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LANDIS ARBORETUM

THE NEWSLETTER

From the Director's Desk —Fred Breglia

Many years ago, the Great Oak was designated as the official logo for the Landis Arboretum. Landis' Great Oak is a white oak, *Quercus alba*, the native range of which stretches from Maine to Georgia.

In an article that appeared in the spring 1982 Arboretum *Newsletter*, founder Fred Lape remembered this impressive tree:

The big oak of the George Landis Arboretum must have been an outstanding forest tree when the land was first cleared around 1840 for it was singled out by the first owner to be left standing in the open. . . .

My first memory of the tree dates from 1910 when I was getting old enough to pay attention to trees. It seems to me now in memory that the trunk was as large then as it is now but early in life memories usually magnify with time. . . .

It was one of the features of the farm which induced my father to buy the property, for he loved far views, and he immediately named the place Oak Nose Farm, and always took visitors to see the views up and down the Schoharie Valley, which one gets from the



knoll upon which the oak stands.

It is said that an oak tree spends a few hundred years growing, a hundred years or so just living,

and another hundred years or more dying. The Great Oak has sustained many natural disasters over the years, including lightning strikes and ice storms. Most recently Hurricane Irene, with its gusty winds and heavy rains, delivered the biggest blow yet, breaking off the crown of the tree and destroying two-thirds of its canopy. Our Great Oak had passed the climax of its life many years ago, and is now definitely in the last century of its life.

Many Arboretum friends and members have requested a piece of this Arboretum landmark. Some very talented woodworkers have generously donated their time and craftsmanship to fashion a limited number of Great Oak products. Their handcrafted items will include bowls, pens, key chains, coasters, and cross sections of the tree that reveal several hundred

years' growth. Sale of these items will help raise funds to keep the Arboretum growing. Please contact me at fred@landisarboretum.org or call the office at **518-875-6935** if you have questions, a special request, or would like to place an order. See page 2.

While the Great Oak's years are now decidedly numbered, the Arboretum is very fortunate to have over a dozen oaks that are more than 300 years old. Big Red, the gigantic red oak, stands next to our Great Oak on the same knoll overlooking the Schoharie Valley. The Twin Oaks, which are located in the old growth area near the Woodland Trail, have been largely unseen by most Arboretum visitors. These two colossal trees are over 4 feet in diameter.

As we move into the future, we will remember our past. The Great Oak will continue to welcome our visitors, now featured in a brochure complete with GPS coordinates that will guide them to the other great oaks of Landis Arboretum.

The Arboretum continues its tradition of celebrating the vernal equinox with a special afternoon of **fine food, live jazz music, and silent and open auctions**. Come to the Settles Hill Tree Farm Restaurant, at 1123 Settles Hill Road, Altamont, just off Route 20. Take a short drive from anywhere in the Capital Region and relax with friends, family, or associates over brunch. It's a great way to introduce potential new members to Landis and tell them about what they've been missing.

Landis Arboretum presents

RITE of SPRING
Brunch & Auction

Sunday, April 1
 Noon to 3 PM

Members and non-members: \$25 per person, with a limited number of tables for eight available for \$175. **RESERVE NOW and be part of the FUN!** **518-875-6935** Or use PayPal at www.landisarboretum.org or email: info@landisarboretum.org

Volume30, Number 1

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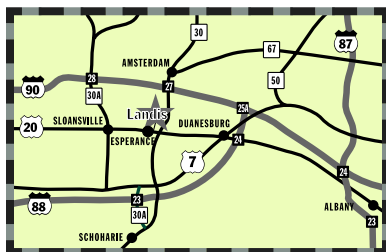
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The Arboretum is located at 174 Lape Road, Esperance, NY. It is one and one-half miles north of Route 20 in Esperance. Follow the signs from the village to Lape Road. The Arboretum is one-quarter mile straight ahead. Visit our website for more information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



—Wilma Jozwiak

Winter has had a pretty low profile as this newsletter went to press, but chances are that by the time you receive your copy, you'll be dreaming about spring.

