



LANDIS ARBORETUM

THE NEWSLETTER

Esperance, New York

WINTER 2008

VOLUME 27, NO. 1

Funds, Hope Infuse Greenhouse

Thom O'Connor and Cynthia King

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On a cold, windy winter day 18 years ago, the sun filled the sky as Arboretum president Elizabeth (Betty) Corning presided over a ceremony to honor William Thomas Raymond, whose name is linked to the presence of the Greenhouse at Landis.

To support this ambitious undertaking, Arboretum supporters raised \$16,584. That was nearly half the total needed to complete

the reconstruction of a greenhouse taken down by William (Bill) Raymond, son of Landis trustee Dr. Robert Raymond and his wife

Marion, from the land of prominent florist Ted Goldring on Font Grove Road in Slingerlands. Mrs.

Raymond recalls that after Bill had learned that several greenhouses at the Goldring estate were to be demolished, he arranged to secure one of them.

"An entire University of Vermont summer vacation," she recalls, "was devoted to the task of deconstructing and transporting the frame and glass of the greenhouse to a barn on our family farm in nearby New Scotland, NY."

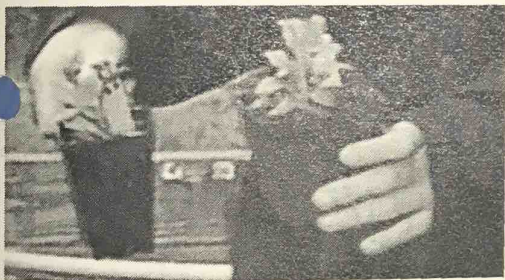
A move from New Scotland to Ithaca, NY, did not diminish the Raymonds' keen interest in a greenhouse and its potential role in plant propagation at the Arboretum. Following the death of William Raymond at the age of 26 from complications related to mononucleosis, Robert and Marion Raymond donated the greenhouse and seed money to reconfigure the structure at the Arboretum in his honor.

A \$5,000 anonymous donation to the project was quickly

supplemented by an infusion of two substantial donations from Arboretum supporters Ruth MacDowell and Catherine Kord. The reconstruction also benefited from the committed assistance of Wallace I. Johnson and the skill and persistence of the Arboretum's skilled carpenter, Theodore MacDowell—brother of longstanding Arboretum supporter and artist Anne Jaster. The hard work, devotion, and financial support of many Arboretum "angels" transformed a dream of a greenhouse at Landis into reality.

When I called to acknowledge a donation from Marion Raymond last spring, we arranged to meet at the Greenhouse. Through miscommunication, by the time I arrived at Landis, Mrs. Raymond had come and gone to attend a lecture at the University of Vermont—but not before she peered through the windows of the locked greenhouse.

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Wildlife/Arboretum Partnership Raises Bar on Excellence in Outdoor Education

The Landis Arboretum enters the new year energized by a new and dynamic partnership with Otsego County-based Wildlife Learning Company (Hartwick, NY) and the collective focus of an expanded Education Committee.

From the perspective of Arboretum Education Committee Chair Anne Donnelly, the synergy created by the shared vision of the Landis Arboretum and the Wildlife Learning Company (WLC)—coupled with the perspectives of an expanded and forward-looking Arboretum Education Committee—offers a rich

diversity of educational opportunities to teach and to learn about nature through seasoned educational professionals working within the spectacular 548-acre Arboretum.

Wildlife Perspective

Wildlife Learning Company, Inc. is a full-service environmental education company offering services and products to schools, libraries, environmental organizations and members of the general public. WLC promotes conservation through education and strives to connect people to nature by providing programs and products that foster an appreciation of the

—continued on page 8



Wildlife Learning Company took possession recently of a permanently injured peregrine falcon for use in education programs. The bird, an endangered species in NY State, has a permanent wing injury and is unable to fly. He was sent to WLC from the American Eagle Foundation in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee.

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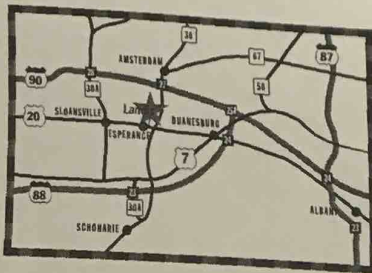
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The Arboretum is located one and one-half miles north of Route 20 in Esperance. Follow the signs from the village to Lape Road. The Arboretum is one-quarter mile straight ahead. Visit our website for more information and directions.



Photo, right: The Meeting House in Winter
Bill Combs, Jr. ©2008

At Large

Thom O'Connor, Executive Director

Photo: Ken Nichols



In 2007, our Arboretum blossomed from one of the best-kept secrets of the Northern Catskills into a regional "brand" recognized in international circles. We accomplished this sea change with a limited budget, a passionate, skeletal staff, and a core of seemingly tireless and devoted volunteers.

This "global" coming of age was built on the hard work of many before me. Their devotion to and understanding of Landis as an arboretum invited notice from the American Public Gardens Association; our notable Northeast Oak Collection also garnered attention from arborists everywhere. Early last year, Landis was named one of 15 public gardens from across the US to participate in a phased-implementation of a state-of-the-art database system to interconnect public gardens across the nation—through an additional grant made available by members of the APGA. Shortly thereafter, Notre Dame University requested specimens from our oak collection.

A surprise gift from the Chicago Botanic Garden followed and enabled our ISA Certified Arborist to participate in a national meeting of APGA in Chicago in mid-December 2007. Days before the conference, the Arboretum went LIVE through a Google-based database platform to public gardens in the US and the UK. As of this letter, the reach of that information sharing now extends to the Beijing Municipal Botanic Garden (which boasts more than 40 million visitors a year). And, in early December, we received notification that we have been invited to speak before the national gathering of the APGA in June 2008 in Hollywood, CA.

