

# 2016 Year in Review

*Friends of*  
**Laurelwood Arboretum**  
*Connecting People with Nature*



*Mark Hirsch*

## Our Mission

To preserve Laurelwood Arboretum as an oasis for the enjoyment of nature and to provide opportunities for environmental awareness through educational programs, community involvement and outreach activities.

## Our Vision

To connect people with nature

## Our Core Values

**Stewardship** – Commitment to the conservation of this treasured oasis for present and future generations

**Environmental Education** – Engaging the public through ecological workshops, programs and activities

**Horticulture** – Pursuing excellence in landscape design and horticultural practices

**Teamwork** – Realizing our mission through the cooperative efforts of the FOLA Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, Wayne Township officials and employees, community organizations and members of the public

**Leadership** – Cultivation of emerging leaders

**Community** – Promoting involvement through membership, volunteerism, events, programs, tours, social media and outreach

**Financial Responsibility** – Ensuring the future of Laurelwood Arboretum through effective fiscal management and fundraising initiatives

**Organizational Excellence** – Commitment to the highest standards of professional conduct

FOLA was incorporated in 2003 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

In 2007, a partnership was formed between FOLA and the Township of Wayne.

FOLA assumed responsibility for maintaining and improving the arboretum.

The FOLA Board of Directors oversees the activities of more than 200 volunteers, who contribute more than 10,000 hours of work in the arboretum each year. FOLA is funded by membership dues, plant sales, grants and donations from individuals and businesses.

## Message from the President

The year 2016 was a very exciting one for Friends of Laurelwood. It was the first full year in which we are able to plan programs and activities for the Knippenberg Center for Education, the adjoining Educational Greenhouse, and the Native Plant Demonstration Garden, and we took full advantage.

### Programs and Activities

We hosted 11 Educational Programs for adults that drew a total of 700 people. We had 14 children's educational programs attended by a total of 300 parents and children, and 5 children's story hours in which books were followed by hands-on science projects in the greenhouse. Elaine Fogerty, our Executive Director, led 7 training programs for our volunteer gardeners. We also had two charming Reading to the Dogs programs for children and hosted a monthly Gardener's Journal discussion group at which we shared our gardening experiences.

Laurelwood Arboretum welcomed an estimated 15,000 visitors in 2016. In addition, FOLA hosted five well-attended community events—an Earth Day celebration, our popular annual Plant Sale, a special Pines Lake Day event, an Alice in Laurelwood Tea Party fundraiser, and Art at the Arboretum, a very successful fundraiser.

### Horticultural Plan

The Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust of San Francisco, California, awarded FOLA a grant for 2016 that funded additional hours for our Executive Director to develop a Horticultural Master Plan for Laurelwood Arboretum. The plan is designed to ensure high standards of excellence and dedication to the Knippenberg legacy of landscaping, garden design, horticultural practices and collection care. The grant addresses five key issues:

- Collection care, protection, preservation, maintenance, restoration, signage and appropriate plantings at Laurelwood Arboretum
- Horticultural education programs for schoolchildren and the community
- A children's gardening program that includes hands-on experiences, brochures, guided tours and activities
- Horticultural programs in the Educational Greenhouse that include plant identification and propagation
- The Rhododendron Collection and the development of a database to implement an identification and maintenance program

To ensure that Laurelwood will be a center of excellence among arboreta, FOLA's Plant Identification Committee has developed a computer-based system to help identify and catalog plant records. Data is being entered on a dedicated computer using relational database software. The group is also creating customized botanical labels for select plants in the arboretum. In a parallel effort, the Rhododendron Study Team is identifying, photographing and tagging Laurelwood's rhododendrons and entering this information on the computer.

### 'Laurelwood Sunset'

FOLA submitted an application for the registration of an evergreen azalea named, 'Laurelwood Sunset,' with the International Cultivar Registration Authority. The azalea was hybridized and



grown by Dr. Al Fitzburgh, a past president of FOLA. It has been approved by the Royal Horticultural Society, which serves as the International Cultivar Registration Authority for genus *Rhododendron* and will be published in the spring edition of the *Journal of the American Rhododendron Society*. FOLA has sent cuttings of this azalea to Van Veen Nursery in Portland Oregon for custom propagation.



