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Virginia Bluebell



Eastern Ninebark



Betty Corning Clematis

LANDIS ARBORETUM

THE NEWSLETTER

From the Director's Desk —Fred Breglia

Landis Celebrates its 40th Anniversary Spring Plant Sale!

The Landis Arboretum's Spring Plant Sale, our largest fundraising event, is celebrating its 40th anniversary this year. While we constantly strive to make sure each year's sale is a productive yet fun event for visitors and volunteers alike, we are planning this year's to be the best ever.

We kick-off with the "Pick of the Pots" on Friday, May 18, from 5 to 8 p.m. This exclusive **for members only** pre-sale is perhaps the best time to shop. Not only do you get the first choice of the available plants, but you also enjoy a festive atmosphere, snacks and beverages provided. An expert staff will be on hand to answer questions, helping you select the best plants for your garden conditions. But don't stay home because you're not a current member, as there will be an opportunity to become one that same evening. Another membership bonus is a 10% discount on all purchases.

The Sale opens to the general public on Saturday and Sunday. We offer an extensive selection of flowering, fruiting, and shade trees, including many new

culvars that are cold hardy and resistant to diseases and insects. Also available are a number of flowering and ornamental shrubs and the greatest selection of perennials ever! We suggest you prepare by looking over your yard. Stroll through your garden and think about introducing new colors, textures, and scents. Is a focal point needed? Which gaps need filling? how about plants that attract birds or butterflies? Don't despair if you get overwhelmed—just bring a sketch or photo to show the experts and get their recommendations.

One of our featured plants this year will be the Betty Corning clematis. Its beautiful fragrance, lovely flower form, and exceptional resistance to extreme temperatures earned it a Gold Medal from the Pennsylvania Horticulture Society. It is very disease resistant and cold hardy to Zone 3. We are especially honored to offer this plant as Mrs. Corning was a long-time supporter of the Arboretum.

We will also have on hand a large collection of plants native to this area. Examples include the native witch hazel (a large shrub with late fall/early winter blooms) and Eastern ninebark (a great land-



scaping shrub with beautiful flowers.) Flowering perennials include Virginia blue-

bells for spring blooms and Joe Pye weed and New England asters for fall color. Christmas fern and golden ragwort, native shady ground-covers, are suited for a woodland garden.

But the plant sale is more than just plants. Delicious baked goods will be here to satisfy your desire for home-made goodness. The book sale will be back and "bookies" Ken and Marian Hotopp say, "The selection of gardening and nature books is better than ever." The Acorn Shop will offer garden ornaments and implements, and our new Acorn Gallery will offer original watercolors by noted local artists.

We welcome our many returning friends to the Spring Plant Sale and invite them to bring someone to share the day. True to tradition, things will remain the same—but differences to mark our 40th year!



Veteran plant sale advocates Carol and Bob Olsen (center) are congratulated on receiving "Volunteer of the Year" awards by Assemblyman Peter Lopez (L) and Senator James Seward (R). Susan Sagendorf was presented with a lifetime achievement award at Landis' Volunteer Recognition Celebration.

Garden Party at Landis Arboretum

On June 16, 4:30–8:30 p.m., celebrate the summer solstice at Landis. Bring your friends and enjoy the pleasures of the season. Dinner at twilight, live entertainment, cash bar, and a silent auction. We promise you a most memorable evening, that will benefit the Arboretum, too. Free parking. For tickets call 518-469-1491. Tables for 8 available.

Members and non-members: \$40/person prepaid before June 10; \$45 after June 10.

(See the Calendar of Events for a complete description and information)



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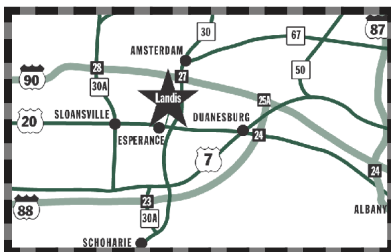
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The Arboretum is located at 174 Lape Road, Esperance, NY. It is one and one-half miles north of Route 20 in Esperance. Follow the signs from the village to Lape Road. The Arboretum is one-quarter mile straight ahead. Visit our website for more information and directions.



Dawn of the Redwood

—Lee Lattimer, Landis Historian

Redwood. When most people hear that word, an image of the tall redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*) in northern California springs to mind. Yet these trees are only one of the three species of coniferous trees known as redwoods in the family Cupressaceae. The other two are the giant Sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) and dawn redwood (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*). We are fortunate to have a specimen of the dawn redwood at the George Landis Arboretum.