Today, the Arboretum is a recognized link in the preservation of the *Quercus* species worldwide—and in studies that may unlock the mystery of sudden oak death now threatening the extinction of oaks nationwide.

As you read this message, you know that our Arboretum has entered into a dynamic part-

nership with the Otsego County-based Wildlife Learning Company. The impact of this and other evolving relationships will heighten our profile on many fronts. Such mutually beneficial alliances can only further firm our footing as we leverage our accomplishments and reach out to those who can help fund our operations and grant needed support to bolster our journey forward.

Such accomplishment is breathtaking! We continue to absorb the full impact of our hard-earned good fortune even while containing our obvious excitement about events during the past year.

We thank you for your support, which has helped sustain our incremental gains between fundraising events and intermittent grants.

In the future, consider continuing or increasing your financial and spirited support for Landis, the little Arboretum that could and, indeed, does continue to succeed and focus international attention on historic Esperance and the counties of Montgomery and Schoharie and the towns that comprise them.

You can also help by sending us your e-mail address so that we can keep you attuned to the latest developments at our Arboretum—without breaking the bank for postage. We are as honorable as our collections are noteworthy and will not abuse your trust with spam or improper use of the Net.

And because as Arboretum members we are all greenly focused, I end with this note with a "Living Green" tip from our friend, Debby Goedeke at the Albany County Convention & Visitors Bureau. "We could all benefit from a little extra sleep. Turns out, so could your computer, printer and monitor. If we all set the sleep function to kick in after five minutes of inactivity, we would save enough energy to keep the equivalent of almost 800,000 cars off the road for a year." Except of course, when they are heading to informative, educational, and fun times at Landis, the Capital Region's Arboretum—right in our own backyard.





COLLECTIONS NEWS

Fred Breglia, Director of Horticulture and Operations

As always, many exciting things are happening here at Landis. At the end of November, I attended the Plant Collections Project International, hosted by the Chicago Botanic Garden. This was a wonderful opportunity for the Landis Arboretum, especially as we begin to become known on the international level.

Meeting highlights included many excellent presentations that were given by representatives of the Plant Collections Project. These presentations varied in content but collectively covered the entire project in detail.

After the welcoming reception, the meeting began with a presentation by Dave Vieglais (technical guru for the project), who updated the group on the technological advancements that have been made using Google Base as the primary server for the project. He also explained how this online server works and what the Plant Collection server has to do in order to provide consistent results to online searches.

An update on the North American Plant Collection Consortium (NAPCC) program was given by Pam

Allenstein. During this presentation, Landis Arboretum was featured as one of the 15 partner gardens in the nation. Landis is the official Northeast Oak Holder for the NAPCC, as well as a partner in Plant Collections.

Dan Stark, executive director of the American Public Garden Association, gave a presentation on the ways the APGA can help public gardens grow (pun intended).

Kerry Walter of BG-BASE (UK), Ltd. and Mike O'Neal of , Inc. (US) gave presentations on the BG-BASE database. You may remember Mike O'Neal from his recent visit to Landis, when he installed the most recent version of BG-BASE as our primary database for plant records. O'Neal discussed data uploads to Google Base using BG-BASE, Inc. software. I am proud to say that Landis Arboretum has its entire database posted on the Plant Collections server. As the Plant Collection portal develops and becomes fully online, I will be giving you all the online address so you can check out this wonderful resource from your home computers.

The Beijing Botanical Garden and the National Trust (UK) both sent representatives, Kang Wang and Mike Buffin respectively, to learn more about the project. Presentations were given, featuring summations of the surveys

conducted in the US, including a profile of the Landis Arboretum.

An overview of the icon and portal concepts by James Frost and Cheri van Deraa, CBG Communications staff, and a presentation on the timeline by Boyce Tankersley wrapped up the day.

The next day featured tours of CBG gardens, the holiday exhibits, and library (led by Galen Gates and Andrew Bell), followed by formal signing ceremonies creating partnerships between the American and Chinese institutions and marking the expansion of the project. Dr. Zhang signed for the Beijing Botanical Garden, the first Asian garden to join the group.

The group gathered for meals off the Garden grounds on Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday evenings. Overall, the kickoff meeting was a success, replete with some wonderful networking opportunities.

More exciting news is that our proposal to present at the National APGA meeting in Hollywood during the summer of 2008 was recently accepted. I am proud to have the opportunity to represent Landis Arboretum at this very important meeting next year, and I already look forward to having the opportunity to promote the Landis Arboretum as widely as possible.

Presentations were given . . . including a profile of the Landis Arboretum.

Landis Arboretum Gets Boost from ZBGA Grant

In mid-January, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Commissioner Carol Ash announced \$8 million in grants awarded under the Zoos, Botanical Gardens and Aquariums Program (zbga) to support the development of educational, cultural and recreational programs that interpret New York's natural heritage. The Landis Arboretum received \$12,085 of this allotment based on its programs and operating budget—a 28 percent increase over last year.

"New York State is home to a large and diverse collection of rare

plants, animals and sensitive ecosystems, many of which are endangered. This program provides valuable funding for organizations to develop critical educational and interpretive programs in order to raise awareness and appreciation of the importance of identifying, protecting and preserving our fragile natural heritage," said Ash.

Senator Mary Lou Rath (R, 61st Congressional District), Chair of the Senate Committee on Tourism, Recreation and Sports Development said, "The ZBGA is a vital part of our state's tourism landscape. By supporting the programs that promote our state's natural heritage, these funds are critical

to the future of our community zoos, botanical gardens and aquariums."

Assemblyman Steve Englebright (4th Assembly District) said, "By supporting additional funding to the ZBGA Program, Governor Spitzer and Commissioner Ash have underscored their commitment to its vital educational and conservation mission. I applaud this thoughtful investment into the cultural treasures that are New York's Natural Heritage Institutions."