*Laurelwood Sunset Azalea*

### **Membership**

Friends are the mainstay of our organization. Membership dues and the voluntary contributions of many of our members are critical to our continuing success. We are very pleased to report a 24 percent growth in membership in 2016. We now have more than 433 members, including 24 Lifetime Members.

### **Fundraising**

This has been a successful fundraising year for FOLA. Our annual Gift of Green fundraiser helped us start off the gardening season. Donors continue to order patio pavers for the Knippenberg Center. The Alice in Laurelwood Tea Party was great fun and brought in additional funds. All this was capped by Art at the Arboretum, our first-ever major fundraiser, which was a resounding success. This two-day event was enjoyed by several hundred people who attended the Saturday night gala and the Sunday brunch and open house. They experienced the Knippenberg Center as an elegant social venue and as a place to view and purchase art, while supporting FOLA with donations to an art journal. These are all important income sources, but we need to strengthen our fundraising efforts so that we will have a stable source of money for maintaining and enhancing Laurelwood in the years to come.

## Community Outreach

We continue to publicize Laurelwood Arboretum and the Friends organization through press releases and on Facebook. We are now sending a monthly E-newsletter to members to keep them informed of upcoming events. Our redesigned website drew more than 15,000 visits this year from people who joined or donated online or just sought information about the arboretum.

## Volunteers



*Greenhouse Volunteers  
"The Green Team"*



*Volunteers working in the garden  
near Dorothy's bench.*

No review of the year would be complete without special mention of our volunteers, who worked in the gardens, helped maintain our roads and equipment, and served on the board of directors and the many committees that planned and executed our programs and activities. In addition, the Leos (junior Lions), Columbia Bank employees, the New Jersey Rock Garden Society and several scout groups volunteered at Laurelwood. In total, FOLA volunteers donated more than 11,831 hours of their time. This represents a contribution of \$315,888 based on the nationally accepted volunteer hourly rate.

As always, we thank Wayne Mayor Christopher Vergano and the Township's Parks and Recreation Department for their continued support of Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum, and the Wayne Township Council for authorizing the funds we need to manage the arboretum.

Our 2017 Board meetings are the 4th Thursday of each month at 4:30 pm at the Knippenberg Center, except for January, February and March when they are in the Mayor's Conference room. Board meetings are always open to the public.

*Alice Moskowitz*

President, Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum

## Executive Director's Report

My responsibilities at Laurelwood Arboretum are many and varied. In 2016 I wrote a "Dear Elaine" problem-solving column in FOLA's new monthly e-newsletter. I continued to send weekly e-blasts to the 167 active onsite volunteers on our e-mail list to update them on weekly projects, work sessions and supplies needed at Laurelwood. As the "roving photographer" during the onsite volunteer sessions on Tuesdays and Fridays, I captured volunteers in action and provided press releases. I also participated on the nominating and budget committees for FOLA.

Of great significance was my increased work schedule to fulfill the requirements of the Stanley Smith Horticultural Grant. By the end of 2016, I completed the Horticultural Master Plan for Laurelwood Arboretum. This 24-page document addresses education, conservation and horticultural excellence at Laurelwood. The FOLA Board will review the plan in 2017.

My formal lecture schedule included six "Native Plant" programs, "Plant Propagation," "Putting Your Garden to Bed," "Deer and Their Control" and a lecture and tour for William Paterson University graduate students. Laurelwood Arboretum proudly hosted and provided tours for the Native Plant Society and the Garden State Gardens Consortium in the new Knippenberg Center for Education. Restoration of the South Rock Garden continues with our friends from the North American Rock Garden Society, Watnong Chapter.

### **Staff**

Weekly management meetings with the Horticultural Manager, Site Manager and Executive Board members reviewed the week's progress in the arboretum and addressed needed maintenance for the following week. This allowed for timely activities and repairs and a satisfactory wrap-up at the end of the garden year. The staff was encouraged to attend all educational programs provided for volunteers and the public. The staff is seasonal and works from April to November.

### **Volunteers**

Thousands of hours of volunteer time are given to Laurelwood Arboretum. Onsite volunteers have helped to make Laurelwood Arboretum a showcase public garden: weeding, planting, pruning and mulching, all performed with a dose of history and education. Winter volunteers grow and maintain plants in the greenhouse for spring and summer use in the gardens. Another dedicated and talented volunteer crew maintains the arboretum's infrastructure. Enthusiastic trained tour guides provide information to our many guests.