While many use the terms conifer and evergreen interchangeably, botanically speaking they are not. Conifers are cone-bearing trees, and evergreens are plants that keep their leaves throughout the year. Conifers can be deciduous, and evergreens can be broad-leafed plants. For example, the rhododendron (*Rhododendron maximum*) is a broad-leafed evergreen. Our dawn redwood is an example of the deciduous conifer, losing its leaves in the fall just like a maple or oak. Of the three redwoods, it is the only one that does.

Other characteristics of the dawn redwood are a red-brown bark and a wide buttress on the lower trunk. It has bright fresh-green needles about a half-inch long that turn a copper color in the fall. The cones appear in the early spring on long spikes and are about an inch long. Under optimal conditions, the dawn redwood can grow up to 145 feet—our specimen currently stands at 65 feet.

The most fascinating aspect of our dawn redwood is the history of its discovery and how it came to the Arboretum. The story begins in 1941 when a Japanese scientist, Shigeru Miki, was examining fossils. To some that had been incorrectly classified he gave the genus name *Metasequoia*, which means “almost a sequoia,” because of its resemblance to the California coast redwoods. It was believed that the tree was extinct and known only through fossils, some of which found in the American West dated back 70 millions years. During the Tertiary Period, it was the most widespread tree species in the Northern Hemisphere. In the mid- to late-1940's, the living tree was found in a remote area of southeastern China and described as a new species of *Metasequoia* by Wan Chun Cheng and Hu Hsen Hsu. In 1948 several shipments of seeds were sent from China to the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University and thence distributed throughout the world. Fred Lape contacted the Arnold Arboretum and was sent five seeds. Of the five, three were successfully propagated. Only one survived. This tree was planted in its current location in 1951.

To view our specimen, begin at the main parking area off Lape Road. It is just up the hill on Fred Lape Trail on the right and is marked on our color trail maps. The next time you are visiting, be sure to stop and contemplate our dawn redwood, the living fossil.

Pettiti Earns Scout Honor at Arboretum

—Angie Pettiti

In September, Gabriel Pettiti of Boy Scout Troop 83 in Guilderland completed his Eagle Scout service project at the Arboretum. His Eagle Court of Honor was held in January at the Joseph E. Zaloga Post, an American Legion veterans' post that sponsors Troop 83.

A Scout who wants to achieve the rank of Eagle Scout must plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to his community. He planned a project of two parts with Landis director Fred Breglia.



With donations of materials from Home Depot., six posts with directional signage were placed at intersections along the Bass Trail. His grandfather, Peter Trivilino, taught him how to use a table saw to cut the lumber for the signs and a router to create the sign letters.

The second part of his project involved the Landis Arboretum and the New York State Eastern Bluebird Society who had placed nesting boxes at the Arboretum years ago. It was part of a program to help the state's official bird increase in number after a long period of population decline. Gabriel refurbished the boxes near the Bass Trail system. The boxes were repainted with the help of fellow Troop members, using a yellow-orange that helps maintain the correct temperature inside the boxes for egg incubation. On September 24th as the project leader, Gabriel directed other Boy Scouts and Scout leaders as they helped dig post holes, put in the new signs,

and hang the nesting boxes.

The Landis Arboretum wishes to thank Gabriel for his time and effort. It's certain that if they could, the bluebirds would as well.

Potting Up Plants for the Plant Sale

—Nick Zabawsky

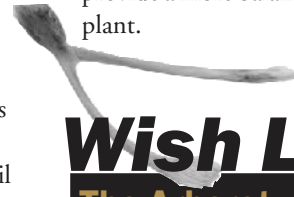
It is important to have attractive, healthy looking plants for the sale. With that in mind, here are a few pointers:

- ☞ **Start Ahead of Time**—Plants go into transplant shock when they are dug up and potted. Most plants need 2 to 4 weeks to recover, so plan accordingly. I start potting up plants 4 weeks before a plant sale.
- ☞ **Pamper Plants after Potting Up**—The transplanting process does major damage to root systems, and plants can't take direct sun. For the first ten days after potting up plants, keep them in shade and water regularly. I also mist the plants with a garden sprayer on a daily basis for the first few days to prevent dehydration. After ten days, gradually move the sun loving plants out into the sun to harden them off. Of course, keep the shade lovers in the shade.
- ☞ **Provide Good Drainage**—One of the quickest ways to kill a newly potted plant is to overwater and drown it. Use pots with