In 2007, Governor Spitzer and the Legislature appropriated \$8 million for the ZBGA program, a \$500,000 increase from 2006.



Education Highlights

Anne Donnelly

And we thought winter was down time! Just look at our *Coming Attractions!* And, of course, our events are always available on our

beautiful and always dynamic website, www.landisarboretum.org.

Since the last *Newsletter*, we have announced our official Education Partnership with the Wildlife Learning Center, and we couldn't be more pleased. Look at all they have to offer by clicking on Resources from www.landisarboretum.org

We now offer more focused opportunities for youth groups seeking field trips, new educational programs, and instruction for scout badge/patch requirements: Barbara Brabetz, SUNY Cobleskill's natural sciences department chair and president of Landis Board, is available on the first and third Fridays of each month for group presentations and field trips at the Landis Arboretum or in school classrooms. Call or e-mail the office to make arrangements

AND Environmental conservation officer (K-9 Unit) and Landis member Keith Isles presents a 45-minute demonstration during which he explains the role of environmental conservation officers and how dogs are used to assist them. He also offers insight into the training process and the areas of canine use, such as handler protection, human tracking, wildlife detection for apprehending poachers, etc. He and the dog display those skills in this demonstration.

OR The Arboretum will also facilitate a law enforcement educational program appropriate for grade school and/or middle school students. It is called EAGLES. To learn more about this important security program, visit www.dec.ny.gov. On the left side of the page, scroll to "Regulations and Enforcement." Choose "Law Enforcement." The EAGLES program is detailed in that section.

These new programs are scheduled on a group-by-group basis. Call the Arboretum office or e-mail info@landisarboretum.org.

Come on out this winter! We have snowshoes, wonderful trails, magnificent vistas, and abundant wildlife (at least their tracks). Photographic opportunities abound! **And with this photographic reference—**

Let me introduce Bill Combs, Jr., wildlife photographer extraordinaire! You can

see his wonderful work on our website—or on his own website through an active link on our site's *Resources* page. Wasn't that sequence with the red-tailed hawk in the last newsletter awesome? Bill has just joined our Education Committee and frequents the grounds with his two granddaughters, teaching them animal tracks and photography. He is willing to share his skill and experience with other youth as well and offers some nature photography classes tailored to your group. Please call and make arrangements.

To share a little background—

In 2001, Bill, then a Florida resident, changed careers, bought himself a Canon A-1 film camera, and started taking photographs. He would pick a different Florida state park (Florida has 161) each time and often drive up to three hours each way just to take photos of the wildlife and landscapes. The first photograph he ever entered in a contest won! He started winning more and more contests. Within two years, there were hundreds of Bill's photos on the Florida State Parks' official website. To this day Florida State Parks, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, and the Everglades Radio Network use his photographs for their websites and logos.

After expanding his knowledge of photography in a natural setting through a Florida master naturalist program (freshwater wetlands) at the University of Florida, Bill achieved certification in 2003. During the 2004 Florida State Parks Photo Contest Annual Awards Ceremony, he offered a workshop on field photography. In October 2004, he was one of the photographers for the 39th Annual Buffalo Roundup at Custer State Park in South Dakota. Bill and his wife Dannielle (also a photographer) spent time traveling and photographing in Rocky Mountain National Park in 2005 and 2006. Bill also volunteered at the Broward County Wildlife Care Center for two years.

In July of 2006, he moved to New York to be with family and to enjoy a simpler way of life. He bought a 164-year-old house on just over 2 acres in Cobleskill and started to settle in. He soon began looking for places to photograph. He had read about the Landis Arboretum and decided to check it out. He quickly fell in love with the Arboretum and was just as quickly enlisted by Thom O'Connor to become a volunteer. Bill now spends any free time walking and enjoying the wildlife, trees,

trails, and flowers, often accompanied by his family. He works at home as a graphic design website designer, nature photographer—and caring for his two grandchildren.

Bill plans to apply for his New York wildlife rehabilitator's license and one day start his own care center for injured wildlife here in Cobleskill, as he did in Florida.



More Highlights

Toward the end of the winter, we will continue our series of presentations by members sharing their work, travels, and experiences. Author Anita Sanchez offered our first program last fall; she gave a short field experience and shared insights into her newly published book, *The Teeth of the Lion: The Story of the Beloved and Despised Dandelion*.

In March, George Steele will present a naturalist's account of his recent trip through Bryce and Zion National parks. His presentation will be illustrated with gorgeous slides. That should combat the winter doldrums!

In April, I will share with you my ten-day botanical adventure into Oaxaca, Mexico. This is a view of Mexico few have seen. I traveled from Atlantic to Pacific and from sea level to elevations at 12,000 feet through rain forest, tropical deciduous thorn forest, and several other unique ecosystems. Roadside mescal stills abound, and the sampling policy is most liberal. (I'll even bring a sample.) I also learned that group dynamics in close quarters can be quite entertaining! Please join us!

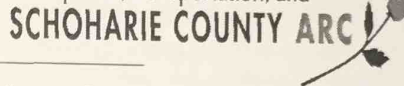
Photo, above: Female downy woodpecker Bill Combs, Jr. ©2008



The George Landis Arboretum/ARC Collaboration

Maria Kueth

The Schoharie County ARC, is a non-profit organization serving, supporting, and advocating for individuals with developmental disabilities and their families. The organization is one of 57 NYSARC chapters statewide. Schoharie County ARC currently serves over 300 developmentally disabled children and adults through a continuum of supports including residential and day programming, vocational services, day habilitation, Medicaid service coordination, family support, friendship club, transportation, and self-advocacy and guardianship services.



