

Friends of
Laurelwood Arboretum
Connecting People with Nature



2018 Year in Review



Photo by Lorraine Meyer.

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-workshops, programs and activities

Horticulture – Pursuing excellence in landscape design and horticultural practices

Teamwork – Realizing our mission through the cooperative efforts of the Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum 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

Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum was incorporated in 2003 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

In 2007, a partnership was formed between Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum and the Township of Wayne. Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum oversees the park and is responsible for maintenance, operations and public programs.

The Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum Board of Directors oversees the activities of more than 200 volunteers, who contribute more than 12,000 hours of work in the arboretum each year. The organization is funded by membership dues, plant sales, grants and donations from individuals and businesses.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

This year we celebrated the 15th anniversary of Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum. In this anniversary year, we hosted 11 educational programs, seven monthly gardening discussions, seven free tours, four art and photography exhibits, two concerts, 19 yoga classes, three scout projects, a pilot educational program for Wayne School students, and a Rhododendron Festival. We also dedicated a Founders' Garden to honor those who had the vision to establish the Friends organization. Finally, we celebrated these accomplishments at a Festival of Friends fundraising event.



*The Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum founders, from left, Alex Fadynich, David Kooistra, Nancy Fadynich, Nancy Alexander, Joan Scott-Miller and Bonnie Joachim. (not in photo, Howard Aschoff and Betsy Hayes Gatti)
Photo by Lorraine Meyer.*



Tuesday volunteers

Volunteers

The number of Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum volunteers has grown to more than 200, and now includes volunteers from local businesses such as Columbia Bank and McHutchison Horticultural Distributors. Our hardworking volunteers helped maintain the park's gardens, roads and equipment. Volunteers served on the more than 25 committees that manage our organization, plan educational programs and activities, promote membership, and help raise funds. Volunteer tour guides led 22 tours, through Laurelwood, sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm. In sum, Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum volunteers donated more than 12,779 hours of their time. This represents a contribution of \$361,901 based on the nationally accepted volunteer hourly rate.



Columbia Bank volunteers. Photo by Elaine Fogerty.



Volunteers from the McHutchison Horticultural Group of Wayne. Photo by Elaine Fogerty.

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 depend on membership support to create programs to engage visitors of all ages and to maintain and enhance Laurelwood Arboretum. I'm very pleased to report that our total membership is now more than 475, including 28 five-year members and 26 lifetime members.

Fundraising

This has been a successful fundraising year for Friends of Laurelwood. The Festival of Friends raised more than \$5,000. Our annual Gift of Green fundraiser brought in substantially more donations than in previous years. Donors continue to order patio pavers. We also have several generous corporate donors—Columbia Bank, Lakeland Bank, and Wayne Subaru—and we thank them for their support.

In November, we launched our Donate-A-Bench program. We have identified 11 spots in the arboretum for new benches, each of which can display a plaque with wording honoring or memorializing a person or family of the donor's choosing. Our program got off to a roaring start, with two commemorative benches already spoken for. A brochure with details of the program is available in the Knippenberg Center office.



Rustic bench created by David Robinson, located in the Summer Garden.

We continue to be successful in obtaining grants for special projects. We were awarded a grant from the Passaic County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust for the replacement of the deteriorated upper greenhouse and are moving forward with construction of a new propagation greenhouse on the site. We also secured a grant from the Columbia Bank Foundation for purchase of a replacement utility cart for use by our staff. The American Rhododendron Society's Grant Endowment Program funded publication of a 20-page booklet about the role of Laurelwood in rhododendron hybridizing.

At year's end, the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust awarded a \$17,000 grant for the installation of motorized sidewall vents in our educational greenhouse in order to improve air circulation and reduce interior temperatures during the hot summer months. The Ira A. Roschelle, MD Family Foundation gave us a \$7,000 grant for the development of a garden adjacent to our Pines Lake Drive parking lot.

We sincerely appreciate the enthusiastic support of Wayne Mayor Christopher Vergano and the Township's Parks and Recreation Department and thank the Wayne Township Council for authorizing the funds we need to manage the arboretum.