The many offsite volunteers keep the arboretum running smoothly – newsletters, education, budget, grants, and committees galore. The Plant Identification and Rhododendron Identification Committees have helped to establish Laurelwood Arboretum as a premier public garden with accessioned plant labels, computerized inventory and a rhododendron breeding and identification effort.

Two William Paterson University students responded to the Green-A-Fair brochure that advertised our need for assistance. Tara Ekiert helped the Plant ID and Rhododendron Committees develop and enter information on shrubs and trees in our new computerized inventory system. Nicholas Cowie was instrumental in developing the graph for garden and greenhouse maintenance that is included in the Horticultural Master Plan.

### **Challenges**

The deer are expanding in number and girth as they are eating our very valuable plants. The pond is silting in and causing a vegetation and irrigation problem. The irrigation pipes are old and need frequent repairs. The upper greenhouse may be beyond repair. Hemlock wooly adelgid and pine sawfly continue to be our evergreen insect problems. These situations will continue to be addressed in 2017.

### *Elaine Fogerty*

Executive Director, Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum

### **Administration**

In November, FOLA elected four new members to a two-year term on the Board of Directors.

#### **Board of Directors 2016-2018**

Alice Moskowitz – President

Jim McHugh – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

David Kooistra – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President

William Lauber – Treasurer

Ruth Hayden – Recording Secretary

Dawn Healey

Margaret Kerstner

Sara McHugh

Mary Joe Sichak

Regina Imperato

Bill Mains

Linda Ransom

Diane Bromberg-Stern

#### **Executive Director**

Elaine Fogerty

#### **Board Attorney**

Stuart Reiser, Esq

#### **Office Manager**

Pam Himeles

#### **Horticultural Manager**

Joan Scott-Miller

#### **Honorary Board**

Alex Fadynich

Nancy Fadynich

Dr. Al Fitzburgh

Barbara Hegranes

Carol Huber

Roland Reynolds

#### **Advisory Council**

Joseph DiGiacomo

John Hegranes

Bonnie Joachim

Andrew Lawn

Peter Lowry

Betty Montagne



## 2016 PROGRAMS

- Beatrix Potter's Gardens by Marta McDowell, author of *Beatrix Potter's Gardening Life*.
- The History and Unique Features of High Mountain Preserve in Wayne by Jim Wright, birding columnist for *The Record*
- Photo Walk through Laurelwood given by Dawn Healey, Vice President, Essex Photo Club and member of the FOLA Board of Directors
- Laurelwood's Unique Rhododendron Collection by Joseph Di Giacomo, Chairperson of the Rhododendron Identification Committee
- All About Butterflies by butterfly expert Rick Mikula
- The Geology of Laurelwood Arboretum by Dr. Marty Becker, Professor of Earth and Environmental Science, William Paterson University
- Native Plants for the Home Landscape by Elaine Fogerty, Executive Director
- Small Gardens/Big Attitudes by Kerry Mendez, award-winning author, speaker, and garden designer
- Monthly Gardeners' Journal Series - Horticultural discussion group led by Dawn Healey
- Educational Workshops:
  - How to Garden Without Injuring Yourself by Dr. Heidi Tinter, PT, DPT, CSCS, of Paramus and Wayne Orthopedic Physical Therapy
  - Lilac Walk Workshop by Dan Ryniec, former lilac curator, Brooklyn Botanic Garden
  - Native Plant Demonstration Garden Program by Elaine Fogerty
  - Plant Propagation by Elaine Fogerty
  - Putting Your Garden to Bed by Elaine Fogerty
- Children's Educational Programs:
  - Four Children's Storytimes – nature books followed by hands-on projects by Margaret Kerstner and Sara McHugh, retired teachers
  - Two Kids Reading to Dogs by Margaret Kerstner, by Bright and Beautiful Therapy Dogs of New Jersey

## SCOUTS

Connor Bushoven, a North Haledon resident and a senior at Paramus Catholic High School, completed his Eagle Scout project at Laurelwood Arboretum. He designed, created and installed eight bird signs along the arboretum's pathways. For four of the signs, he built accompanying birdhouses to attract birds that are not often seen in the park. In addition, Connor created a tree-ring timeline cut from a large red oak that had fallen during Hurricane Sandy.