WANTED: PLANT DONATIONS
The Arboretum is encouraging its members to donate plants to the Plant Sale. Not only is it a way to tidy up your garden in the spring, but it also gives you a chance to share with other gardeners. Most important, your donations significantly boost the Arboretum's profits. You may bring your donations to the Arboretum during the week preceding the Sale.

holes in the bottom to provide drainage and line the bottom of the pot with small stones, gravel, bark chips or some other coarse material that will insure quick drainage from the bottom of the pot. Use soil that drains well—not heavy clay. Professional potting mix will produce the best results. I like the mix that is sold as “moisture control potting mix” as it allows longer time between waterings, and it also reduces the likelihood of drowning the roots. For plants that prefer heavier soils, I mix topsoil in with the potting mix.

- ☞ **Use the Right Size Pot**—Don't try to jam a plant into an undersized pot, and don't put a tiny plant into a large pot. Both situations not only look unattractive, but the plant will not thrive in such conditions.
- ☞ **Don't Fertilize**—Adding fertilizer over the long haul is a good idea, but not when potting up. High nitrogen fertilizer promotes top growth, when what is needed is root establishment.
- ☞ **Prune and Primp**—Just before the plant sale, remove dead or damaged foliage. Level up and top off the soil if necessary. For many plants with lots of foliage, remove some leaves to reduce transplant shock and provide a more balanced, healthy looking plant.



Wish List

The Arboretum needs—

- fireproof cabinets for our plant and financial records (approx. \$1000)
- hand tools: shovels, rakes, garden tools, etc. (excellent condition only)
- 4-wheel drive pickup truck with or without plow (reliable running condition)
- new work lights in our Barn
- gas-powered pruning pole saw
- weed whacker (new)
- snowblower, in good working condition

Arboretum Plant Sale: A Primer

- ☞ Starting times and dates for the sale are firm, Saturday and Sunday, May 19 & 20, 10 a.m.—4 p.m. Purchases may not be made prior to the sale. The Arboretum cannot set aside plants prior to the sale.
- ☞ Please park cars in our upper parking area next to the Meeting House.
- ☞ Handicapped parking and drop-off space is available. Please inform the parking attendants of your needs.
- ☞ Sorry—dogs are not permitted at the Plant Sale.

Arboretum plant experts will be available all week-end to answer your questions and to provide suggestions and advice on plant selection, site requirements, and proper planting and care techniques.

- ☞ Free soil pH tests will be provided on Saturday by the Cornell Cooperative Extension Schoharie Master Gardeners. To participate, bring one cup of dry soil in a clean plastic bag.
- ☞ Be sure to check out the Acorn Shop Tent, which will include a section for your donations of new, unused, or “gently used” garden-related items. To donate a “gardening

treasure” for the sale or for more information on the tent sale, email Gail Browning at fred@landisarboretum.org

- ☞ Restrooms and picnic tables are available for your convenience.
- ☞ Have your membership card handy for quicker checkout. (10% discount for members.) Not a member? We'll be happy to help you join.
- ☞ The Acorn Gallery (in the Farmhouse) will display watercolors by local artists for your purchase. Note that Arboretum members receive a 10% discount on Gallery purchases, too.
- ☞ Volunteers from Arboretum-sponsored Boy Scout Troop 501 will be available to help those needing assistance in getting purchases to their vehicles.
- ☞ All purchased items must be removed by 4 p.m. Sunday. Landis does not make deliveries and is not responsible for items left after 4 p.m.

For more information, call the Arboretum at **518-875-6935** or email: info@landisarboretum.org.

George Mann Tory Tavern Restaurant



Ralph & Irmgard Buess

104 Vrooman Cross Road
Schoharie, NY 12157

Reservations appreciated
(518) 295-7128

LANDIS PORTRAITS: A series about the people behind the plants at the Arboretum

—**Noian Marciniac**

Mariesa Jozwiak (photo) confessed that her reputation as “Miss Nature” is largely undeserved.

Her gardening is limited to a strip between sidewalk and street at her home in downtown Troy and a backyard of “sad grass” and always dependable and low maintenance hostas. She admitted that she would probably seldom venture outdoors if it weren’t for her dogs. Yet her teaching colleagues recognize her enthusiastic and innovative use of the “Big Back Yard” to teach her third grade students.