It began as idle talk. I was an Arboretum volunteer; my neighbor, Lawson Harris, was on the Arboretum's board of trustees. When Lawson asked me whether I had any ideas for projects that could be undertaken by the Arboretum, I replied that I wondered whether ARC consumers could somehow become involved. Lawson brought this vague idea to the Board and reported that they seemed interested.

Summer 2006

The idea took on more life when the Arboretum hired Thom O'Connor as its executive director. Thom not only seemed to like the plan but immediately began to implement it. I was told that he and I had an appointment to meet with Tony Alvarez, director of the Schoharie County ARC. I recall that Thom and I met face to face for the first time in the lobby of the Schoharie County ARC. His confidence and enthusiasm were infectious. Tony Alvarez and ARC staff members Linda Isles and Lauren Milavec welcomed us with utmost graciousness and thanked us for reaching out to the ARC. They did not seem to think our idea was a foolish or impractical one, and, almost before any of us knew it, a plan had been set in motion.

September 2006

I learned that I was to make a presentation to two groups of ARC consumers and staff, together with reporters from the *Gazette* and the *Times Union*, on October 13, 2006. Timidly, I suggested that we confine our first meetings to relatively high-functioning people. Linda and Lauren were having none of this. They saw an opportunity for all their consumers, and they were going to bring along everyone they could. I had no idea of these consumers' ability level, familiarity with plants,

or degree of interest. I collected various plant materials to show: peas I had sprouted between damp paper towels to show root development, lambs' ears to show the wonderful soft texture of some plants, a basil plant for scent, and a mum in full bloom that I planned to show the consumers how to divide.

October 13, 2006

The first group to arrive had very limited verbal ability. A number used wheelchairs. There were more people than we had expected. We were all packed into the Library, with a rather perplexed-looking *Times-Union* reporter hovering at the edge of the group. I do not know whether it was kindness on the part of the ARC consumers or genuine interest, but they paid rapt attention to everything I showed them. It was a relatively non-verbal group, but these consumers made their utterances count. I passed around the peas that had started to sprout roots. A bass voice declared with profound satisfaction, "PEAS!" I started to show the group how to divide a mum plant, when it suddenly occurred to me to wonder what the consumers knew about the nature of plants. I held up the plant and asked, "Is it alive?" Heads nodded. I decided to push things further. "How do you know?" The same bass voice announced, "Grows!" What a perfect response!

Fred Breglia, the Arboretum's horticulture director, told the consumers about his wonderful idea to divide the perennial gardens into individual plots and give each consumer responsibility for a small plot. They understood, and their eyes lit up.

The next group was more verbal, and fewer members had physical disabilities. They loved seeing the gardens. A very tall and wide ARC consumer said to me in a small voice, "Can I have a hug?" I hugged him, but he was so big

my arms would go only part way around. We burst out laughing. It was a beautiful fall day. Everyone seemed exhilarated. We explained to the consumers that they would start their work at the Arboretum in the spring.

October 20, 2006

When Arboretum staff arrived in the morning, a number of ARC consumers and counselors were waiting outside the closed gate well before Arboretum staff had arrived. I think the clients were so eager to start work at the Arboretum that they had badgered the counselors into bringing them that early. Fred Breglia and Erin McKenna immediately put them to work, and the consumers were of tremendous help in getting the gardens ready for winter.

Spring 2007

The ARC workers arrived in full force. One group adopted the garden by the parking lot to work on. Fred Breglia said the workers were very helpful, and all that was needed was a bit of preparation and clear instructions about what they were to do. Gardener Erin McKenna appeared to have a great deal of empathy for the ARC workers, and had the ability to sense when to provide encouragement and when a worker was simply tired and needed to rest.

May 2007

The Schoharie County ARC held an awards dinner at the Best Western Hotel in Cobleskill. Those ARC consumers who had made the most progress during the year were to receive awards. In addition, the Arboretum was to be given a community service award by the ARC.

Landis Board of Trustees president Barbara Brabetz, Executive Director Thom O'Connor, and I attended. The hotel ballroom was filled with ARC consumers and counselors. Wait staff leaned solicitously over consumers who needed extra assistance. They seemed pleased to be doing so. After dinner, the consumers went up to the microphone one at a time to receive their awards. None of them appeared to have stage fright. A lanky, grinning young man bounded effortlessly forward, as if supported by helium balloons. A tiny woman with physical disabilities gave a speech thanking "everyone who helped me." It sounded as spontaneous as a bird's song. Thom O'Connor accepted the community service award on behalf of the Arboretum. It was a memorable evening.

—continued on page 6

July 21, 2007

The Arboretum hosted a concert by the soft rock band “Flame.” This band is composed of ARC consumers from the Lexington Center in Gloversville. Some of the band members are physically handicapped as well as developmentally delayed. I had never heard them and did not know what to expect. The band arrived in a huge brown bus with “Flame” emblazoned on the sides. The bus was equipped with wheelchair lifts for the physically challenged band members. Assemblyman Peter Lopez made opening remarks, and the group “Cherie and the Hot Pots” entertained charmingly with old songs. Then Flame began to perform. None of the members of this group can read music, but they had memorized over a hundred songs, and their musical performance was breathtaking. The lead singer, Michelle King, has a spectacular, soaring voice, and she performed with flawless poise and dignity. I was able to understand why this group is reviewed in local publications with no mention of its members’ disabilities. They are incredible musicians, and their degree of emotional expressiveness was outstanding. There were many ARC consumers, along with family members and other caregivers in the audience. Michelle King invited the audience members to dance, and they did, with great joy. Some of the physically disabled “danced” while carried in the arms of their caregivers. Many faces were radiant. It was a fitting conclusion to the first year of the ARC/Arboretum connection.