*Connor Bushoven with his tree-ring timeline.*



FOLA volunteers led eight Girl Scout groups, Daisies, Brownies, and Junior Scouts in a variety of activities that included nature walks, earning specific patches, badges, and “Fly Up” and “Bridging” ceremonies. In addition, two Cub Scout groups toured the arboretum, where they learned about its environment and its many unique trees.

## EVENTS

- Spring Plant Sale with programs and tours
- Earth Day Celebration with programs and tours
- Pines Lake Day with programs and tours
- Alice in Laurelwood Tea Party fundraiser
- Art at the Arboretum fundraiser



*The Cast of Alice in Laurelwood Tea Party*

## PUBLIC OUTREACH OFFSITE

- Wayne Day
- Green-a-Fair at William Paterson University
- New Jersey Botanical Garden Holiday Open House decoration of the main entrance and grand stairway at Skylands Manor



*Art at the Arboretum*

## TOURS

FOLA had volunteer tour guide training sessions throughout the season. There is now a well-educated and enthusiastic group of tour guides.

- 5 Public Tour Days – approximately 325 attendees
- 15 Private Tours – approximately 200 attendees

## MEDIA

- Press – articles submitted weekly to local news outlets about arboretum activities, before and after events
- Annual Newsletter – overview of the year’s significant past and upcoming activities
- Notice Boards on site and inside the Knippenberg Center displayed upcoming events and visitor and membership information.
- Website [www.laurelwoodarboretum.org](http://www.laurelwoodarboretum.org) was upgraded throughout the year with new information and features. Visitors to the site increased by 75% from previous year with approximately 15,000 visits in 2017
- E-news sent out monthly highlighted upcoming events and timely horticultural information
- Email flyers reminded members of upcoming events and important information
- Facebook posted up-to-date information about upcoming events and important member and visitor information – 373 “friends”

## Site Management

### IMPROVEMENTS

- The Long Valley maintenance workshop was completed and is now in use by the staff
- The First bridge was replaced by Wayne Township workers
- Six trench drains were installed to control erosion on hills
- A preowned John Deere tractor was purchased for use in heavy-duty tasks, such as loading and moving Christmas tree mulch and leaf mold, digging to repair irrigation, moving large rocks and soil
- A concrete platform was constructed to secure the large, metal sculpture that is on loan from the artist, John Sanders

**Horticultural projects and programs adopted** through the year include:

- Invasive and noxious weed disposal program
- Black vine weevil, hemlock woolly adelgid and sawfly control
- Identification and mapping of dead or damaged trees
- Bulb planting map
- Boxwood and rhododendron layering project
- Development of an arboretum maintenance schedule
- Documentation of equipment maintenance schedule
- Inventory of supplies and equipment
- Transplanting of rhododendron, leucothoe and boxwood near the Knippenberg Center

**The South Rock Garden Restoration Project**, spearheaded by the NJ Rock Garden Society, is an ongoing effort.

## Finance and Fundraising

Funding for the Arboretum was obtained from three sources: Wayne Township, FOLA and Grants.

The **Wayne Township** Laurelwood Arboretum Budget is managed through the Parks and Recreation Department. It covers employee wages and related payroll taxes, administrative expenses, accounting, insurance, utilities, security, and site expenses.

**FOLA** is funded by membership dues, donations, and fundraising initiatives. FOLA pays for community outreach (which includes publications, programs, and tours), as well as costs related to the generation of new members, fundraising and community education. Some items not covered by Wayne Township are also funded by FOLA.

### Grants

FOLA was awarded a \$20,000 grant from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust for the development of a horticultural master plan and educational programs. These funds were used to increase the work schedule of the arboretum's Executive Director from 2 days to 4 days per week. This allowed her to develop a Horticultural Master Plan for the arboretum and design and execute new horticultural programs for children and adults.

Additionally, FOLA received a \$5000 grant from the Ira A. Roschelle, MD Family Foundation for the purchase and installation of an audio tour system for the arboretum.

FOLA continues to pursue grant opportunities.