Once again (for the 24th year!) coming to our rescue, Wildwood Programs the Capital District Garden and Flower Show. Held this year from Friday, March 23, through Sunday, March 25, the show lets us wander through lush landscapes created by local companies, visit vendors selling everything imaginable relating to our lawns and gardens, pick up information from organizations and tourist destinations throughout the region, and admire gorgeous flower arrangements.

Among the many workshops this year, two will be presented by Landis Director and Arborist Fred Breglia (**Prudent Pruning** at 1 p.m., and **New and Unusual Trees for the Landscape** at 3 p.m., both on Saturday). Long-time Arboretum member Viktoria Serafin will also be speaking about **Hosta Gardening Using Native Plants and Wildflowers** at 1 p.m. on Friday.

Garden Show hours are 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. on Friday, 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. on Saturday, and 10 am until 5 p.m. on Sunday. As always, Landis will have an information booth at the show, and we need you to help us put our best foot forward. Volunteers typically work two-hour shifts and are given free admission to the show on their volunteer day. If you are interested, please call the Arboretum at (518) 875-6935 or e-mail us at info@LandisArboretum.org .



UPDATE

LANDIS

LIVE

ON WAMC

Once again, Fred Breglia will be a featured participant on the panel.

Thursday, April 5	Thursday, Aug. 2
Thursday, May 3	Thursday, Sept. 13
Thursday, June 14	Thursday, Oct. 11
Thursday, July 5	

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)



Local woodworkers have created keepsakes from the Arboretum's Great Oak, such as bowls (below, left) and wine stoppers.(above, right) Please contact me at fred@landisarboretum.org or call the office at 518-875-6935 if you have questions, a special request, or would like to place an order. ale of these items will help raise funds to keep the Arboretum growing.

Oh, those post-holiday blues! The tree is down, the seldom seen but often missed kids or grandkids are gone, and you can't face another sugary treat till February. Cold seeps under your doorstep as the wind wreaks havoc, once again, on your newly shoveled driveway. The sparkle of December dims, replaced by gray days and thoughts.

You hesitate to approach your mailbox as you venture outside to retrieve the day's delivery of holiday bills, income tax forms, and the like. No more cards and letters from old friends, no packages and baked goods from a favorite aunt. But wait, what else is peeking out from the weathered box? A belated holiday gift? For gardeners, it is a treasure trove of gifts—the seed catalogue.

Who can resist the wonders of seed catalogues, the veritable promise of better days just ahead, and the miracle of the growing season? Springing to life among these pages, the gardener dreams of what is to come, right here at home under the blanket of snow that nestles the bounty of the sleeping earth. Brilliance of color, symmetry of form, sweetest of tastes, if only one makes a purchase, or two, or more. Buy in bulk, the seed company urges, and delight in mass plantings your neighbors and friends will envy. Try a striking new variety, grow a prize winner, and fill your freezer to the brim; push the envelope (or seed



—Louise Polli

packet) on your hardiness zone, just this once.”

How easy it is, in the comfort of your overstuffed chair and bulky sweater, hot chocolate or chocolate Lab at your side, to be lured by the vision of sunny days, shears in hand, or the memory of fragrant summer nights spent in your gardens. Oh, the joys of the seed catalogue with the sheer beauty and dazzle of page after page of glorious flowers, unblemished fruits, succulent vegetables, and pungent herbs. The search for the perfect bloom, or, at the very least, one or more

“bigger and better” than last year. Rising to the top of our reading list, novels left behind on the bedside table, these glossy volumes, slim or fat, guide us deftly through the winter months with ease.

Will we till a new bed, propagate seedlings, harvest worm castings, or espalier a fruit tree? Is it time to invest in row covers, new nitrile gloves, or perhaps a harvest hod from New England to gather up and cleanse the garden's gifts? Will this be the year we dramatically increase our yields, and learn some definitive methods of putting foods by or share our abundance with the local food pantry?

The seed catalogue puts all of this within reach, as our dreams trellis with the peas or clematis. All we have to do is trek out, or snowshoe, to the mailbox with mittened hands and a hat covering our ears. The catalogue will do the rest.

Remember Landis: A Guide to Charitable Giving

—Jim Paley

In our last newsletter, we featured Part I of Board President Jim Paley's article on charitable giving, including basic information and benefits to both the donor and the recipient of the gift. This issue contains the remainder of the article and provides additional detail with concrete examples of two types of charitable trusts, the charitable lead trust and the charitable remainder trust.