The Arboretum has made plans to construct a universally accessible garden, to be called Wanderland. It will incorporate elements devoted to touch and scent, as well as the more typical visually-oriented designs. The entrance will be marked by a large pergola, the design for which can be viewed at the Arboretum. Area organizations such as SUNY Cobleskill, BOCES, the Esperance Elks, and ARC consumers themselves will play a vital role in bringing Wanderland to life.

RIVERWALK WINNERS! These are the winners of the Landis Arboretum’s Environmental Quiz displaying their prizes. The contest required participants to use keys to identify plants and animals in their environment. The girls from left to right: Britta Kilbourn, Ashley Rios, Maria DeMarco, Seneca Willoughby, from Scotia/Glenville Troop #2173.

Best Foot Forward

Thom O’Connor

Some say that a picture is worth... well, two sets of exterior grade French doors? Somewhat of a stretch but this image of the Carriage House adjacent to the Farm House (administrative office) at Landis tells the story.

Last Fall, this *Newsletter* (Unsung Deeds... Loud and Clear) told of the extensive work completed on the Carriage House area. Again, a tip of the hat to Donna and Bob Vincent of Plantscapes Florists of Duaneburg, hardy volunteers Ben and apprentice Jed Fox, carpenters Tom and Clay Edmunds, and the responsiveness of donor Mike Caputo, Vice President of the Sand and Gravel division of Carver Stone Products in Middleburg. And who can forget the generosity of “Acorn Barbara” Hunt and Marian Hotopp in providing funding that enabled the purchase and installation of new Farm House and Acorn Shop doors.

The goal is to complete the new Acorn Visitors Center before the Spring ’08 season. The new center will bring visitors closer the Acorn Shop and our center of business in the Farm House. There, they can sign in (important to documenting visitations for grantwriting purposes and internal planning), learn more about us, ask questions, and view new maps of the Arboretum Trails before starting their visit.

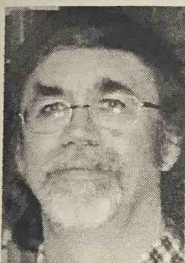
With your help, the Carriage House awaits Act II: Look at the

entrance bays in the image below. With eyes wide open, image the form—and function—and beauty of a set of exterior grade French doors in each bay. Once installed, the doors will protect informational and educational material as well as a visitor sign-in area. The panels of the double doors will shed lots of light on Landis in print and open in a wide embrace to visitors who need handicapped-accessible doors. Estimated cost to purchase at deep discount and install is \$2500. Think about it—and respond with generosity before the 2008 Spring season at Arboretum. Be sure to indicate Visitors’ Center on your donation. Know of a friend or business with two sets of doors to donate? Tell us. (We want them to match! It is *THE* internationally known Arboretum after all.) Thank you again and again for all you do already!



Star Gazing at Landis

COMING ATTRACTIONS



Alan French

Alan French has been exploring the night sky for more than 40 years. He is a telescope-maker and vice president of Dudley Observatory's Board of Trustees and the Albany Area Amateur Astronomers, who meet regularly at Landis.

The highlight of the next four months is a total lunar eclipse on February 20.

Unlike the lunar eclipses that have occurred in the two last years, this eclipse will be visible in its entirety. The Earth projects a shadow into space, but the full Moon usually passes above or below this shadow. However, on February 20 the full Moon will pass through the shadow, and we will enjoy a total lunar eclipse—the last until December, 2010.

The Earth's shadow has two parts: the lighter, outer penumbra, where the Earth partially blocks the light of the Sun; and the darker, inner umbra, where the Earth completely

blocks direct sunlight. The umbra is not completely dark because our Earth's atmosphere refracts or bends light into the shadow. A totally eclipsed Moon is illuminated by the sunsets and sunrises all around the Earth. At totality the Moon may be quite bright or barely visible, depending on the cloud cover around the Earth. The Moon can also appear reddish, orange, or a coppery color.

The penumbral shadow is not very dark and is generally impossible to see when the Moon first enters it. Although the Moon will enter the penumbra at 7:36, you will probably not notice a slight shading on the lower left edge of the Moon until around 8:05 pm. At 8:43 the Moon starts moving into the darker umbra, which will be easily seen taking a bite out of the lower left edge of the Moon. Totality begins at 10:01, when the Moon is completely within the umbra. Mid-eclipse is at 10:26, and totality ends at 10:51 when the Moon begins to move back out of the umbra. The Moon leaves the umbra at 12:09 am. The subtle penumbral shadow will probably be invisible after 12:45, although the Moon will not completely leave it until 1:16.

In March, brilliant Jupiter dominates the southeastern skies just before sunrise. The teapot shaped pattern of stars that marks the

constellation Sagittarius lies to Jupiter's right. A pretty thin crescent Moon will be visible in the west just after sunset on March 9.

At 9 pm on April 8, a crescent Moon will be just one degree to the right of the Pleiades or Seven Sisters in the western sky. The close grouping will be a pretty sight with binoculars or a low power telescope. The Moon will be within three degrees of reddish Mars on the evening of April 11.

Elusive Mercury, which never appears far from the Sun, makes a fine appearance in the evening sky during May. One half hour after sunset, it will be at least ten degrees above the west-northwestern horizon until May 23, although it will be dimmer toward the end of the period. (For reference, remember that a fist held at arms length spans ten degrees across the knuckles.) It will be highest on May 14, when it will be 13 degrees above the west-northwestern horizon at 8:40 pm. A helpful landmark is Betelgeuse, which is almost as high above the horizon and due west—twenty three degrees left of Mercury. Many people have never seen Mercury, although it is bright enough to be easily visible. To insure clear skies and success, plan on starting your search a couple of days before the 14th.