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 if weather limits access to the arboretum. Board meetings are always open to the public.

Laurelwood Arboretum is open to everyone free of charge daily year 'round from 8 am to sunset (except in emergency conditions). The Knippenberg Center for Education is open April through October, Tuesdays through Sundays, 12 noon to 4 pm.

Please read the reports below to learn more about all that is happening at Laurelwood Arboretum.

Alice Moskowitz

President 2016 - 2018

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2018 was a year of stormy weather. New Jersey had more days with rain and snow than without and a hotter-than-normal summer. We had four summer heat waves (three consecutive days above 90 degrees). August 2018 was the second hottest and second wettest on record. Could this be the new normal?

An early March snowstorm destroyed six trees and damaged another dozen. Our staff and volunteers spent six weeks cleaning up from the storm. While summer rains decreased the need to use supplemental irrigation, the incidence of disease spiked (leaf spot and boxwood blight). The constant rain reduced the effectiveness of deer repellents. We continued our netting program to discourage the herd of 20+ that roams through the arboretum.

On the positive side, we planted more than 40 trees and shrubs, 1990 spring-blooming bulbs, new deer-resistant Silver Garden in the serene Founders' Garden, and colorful and deer-resistant plants in the Sensory Garden and Gazebo.

We transplanted nine valuable rhododendrons donated by Dr. Al Fitzburgh from his personal garden. We also made cuttings from hard-to-find Knippenberg-grown rhododendrons and azaleas from the landscape of Alex and Nancy Fadynich and continued enhancing our Lilac Collection. We continued our efforts to identify, tag and enter data for our plant collections;

We started our first specialized garden "team" in the Native Plant Demonstration Garden. I provided the training on the design and maintenance while a small group of dedicated volunteers helped with labeling, planting, weeding and mulching. I expect to expand this idea to other special gardens in 2019.

My thanks to our seasonal staff – Joan Scott-Miller, Eddy Lantigua and Felix Fernandez, for continuing the general maintenance at Laurelwood Arboretum. Moreover, we would be nowhere without our volunteers. Committee members and outside gardeners keep Laurelwood beautiful and well run. Helping in the gardens and on special projects were various individuals and corporate groups (Columbia Bank and the McHutchison Horticultural Group), Scouts, the North American Rock Garden Society-Watnong Chapter, and William Paterson University interns Karliann Blumenfeld and Kay Gardiner. A heartfelt "thank you" to all.

See you in the garden!

Elaine Fogerty

Executive Director

ADMINISTRATION

Board of Directors 2018

Alice Moskowitz – President
Jim McHugh – 1st Vice President
David Kooistra – 2nd Vice President

William Lauber – Treasurer
Ruth Hayden – Recording Secretary

Robin Abrett
Bonnie Joachim
John Hegranes
Margaret Kerstner
Sara McHugh
Rick Wild

Mary Joe Sichak
Bill Mains
Georgette Moesch
Carol Palmer-Yomtov
Linda Ransom

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
Dawn Healey
Barbara Hegranes
Carol Huber
Roland Reynolds
Diane Stern

Advisory Council

Joseph DiGiacomo
Andrew Lawn
Peter Lowry
Betty Montagne

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In 2018, we hosted a variety of educational program and activities for the community.

Artificial Floating Islands Project

Seven fifth-grade students from Pines Lake and Terhune Elementary Schools in Wayne participated in a pilot project to learn about and then create Artificial Floating Islands (AFIs). These are structures capable of supporting aquatic vegetation that move up and down with water levels and can act as “wave breaks.” In this hands-on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) project, the students researched, designed and created an AFI that could be placed in a local pond or stream.



At the Laurelwood Arboretum pond, students launch the AFI that they envisioned, designed and built.