As stewards of Landis, we can find many ways to ensure the future of the Arboretum for not only ourselves but also for those who come after us. Through our membership and the support of Landis programs and activities, we demonstrate our ongoing commitment to its continuing vitality. With charitable giving, we take that commitment a step further. Please remember the Arboretum when planning a charitable gift.

Charitable trusts

One way to make a charitable gift is to create a charitable trust. You can name the charity as the sole beneficiary, or name the charity and a non-charitable beneficiary as well, splitting the beneficial interest (this is referred to as making a partial charitable gift). The most common types of trusts used to make partial gifts to charity are the charitable lead trust and the charitable remainder trust.

Charitable lead trust

A charitable lead trust pays income to a charity for a certain period of years, and then the trust principal passes back to you, your family members, or other heirs. The trust is known as a charitable lead trust because the charity gets the first, or lead, interest.

A charitable lead trust can be an excellent estate planning vehicle if you own assets that you expect will substantially appreciate in value. If created properly, a charitable lead trust allows you to keep an asset in the family and still enjoy some tax benefits.

How a Charitable Lead Trust Works

Example: John, who often donates to charity, creates and funds a \$2 million charitable lead trust. The trust provides for fixed annual payments of \$100,000 (or 5% of the initial \$2 million value) to ABC Charity for 20 years. At the end of the 20-year period, the entire trust principal will go outright to John's children. Using IRS tables, the charity's lead interest is valued at \$1,267,630, and the remainder interest is valued at \$732,370. Assuming the trust assets appreciate in value, John's children will receive any amount in excess of the remainder interest (\$732,370) unreduced by estate taxes.

Charitable remainder trust

A charitable remainder trust is the mirror image of the charitable lead trust. Trust income is payable to you, your family members, or other heirs for a period of years, and then the principal goes to your favorite charity.

A charitable remainder trust can be beneficial because it provides you with a stream of current income—a desirable feature if there won't be enough income from other sources.

How a Charitable Remainder Trust Works

Example: Jane, an 80-year-old widow, creates and funds a charitable remainder trust with real estate currently valued at \$1 million, and with a cost basis of \$250,000. The trust provides that fixed quarterly payments be paid to her for 20 years. At the end of that period, the entire trust principal will go outright to her husband's alma mater. Using IRS tables and assuming a 4.8% AFR, Jane receives \$50,000 each year, avoids capital gains tax on \$750,000, and receives an immediate income tax charitable deduction of \$354,903, which can be carried forward for five years. Further, Jane has removed \$1 million, plus any future appreciation, from her gross estate.

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

—Nolan Marciniak

Winter is Nick Zabawsky's favorite time at the Arboretum.



It is, he insisted, the greatest place he knows for snowshoeing. On a really clear winter's day, he said, one can stand at the Great Oak and look out to see the Schoharie and Mohawk valleys and the high peaks of the Catskills and Adirondacks. The location and the view, he said, are "as perfect as it gets."

Nick studied physics at RPI, then trained as an architect. He currently operates a consulting service that focuses on construction development for local municipalities. Having grown up on a farm in the Finger Lakes Region

and working in the fields since he was a boy, Nick maintained that plants are "in his blood." The plantings at his 1890s Victorian home in Amsterdam feature nearly 20 varieties of roses, a dozen different lilacs, over a hundred cultivars of hosta, as well as a hillside planted with spring ephemerals and a magnificent old ginkgo.

Nick was invited to join the Arboretum Board by trustee Carl Salmon and served two terms, from 1993 to 2003, including two years as Board president, as well as a stint as interim director. He has been a presence at the Arboretum's plant sales for more than twenty years—missing only one, in order to attend his son's graduation.

Fearing that Landis' unspoiled beauty might be threat-

ened by development, he advocated the Arboretum's land acquisition, which brought its holdings to the present 548 acres. In his mind, the Arboretum's collections, the oaks and conifers in particular, have become increasingly more valuable in an era of climate change and environmental degradation. He sees the place as a kind of "refuge in a dark time."