Looking Back:

The Native Plant Collection

Ed Miller, Curator, Native Plant Collection



Seven years ago, the Landis Arboretum gave the go-ahead to an ambitious plan to create a complete collection of all of New York's native woody plant species. We soon decided to modify "all" to exclude obnoxious plants like poison sumac and prickly ash and not to try to grow plants found only on alpine summits or the sand dunes of Long Island.

Now, seven years later, the committee has essentially met its goal. We have planted 207 species of native woody plants, and they are all labeled so that interested students can look closely at almost any plant that they would encounter in the wild. We probably have the most complete collection of native woody plants of any arboretum in New York and, because of our grouping by plant families, students are able to easily compare close relatives.

Just as some people don't want to live near their relatives, some related plants have special needs. Therefore, we have grouped additional specimens of some species in wet habitats and others in dry. We even have an understory grouping for those shrubs that like the shade.

Actually, we have gone beyond just grouping plants in the Arboretum's natural environment. We have brought in

Pine Bush sand to make some plants happy, and we have created a bog garden, duplicating the conditions of an Adirondack acid bog.

Seven years has not been a long enough time to achieve mature tree growth, but there are certainly advantages to the student of botany in having leaves and buds available for close examination. In mature forests, buds and leaves are typically out of reach and the student must depend on binoculars or broken branches to see the leaves and buds up close. Visit Fred Lape's collection of oaks and the old growth forest if you want to see trees with acorns and mature bark.

The Native Plant Collection Trail is open to the public dawn to dusk. Everything is labeled so that you don't need a teacher with you to show you what's what. For a really serious student, there is a plant locator sheet in the gazebo at the parking lot which lists all our plants and identifies at least one location where you will be able to find them. To maximize your learning experience, bring your favorite tree and shrub field guide and a hand lens to help distinguish one species from its close relative.

As you complete your native plant walk at the wet habitat, you will note a spur trail to your left. It crosses the bridge and wetland and climbs the hill on the other side. We have planted ferns and spring wild flowers on this hill, but nothing is labeled.

It's all up to you! See how many species you can find!

WLC/Arboretum—from page 1

natural environment, impart an understanding of how natural systems function; and create a desire for people to explore the natural world further and take personal responsibility for its protection and care. WLC provided programs to more than 6,000 participants last year.

"We envision a dynamic collaborative partnership with the Landis Arboretum," says Susan M. O'Handley (www.wildlearn.com/susan.html), Vice President of WLC, Inc. "I see this collaboration with Landis Arboretum as a positive step to establishing a strong market for environmental education services in the Central New York region."

Ms. O'Handley her husband (www.wildlearn.com/jeff.html) Jeffrey O'Handley (who serves as president of WLC) are career environmental educators with more than 30 years combined experience in live animal and environmental education programming and administration. Mr. O'Handley has worked extensively in environmental education programming and administration as well as exhibit design and implementation. Both O'Handleys are seasoned professionals adept at bringing the richness of nature to students, educators, and members of the general public. Both also have been responsible for the care, maintenance, and handling of live animals similar to those Wildlife Learning Company maintains for use in programs.

Evolution of New Directions in Learning

The WLC/Arboretum relationship evolved from discussions with an influential Arboretum supporter, Rob Van der Stricht (now deceased) from Rochester, NY, who reinforced on-going discussions on the importance and potential long-range impact of mutually beneficial partnerships, especially among struggling non-profit entities. Landis trustees, through the Arboretum's Education Committee, committed to exploring options to rein in costs—both financial and the personnel-related—associated with populating its tradition events calendar with quality offerings.

According to Arboretum Board president Barbara Brabetz, "In today's economic environment, our trustees realized that we had an imperative to seek alternatives to our traditional approach to programming—essentially producing an educational calendar that focused on programs that were dependent on a full-time, on-site education

director ... Instead, we have migrated toward promoting the Arboretum's 548 acres as a dynamic, living laboratory and classroom in which other organizations stage their educational programs."

The Arboretum realized the positive impact of that decision when WLC's Jeff O'Handley hosted 40 students per day from Canajoharie Middle School last Oct. 11-12 at Landis for pond study and forest exploration, says Ms. Brabetz.

"The success of the venture was immediate and most positive," she says. "It reinforced our decision to invite others to use the Arboretum as a way to introduce new generations to the outdoors and the assets of the Arboretum."

Other informal partnerships in 2007 included sharing the envelope, an initiative to invite other non-profit educational entities to combine mailings in a single envelope for maximum impact and shared mailing costs. In addition, the Arboretum shared space at the NYS Outdoor Education Association Conference at Hunter Mountain last November with the New York Power Authority (NYPWA). Plans are under discussion to re-create select Arboretum programs on the beautiful grounds of the NYPWA in 2008.

"We also are in discussions with Howe Caverns about sharing educational programs to increase interest in and visitations to both our venues," says Education Committee chairman, Anne Donnelly, a biologist recently retired from SUNY. "These relationships have not gone unnoticed and we have been approached by several other environmental organizations within the Capital Region for exploratory talks on partnerships and alliances, both formal and open ended."



Trustee Susan M. O'Handley (left), Vice President of Wildlife Learning Company, shares a relaxed moment with a peregrine falcon and Anne Donnelly during a meeting break of the Education Committee, which Ms. Donnelly chairs.

Expanded Initiatives

As outlined in the agreement signed in the final days of December 2007, Wildlife Learning Company will work directly with schools and educators who are interested in field environmental education programs at the Landis Arboretum. In addition WLC is taking on administrative responsibilities, which will include coordinating dates among WLC staff, school educators, and LA staff, scheduling programs, and administration of finances for all programs through WLC.

The initial programs envisioned at the Arboretum as part of the managed rollout of the partnership curriculum include daylong pond and forest ecology programs.

