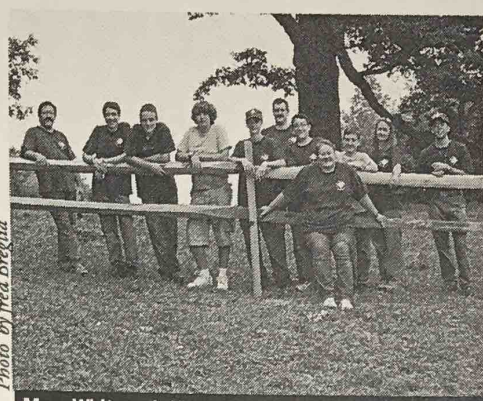


Photo by Fred Breglia

Marc Whitman's Eagle Scout project. Marc is the second from the left and the rest of the folks are the scout troop based here at Landis.

also in Allegheny Park, Letchworth Park, and parts of the Zoar Valley. If these forests are allowed to be cleared, they are gone forever.

More Good News

Mark Whitman completed his Eagle Scout project here at Landis by constructing a split rail fence around our Great Oak and Big Red Oak trees. The new fence is made from pressure-treated wood. The fence adds to the site and looks very attractive. Special thanks to Mark and all the other scouts.

The Bad and the Ugly

Information here is from an article, "Oak Wilt" by George W. Hudler, Cornell University.

Plant pathologists at Cornell recently confirmed for the first time that oak wilt—

a lethal disease of red oaks in the upper mid-west and mid-Atlantic states and Texas—is now present in New York State. So far, oak wilt is only known to occur in the state in an area equal to about three city blocks in Scotia. However, as word of the discovery spreads and more people learn to identify symptoms of the disease, we may see more outbreaks in other areas.

Oak wilt is caused by a fungus that grows in the water-conducting vessels of host trees. It causes the vessels to produce gummy plugs that prevent water transport, eventually causing tree death. The mode of action of the fungus in oaks is similar to that of the Dutch elm disease pathogen in elms.

All species of oaks native to New York State are susceptible to oak wilt to some degree, but those in the red oak "group" (e.g., northern red oak, black oak, pin oak) are much more likely to die soon after they contract the disease.

Oak wilt spreads from tree to tree by way of grafted roots, and by spores.

Diseased trees start to wilt in June or July, and red oaks in particular may wilt completely in as little as three weeks. Leaves on infected trees typically show marginal "scorch".

If you suspect that your trees may have oak wilt, submit leaf samples to your county Cornell Cooperative Extension office.

Forest Stewardship Plan Completed

Jeff Schworm

With the help of Mike Urban, NYS DEC Forester, Region 4, and member of our Horticulture committee, all of the lands of the Arboretum have now been characterized and provided with suggested management practices based largely on biological criteria. This documentation will prove useful to Landis leadership as we make land use decisions that will shape the Arboretum for future generations.

Here are some highlights

- Cost share eligibility
- Multiple use habitat development
- Implementation promotes/maintains healthy forest ecosystem
- 25 distinct stands identified
- Infrared color mapping
- Stands include from 2–80 acres
- Includes two old growth forest ecosystems

- Water resources and wildlife habitat addressed
- Ten-year plan includes boundary demarcation and improvement/development of roads and trails to provide for added accessibility.
- Promotes sustainable forestry practices.

For more information, contact Fred Breglia, Jeff Schworm, or Ken Hotopp of the Horticulture Committee, at 518-875-6935 or info@landisarboretum.org.

The planned application of the Forest Stewardship Plan ties into our overall sustainability strategy and will assist us in making correct calls with respect to timber harvests, green development, and other potential diverse land use and management practices. This is just one more example of the range of thought and activity that is possible for members of this great organization.



Education Highlights

Anne Donnelly

There were five beautiful stops on the Schoharie County Garden Tour Drive-About organized by Gina Nielsen. The tour wound through the hills from the Arboretum to Bob and Carole Olsen's woodland paradise in Jefferson, the Rosman's Roses and Swallow Hill daylilies in Summit, and the SUNY Cobleskill teaching gardens. Thanks to all of the hosts, greeters, and participants for making this such a success.