That “Big Back Yard” is an area of wetlands, forest, and open field behind the Glenmont Elementary School in Bethlehem. Mariesa uses the space to teach language arts as well as science, math, and social studies. “Why teach

science from a book?” she asked, suggesting that nature can be a “touchstone” to instill and hone students’ observation skills, whether they are noting the weight of snow or writing a poem about a tree. To be sure, her students are often unaccustomed to being in natural places and need an eager and knowledgeable guide. Students who are comfortable in nature learn to appreciate it and are more likely to become responsible stewards of the environment, she pointed out.

Mariesa earned her undergraduate degree in elementary education at Marywood College in Scranton, PA. She did her graduate work in special



education at Hunter College in New York City, with a concentration in serving students with severe disabilities

Like many of the Arboretum’s visitors and volunteers, Mariesa first came for a spring plant sale. Over the past several years, she participated in several of George Steele’s workshops for children and families. “George Steele is amazing. The man could talk for hours about the life contained in a cup of pond water,” she said. She met many other people at the Arboretum who are “truly passionate about things I didn’t even know existed”—and she instanced Ed Miller and his expertise about native plants.

Her mother, Board member Wilma Jozwiak, suggested that Mariesa join the Landis Board. In her short tenure, Mariesa has acknowledged the enormous potential that Landis has for nature education. This summer, she will offer a workshop for teachers on using nature to teach the NYS Common Core Competencies. She hopes that the Arboretum will continue to attract young children and their families and suspects that they might well experience that “sense of wonder,” the feeling that “wow, this is an amazing place!”

As for Mariesa herself, she finds that a visit to the Arboretum has a calming influence on her—“as long as there aren’t a lot of bugs.”

Why visit the Arboretum? Mariesa’s answer was immediate: “to learn.” Spoken like a teacher at heart.

Landis and the Arts

—**Louise Polli**

Music and maples. Watercolors and witch hazel. Prints and paths. Those who love Landis often refer to it as a jewel. The views are dazzling, the old growth forests priceless, and the perennials sparkling with color. And always, Landis is multifaceted, like the gem it has become.

A glance at this year’s calendar reveals a growing emphasis on the arts. Plein-Air painters practice their craft, families create t-shirts decorated with animal tracks they may have first spotted in the woods, and local musicians choose the Arboretum as their venue for a major festival.

And yet, a glance backwards at the early days of Landis shows us how entwined in its history the arts have always been. Fred Lape, founder of the Arboretum, wore many hats, but none were far removed from his love of the arts. A writer and poet, as well as a farmer and naturalist, Fred established the Arboretum as a place in which the arts as well as the trees would flourish, and that tradition continues to this day.

The young Fred Lape was exposed to music by one of his teachers who lived with the family. At college in Cornell, he studied

chemistry and physics, but began to write some poetry and graduated as an English major. He later became an instructor of English at that same institution before heading west to California. No longer interested in teaching, he returned home and, after selling a short story to *Collier’s* for what seemed a large sum of money, decided he would become a writer. While his true literary love was poetry, he thought that short stories would pay the bills until his fame grew.

Though Fred once again left Esperance for California, he eventually came home and began writing again, both poetry and short stories. The arts assumed an even larger role in his life. He did a little painting, played the piano in a local band, and developed friendships with local literary figures. Many of his summer visitors had ties to the arts. He started to collect art and joined a theatrical troupe.

When Fred met George Landis, a man of some means and a collector of classical music recordings, they were both teaching at R.P.I. They became fast friends and attended many concerts together. After his dear friend’s untimely death, Fred transformed the farm

into what we see today, the George Landis Arboretum.

Watercolor Paintings and Historic Prints from “Wildflowers of New York” for Sale at the Plant Sale.

Framed original paintings will be for sale during the Plant Sale in the Farmhouse Gallery. Many of these skilled and inspired paintings have already been sold—this may be your last chance to acquire one (or more) for yourself or as gifts.

Also available will be historic prints taken from “Wildflowers of New York,” published in 1918 by the New York State Museum.

“The 400 still-existing autochromes . . . represent one of the most significant collections of early color photography in the United States.”

—Craig Williams, Senior Historian and curator of photography at the NY State Museum.

For more information about the prints, visit www.nysm.nysed.gov/legacy/legacyvol5n4.pdf.