In addition to field ecology programs, schools may also schedule any of WLC's traditional in-school Live Animal programs for single-classroom size audiences to be held at Landis. Several classes visiting can combine an animal program with a modified field ecology program or choose to do other independent activities.

Wildlife Learning Company also will offer a variety of public programs at Landis throughout the year and will assist Landis staff and board members in finding funding to support these. Programs and topics are fully flexible. Examples: Owls: Our Nocturnal Neighbors (to complement the fall and winter Owl Prowl programs); From Lake to Sea; Raptors of Central NY; Wildlife of NY State; Birding Basics; Field Ecology walks; Nature Journaling; teacher training for national Environmental Education Curricula. (www.wildlearn.com).

As part of the agreement, the Landis Arboretum will assume primary responsibility for promoting the programs as part of its already extensive calendar of family-focused outdoor education and entertainment events.

Panopoly of Offerings

The excitement of the Education Committee already has spilled over into innovative offerings for the New Year, says Ms. Donnelly. In celebration of their new partnership for environmental education, Wildlife Learning Company and Landis Arboretum offer national environmental education curriculums through teacher training sessions this spring at the Arboretum.

LANDIS PORTRAITS

A series about the people behind the plants at the Arboretum

Nolan Marciniac



Cynthia (Cindy) King

Without any hesitation, Cynthia King remembered her first visit to Landis thirty-six years ago. She went to the Arboretum on a picnic with her then two-year-old daughter and her brother, a gymnast. And even after all these years, her daughter still treasures the memory of her "Uncle Chippy" walking on his hands from the Library to the pond.

Cindy said that she is the daughter of "a frustrated horticulturalist." As a child growing up in New York's Southern Tier, very much her mother's daughter, she thought that "the greatest way to spend an afternoon was to pick wildflowers and build stone houses and pick wild strawberries."

Gardening has always been something essential to Cindy. "It's watching things grow that I'm intrigued by, becoming. And in a garden, we become, we grow . . . It's also inspiration for everything that I do creatively, whether I make art or write poetry," she said. Today she maintains her own wildflower

garden at her home in rural Montgomery County—along with at least 500 varieties of daylilies.

As the only master forest owner in a four-county area, she enjoys walking through other people's woodlands and making suggestions about managing their forests. She mentioned several trees, such as the contorted beech at Landis, that she felt she knew "as people."

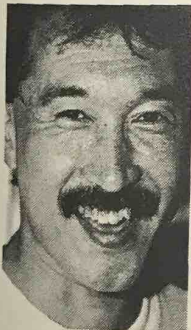
Recovering from a serious automobile accident in 1990, she began to volunteer at the Arboretum under the tutelage of Carol Loucks. She weeded the perennial beds of the Van Loveland Garden but then was persuaded to move indoors to serve as office manager and, later, newsletter editor. She has recently renewed her volunteer efforts at the Arboretum, largely through her association with the Arboretum's arborist, Fred Breglia, and Cornell's master forest owner program. Cindy currently serves on the publications committee.

Cindy earned a BA in English from Skidmore College and a MA in arts

education from the College of St. Rose, where her concentration was on fiber arts. It's no surprise that natural shapes and materials figure prominently in her wall hangings. She taught in several area schools. She also worked as both reporter and editor for the *Schenectady Gazette*. She also confessed that she edited *The Hard Hat News*, a publication for the construction industry.

About the Arboretum, she insisted that ". . . there's nothing like it. I'm glad to see it expand [under Thom O'Connor's direction]. I'm in favor of education of all sorts . . . Family programs and activities . . . are opportunities that are just wonderful."

And then she reflected, "Kids need to be taught to look . . . to be made aware of the world around them. That," she concluded, "should be the Arboretum's most important focus." From just such experiences, memories are made.



George Steele

He quoted Rachel Carson: "A child's world is fresh and new and beautiful, full of wonder and excitement."

Since 1992, George Steele has worked to tap that sense of wonder in the children and their families who visit the Arboretum.

He admitted that growing up in this day and age is markedly different from his growing up in the wild areas in the Southern Adirondacks near the Hudson River, when he would often disappear into the outdoors for an entire day—until he heard his mother's whistle, a signal that he needed to return home. His love for nature was nurtured through his involvement in the Boy Scouts and continued from camper to counselor. These days, he said, there are so many obstacles between children and nature—"stranger danger," the lure of videogames and computers, neighborhoods in which it's impossible for a child to dig a hole or climb trees or build a fort.

George's family programs are based on the simple pleasures afforded by

nature: finding cicada exoskeletons, or examining moths by night, or catching frogs and salamanders, or examining animal tracks in the snow, or watching hawks soar in the Schoharie Valley. "It all starts when you're a kid," he mused. "But who knows where it can go? Maybe the kid will become a herpetologist . . . Maybe that kid will put together some part of the puzzle and benefit the earth and the environment."

George is a member of the Arboretum's Education Committee. He earned an undergraduate degree in wildlife biology from SUNY's College of Environmental Science; he studied environmental education at Antioch Graduate School in Keene, NH. He spent thirteen years working for New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation.

For him, the Arboretum is a microcosm. He pronounced the pond behind the barn "the coolest," since it is exceptionally rich in aquatic microorganisms and macroinvertebra. He loves the Woodland Trail for its natural ecosystem

and the cultivated areas at Landis for their incredible diversity of plants from all over the world. "It's important to know your own backyard, but it's important to know that the world is a community too," he insisted.

It was a program called "Sounds of Spring," he remembered, and a horribly uncomfortable, drizzling, cold evening. Only one person showed up, a man with serious hearing impairment who was enthusiastic about his new hearing aid. At one point during the program, a frog croaked out a mating call. The man was astonished and exclaimed, "I never heard that before." For George, that made the evening all worthwhile.