As the brisk days of fall bring our most active season to a close, I'm pleased at all we have accomplished with such limited resources. My end-of-season responsibilities include packaging the 2008 data and specimens for the third and final year of the NYS Natural Heritage Project Dragonfly and Damselfly Survey. Despite enthusiastic participation of Brownies and other "tweeners" who captured far more individual insects than I could do alone, the diversity of the Arboretum ponds appears diminished. Perhaps it's because the emergent vegetation was mowed down by muskrats. I will continue to monitor

unofficially and await the comprehensive report that will give us the big picture and also break down data by county.

For those of you who have been interested in the Dragonfly Project, there is the Lost Ladybug Project. Entomologists are seeking two rare native species. Pictures and a guide for any interested citizen can be accessed at <http://hosts.cce.cornell.edu/ladybeetles/>.

Scientists need to have detailed information on which species are here (most are exotic) and how many individuals are around. Data is collected by interested citizens. Photos and observations can be sent by e-mail. Both the dragonfly and ladybug projects are heavily dependent on volunteers. Even a well-funded elite entity like Cornell is enlisting the help of citizen volunteers to be their legs, ears, and eyes. Our Arboretum is exponentially more dependent on volunteers, a few of whom you meet in these pages through Nolan Marciniac's "Landis Portraits." Consider joining us for these projects. You will be amazed at how fascinating these projects are—and fun as well! It's not about age: it's about enthusiasm and love of nature!

In 2008, 94 individuals were identified as volunteers by the sign-in sheets at events. We listed another 37 as serving on committees, contributing in other significant ways (or that we remembered, but hadn't signed sheet). The list reveals an interesting age distribution: a small bump representing the scouts, another representing the 20–50 year old cohort. The majority appears to be over 50 (and most of them well over 60, like me). Retirees are our only increasing natural resource. A 2006 study found that 68.3% of retirees would volunteer if asked.

We face the stark reality that our resources are soon to be stretched even thinner and have taken steps to husband them and preserve our core.

Don't forget to check your *Calendar of Events* for Landis-sponsored programs between now and year-end. They also are listed on our website (www.landisarboretum.org). More than ever we look to our members—not just for monetary support, but for the pleasure of your company. Won't you accept my invitation to join us and volunteer at our Arboretum? Our future viability is in your generous spirit and capable hands!

LANDIS PORTRAITS

A series about the people behind the plants at the Arboretum

Susan Sussman

Susan Sussman is an artist by training—and by nature.

When Sue retired from a forty-year career as a classical musician and relocated to upstate New York, she looked around for worthwhile things to do. She remembered visiting the Arboretum and talking with Fred Breglia, and, she said, "before I even knew what happened, I volunteered." Since then, she's been a twice-a-week mainstay in the Van Loveland Garden.

About gardening, she insisted, "It must be an art—and a science too. But it's a very forgiving art." The art of making gardens, she said, was passed down "from grandmother to mother to me, like cooking, like sewing. . . . I love everything about it: the

color, the texture, the smell, the feel—everything."

She said that she was smitten by the "magic" of playing music when she attended the Interlocken Center for the Arts as a young woman. Sue later studied the viola at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. Both she and her husband achieved successful careers as professional musicians in New York City. She played with such renowned ensembles as the New York Philharmonic, the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, and the New York Chamber Symphony; she did a good deal of freelancing as well.

But she also discovered that gardening was a "natural backup" for those slack times in her performance schedule. At first, she began bringing cut flowers to

her fellow orchestra members, and soon her interest in horticulture developed into a business. "I saw the need for knowledgeable gardeners, not the guys with the machines," she commented.

Eventually, Sue transplanted her expertise and passion. High taxes and increasing development in Putnam County led her to drive north until she found affordable real estate. She bought the first house the realtor showed her—to her eyes, a blank slate, "an acre of grass . . . blessed with full sun, deep soil, and flat ground." She began to take up the sod, enrich the soil, and, with an eye for drought tolerance, to plant all sorts of bulbs, lilies, irises.

Sue confessed that she drags anyone who visits her for more than two days to the

Nolan Marciniac

Arboretum. She noted: "I [am] astounded by the extent of the place, so professional, so valuable a resource. . . . There is so much potential here. If only one had the time and the strength! So many garden treasures, sometimes overgrown and hidden. I like the whole idea of a place like this, the whole atmosphere. I like it because it's beautiful, it's unique. It's an environmentally good thing. It gives me hope for the future."

And, not least, it's "positive feedback." Sue pointed out that all musicians need that.

On most days, Landis is a silent place. But if one listens carefully, one can hear a kind of applause for volunteers—the Arboretum's "performers"—like Sue.