Children's Butterfly Day

Our first Butterfly Day for children included butterfly craft and face painting, butterfly life-cycle and other displays, instructions on creating a home butterfly garden with host and nectar plants, live caterpillar and butterfly exhibits, and tours through the sensory and pollinator gardens conducted by our Executive Director. (Our native plant pollinator garden was recently certified and registered as a Monarch Waystation by Monarch Watch at the University of Kansas.) More than 60 children and their families attended the event.



Programs

- Outnumbered: A Program About Garden Pests
- Empress Josephine's Gardens
- The Geology of Wayne
- Veterans' Often-overlooked Benefits
- Houseplants 101
- Ikebana Flower Arranging Demonstration
- Thanksgiving Centerpieces

Concerts

- All Wayne Orchestra
- The Spirit of Vaudeville

Art Shows

- Wayne Schools Student Artwork K through 8
- Wayne Hills Photography Club
- Nancy Rogers Paintings
- Festival of Friends Community Art and Photography Show

Website

Our website, www.laurelwoodarboretum.org, is continually updated with important information about the arboretum and Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum's programs. There were 15,140

visits to our website in 2017. 85 percent of these were new visitors, an increase of 75 percent over last year.

E-news

Our monthly E-newsletter is sent to more than 1,200 members and supporters, keeping them informed of upcoming events. Our average “open rate” is 35%, well above the average nonprofit rate of 20%.

Social Media

We also have a very up-to-date Facebook page with 573 “Friends” from seven countries. Photos of the arboretum and events at Laurelwood are posted regularly on Instagram, where we have 49 followers. We also have a presence on Twitter.

RHODODENDRON STUDY TEAM

This volunteer committee has now identified 334 named hybrid rhododendrons and species in the arboretum. Detailed information on each plant has been entered in our computerized plant collection database. The committee is in the process of affixing an aluminum plant tag containing a unique accession number to each plant.

Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum sponsored a two-day Rhododendron Festival in May, offering educational programs and guided tours of our rhododendron. Our Executive Director presented a talk on maintaining and caring for rhododendrons and a demonstration on how to selectively prune them to improve their growth and increase bloom density. The head of our Rhododendron Study Team led a discussion on the role that Laurelwood and its founders, Dorothy and John Knippenberg, played in hybridizing rhododendrons on the East Coast.

We published a 20-page booklet on the important role of Laurelwood Gardens and the Knippenbergs, as well as other east coast hybridizers, in hybridizing rhododendrons. The booklet was distributed to the public during the festival and is available at the Knippenberg Center for Education and online at www.laurelwoodarboretum.com.

We received a \$500 donation from the Tappan Zee Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society for the purchase of named hybrid rhododendrons for the arboretum. We bought 28 two-year-old and 3-year old hybrid rhododendrons from Van Venn Nursery in Portland, Oregon. We selected rhododendrons that had a connection to Laurelwood Gardens and once grew in the arboretum. We plan to plant them in the arboretum in the Spring at or near their original locations. In addition, the Wayne Township Department of Parks and Recreation donated two large rhododendrons that needed to be removed for the expansion of the Police Department. They were transplanted near the Educational Greenhouse.

PLANT COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

This volunteer committee developed a customized, automated system for creating an inventory of Laurelwood’s trees and plants. The committee assists our Executive Director in identifying, cataloging and tagging trees, shrubs and certain herbaceous perennials in the arboretum. To date, they have identified and cataloged more than 1,060 plantings, which are now included in our plant collection management database.

PLANT PROPAGATION PROGRAM



2-Year-Old Laurelwood Sunset

Our inaugural efforts to propagate plant cuttings were rewarded this spring when our registered hybrid azalea named 'Laurelwood Sunset' bloomed for the first time. The young plants, which were propagated from cuttings from the original evergreen azalea, survived their first winter outdoors in the holding pen behind our Educational Greenhouse, and the two-year-old azaleas bloomed this past May. Another 30 cuttings were rooted in the greenhouse over the winter and have been potted and are being cared for at the arboretum. We plan to plant several 'Laurelwood Sunset' azaleas in the arboretum. The remaining 3-year-old plants will be offered for sale at our annual plant sale in May 2019.