"It is our misfortune that for most of us, that clear-eyed vision, that true instinct for what is beautiful and awe-inspiring [in childhood], is dimmed and even lost before we reach adulthood," Rachel Carson lamented. It is our fortune that George Steele restores our vision—and our hearing. And our childhood too.

Greenhouse,—from page 1

"It needs some work," she told me when we finally met a few months later for a picnic at Cornell Plantations. "Bob and I probably should have created an endowment or fund for maintenance. I need to think about that."

Those thoughts begat action. In December, Marion Raymond transferred stock to establish an account for the continued maintenance of the greenhouse. She envisions that others will contribute as well—creating a fund that will support the year-round operation of the facility.

Even as the Greenhouse needs an updated climate system and a new roof, it is becoming increasingly important as a key element in the facilities that create an educational complex at Landis: the Harkness Library which doubles as a classroom, board room, art studio, and workshop area, and also features important Fred Lape memorabilia; the Baim Herbarium that adjoins a propagation room of the William T. Raymond Greenhouse; and the soon-to-be established Wanderland universally accessible gardens that will provide a gateway to the Great Oak and the Arboretum's three-season Meeting House, constructed in the early 1980s for larger meetings, cultural events, educational programs, and jumping-off spot for the children's outdoor programming.

WILLIAM THOMAS RAYMOND GREENHOUSE

1952 - 1978

In memoriam

The as-yet humble complex plays an important and practical role in the Arboretum's programs that provide both training and continuing education for gardeners at every level of proficiency and interest. The Greenhouse itself played a major role in last year's Spring Plant Sale as a point of interest and sale.

Starting next month, Landis trustee Jeff Schworm plans to take the use of the Greenhouse to a new level with a three-module propagation course (February 6, March 5, and April 2). This course is a mix of practice and discussion with the intention that participants will emerge well equipped with expertise and interest to begin a plant propagation program at Landis. Instructor Schworm is also the owner of The Nursery at Liddledale (Duanesburg) and a manager at General Electric. Members of GE have visited the Arboretum, and some have expressed interest in bringing new life to the Greenhouse.

The Master Gardeners of Fulton and Montgomery Cooperative Extension have already begun meeting at the Arboretum to learn about seed starting and raising ferns from spores as a prelude to workshops where they will help to plant native perennials, shrubs and trees and ferns for Arboretum plant sales. Cindy King, master gardener and Cornell master forest owner, is leading this project with the help of Crystal Stewart, new Ag and Hort educator for Fulton/Montgomery CCE. This group is open to anyone who would like to help. Meetings will be held monthly and will include various lectures on pertinent topics as well as hands on activities. Call the office to join us and get the meeting schedule. The group would also welcome donations of pots, trays, and seed starting media.

The Arboretum continues its outreach to the donors to build a substantive endowment for the greenhouse. We also welcome time and talent to preserve this precious Arboretum resource. Won't you join us? Monetary donations in the form of checks should indicate Greenhouse in the memo line. Those with an interest in seeking grant opportunities for both the greenhouse and the Meeting House will be openly embraced! Don your wings. Be an Arboretum Angel. Fly with us! Call the Arboretum at 518-875-6935.

Holiday Dinner/Auction Draws Crowd and Winning Raffle Winners

A capacity crowd gathered, socialized, dined, and bid at the annual December 8 festive dinner and auction to support the Landis Arboretum.

The event, held this year at The Crossings (Loudonville), attracted Arboretum supporters from throughout the Capital Region for the three-course dinner, silent-, mystery-, and live auctions, and for raffle drawings for a 2007 MINI Cooper and hand-crafted quilt. Popular auctioneer Randy Passonno, president of Collar City Auctions, Delanson (www.collarcityauctions.com), returned by popular demand to spearhead the bidding. The event raised more than \$6,000 in operating funds for the Capital Region's Arboretum.

Winning raffle participants

2007 MINI Cooper Raffle

Instantly recognizable by its unique styling, the MINI is considered to be a compact powerhouse whose near-instant and widespread popularity has made it a break-through highway icon.

- First prize: 2007 MINI Cooper or cash value: Elizabeth and Richard Groves, West Hampton, NY
- 2nd Prize: \$250. Sonja Javarone, Gloversville
- 3rd Prize: \$150. John McKeeby, Esperance

Arboretum Hand-sewn Quilt

Stephen Brabetz of Amsterdam, NY, won the annual Arboretum quilt offering in a Migrating Geese and Cobblestones pattern. Herman Finkbeiner (Rexford), a longstanding member and supporter of the Arboretum, drew the winning ticket for the beautiful 64 x 85 hand-sewn, cotton quilt with batting. Arboretum volunteer Toine Wyckoff (Niskayuna) donated and assembled the pieces that comprise the comely quilt. Well-known Voorheesville craftsman Lew "Quiltsmith" Schedlbauer combined and stitched the pattern to backing.

According to Landis Trustee Bonnie Keller, Vice President, NBT Bank (Duanesburg) and chairman of the event, "We were gratified by the turnout and support of our members and their guests. It was a memorable and high-spirited event that reflected most favorably of the months of planning and hard work of the event committee." She credits committee members Anne Donnelly (Lawyersville), Henrietta Dunn (Duanesburg), Dottie Gallo-Vojnar (Esperance), Vicki Hazzard (Cherry Valley), and Donna Vincent of Plantscapes (Duanesburg) for their major contributions to the evening. More than 60 individuals and area business contributed goods and services for the festive evening. Rick Hill and Tom White (Schoharie) provided the musical entertainment.

"Our committee created a festive, pre-holiday shopping experience that guests said that found enjoyable and stress-free," said Ms. Keller. "Many said they are already looking ahead to what we'll do next year!"