"It's not all about pretty plants," he maintained. There are the people. The Arboretum tells a "unique . . . and colorful . . . story," beginning with Fred Lape. He appreciates the opportunity he has had over the years to interact with such Arboretum stalwarts as Herm and Fran Finkbeiner, Viktoria Serafin, Sonja Javarone, John and Susan Sagendorf—and of course

the legendary Betty Corning—among many others.

In the future, he said that the Arboretum "must stay on the map as the Capital Region's Arboretum." It must expand its membership base. It must cultivate collaborative relationships with organizations in order to generate resources.

Whatever the future of the Arboretum, it remains a place where visitors can encounter Nature first hand, regardless of the season. Nick remembers one spring, stepping over a fawn in the lilac collection. In the fall there is often an eye-level view of hawks and eagles riding the wind currents in the valley. And perhaps most of all, the solitary beauty of winter.

COMING ATTRACTIONS February–March 2012

THE LANDIS ARBORETUM • ESPERANCE • NY

Sunday, February 12, noon–2 p.m.
2ND SUNDAY SNOWSHOE



Don't let Old Man Winter keep you indoors! Join us for an invigorating day of winter fun and learn how to "walk on snow." We will teach you about the different types of snowshoes and

all the basic skills you need to enjoy the serenity and unique beauty of winter on snowshoes. Adult and children's snowshoes are available, so arrive early if you need them—or bring your own. For even more fun, don't forget to bring your sleds! The Farmhouse will be open for you to warm up between adventures and to enjoy some hot cocoa, coffee, and home-baked goodies. Please dress appropriately for the weather and wear a sturdy pair of boots. No snow? We'll take a hike.

Location: Meet at the Farm House Welcome Center; free parking in the lot across from the entry gates

Members: \$5/person, \$15/family.
Non-members: \$10/person, \$25/family.

Saturday, February 25, 1–3 p.m.

KITCHEN GARDENING:

GETTING STARTED AND SAVING MONEY

We all know that fresh vegetables are important in our diets and that knowing where your food comes from is wise—what better reasons for starting a home kitchen garden? Join Master

Gardener Laura Scoones to learn about site preparation, use of containers, choosing the right herbs and vegetables for your site. We'll talk about the whole process from planting through harvest. We'll talk about growing from seed or planting seedlings, feeding your plants, harvesting, and other elements that lead to success in growing and harvesting your own kitchen garden.

Instructor: Laura Scoones

Location: The Library. Free parking in the lot across from the entry gates

Members: \$5 individual/\$15 family
Nonmembers: \$15 individual/\$25 family

**Saturday, March 17, 10–11:30 a.m.,
bad weather date, March 24**

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BED—
THE GARDEN BED THAT IS!

This class will take us a bit off the beaten garden path to learn about square foot gardening, raised beds, lasagna gardening, Topsy Turvey pots, and vegetable varieties for container growing. While any gardener will enjoy this class, it will be very helpful to space-challenged gardeners.

Instructor: Susan Pezzolla

Albany County Cooperative Extension
Community Educator for Horticulture

Location: The Library; free parking in the lot across from the entry gates

Members: \$5 person/\$15 family
Nonmembers: \$15 person/\$25 family

Friday, March 23, 8:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 24, 8:30 p.m.

PUBLIC STAR PARTY

Join the Albany Area Amateur Astronomers for star gazing under the dark Arboretum skies. A variety of telescopes will treat you to views of nebulae, star clusters, galaxies, planets, and other celestial sights. Alan French will hold an introductory program in the Meeting House followed by a short, outdoor tour of the prominent constellations. Free admission and parking—but donations to aid the Arboretum are always welcome. Star Parties are canceled if the skies are mostly cloudy.

Call Alan at (518) 374-8460 if conditions are uncertain or for more details.

Location: The Meeting House; free parking in the adjoining field.

Members and nonmembers: Program free, but donations to the Arboretum gratefully accepted!

Friday, March 23, 10 a.m.–7 p.m.

Saturday, March 24, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Sunday, March 25, 10 am–5 p.m.

CAPITAL DISTRICT GARDEN
& FLOWER SHOW

See article on page 2.