

Becoming...

COUNTDOWN TO OPEN THE GARDEN GATES



“If cultural institutions were boxers, the Delaware Botanic Garden would be Rocky Balboa, an underdog with a seemingly uncrushable spirit.”

—ADRIAN HIGGINS, WASHINGTON POST 9/20/17



DELAWARE
BOTANIC
GARDEN
AT PEPPER CREEK

Annual Report 2017

“Delaware Botanic Gardens at Pepper Creek is a lesson in how a small group of people can make big things happen.”

—THERESE CIESINSKI, GARDEN DESIGN MAGAZINE
APRIL 2018

Our **MISSION** is to create a world-class, inspirational, educational, and sustainable public botanic garden in southern Delaware for the benefit and enjoyment of all.

Our **VISION** is for beautiful, engaging gardens that inspire and educate.

Our **VALUES** encompass inspirational gardens, environmental stewardship, community focus, education and research, organizational transparency, financial responsibility, and civility and respect.



Ray Sander, President
Photo credit: Ray Bojarski

FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

Dear friends, supporters, and soon-to-be friends,

2017 was a landmark year for the Delaware Botanic Gardens—the year that the project emerged from visions and drawings to the actual creation of the garden’s first features on the site. Shortly after the December 3, 2016 Ceremonial Groundbreaking, the DBG Reality Team of Pennoni, Bancroft and George & Lynch began the site work and by early April 2017 the DBG was ‘substantially underway.’

The progress and accomplishments of 2017, show that the Delaware Botanic Gardens is by every measure a community-based garden. While we have attracted nationally and internationally renowned designers and highly respected engineering and construction experts, the project’s workforce is drawn almost exclusively from dedicated volunteers who live here on Delmarva. And, while the project has been the beneficiary of several generous grants from leading regional foundations, the local community here has been the source of priceless hours of in-kind donations of time and talent.

There is still time and need for others to help ‘Open the Garden Gates.’

Opportunities to give tribute or honor the memory of individuals through naming rights, to lend support through sponsorships of our fundraisers and to underwrite the work of our team and volunteers through your membership and donations.

You are invited to join in this rare endeavor...the creation of a landmark... the Delaware Botanic Gardens at Pepper Creek.

Join Us!

Ray Sander, President, Board of Directors



“Later, walking the site along with Piet Oudolf, the rock star from Hummelo turned and said: ‘The garden scene here is small. But so much energy. It’s unbelievable.’”

—ADRIAN HIGGINS, WASHINGTON POST

DELAWARE BOTANIC GARDENS MAKES A SPLASH IN THE GARDEN WORLD AS THE PIET OUDOLF MEADOW NEARS COMPLETION

Rodney Robinson, Landscape Architect for the Delaware Botanic Gardens said, “If you get Piet Oudolf to do a meadow, you’ll have people come to Delaware who don’t even know where Delaware is.”

Piet Oudolf came to Delaware—he said he was attracted to the project because it is a public garden, and he “liked the enthusiasm of people working together for the ‘public good.’” He designed our Meadow Garden—a two-acre palette of color bounded by serpentine pathways, that in the words of Director of Horticulture, Gregg Tepper, “is the jewel in the crown of the Gardens.”

The Meadow will have more than 70,000 perennials and grasses when it is completed in June 2018. Consisting mostly of native plants, it will be a feast for wildlife and for the eyes.

New botanic gardens are a rarity, so news of a new botanic garden in Delaware was already generating excitement in the gardening world, but the Oudolf Meadow Garden, his first installation in the mid-Atlantic, has made the DBG national news. His unlikely arrival in Dagsboro has put DBG on the map.



Photo credit: Ray Bojarski

Renowned garden designer, Piet Oudolf, was attracted to the project because he “liked the enthusiasm of people working together for the public good.”



Gregg Tepper, Director of Horticulture; Wally Pill, volunteer; Peter Carter, Board member; Sheila Latortue, supporter; Piet Oudolf, plantsman and designer of the Meadow Garden.

Photo credit: R. Chris Clark



The Folly Garden is a place to pause between the Meadow and Woodland Gardens—the site of the old farmhouse, long gone.
Photo credit: Ray Bojarski

FOLLY GARDEN PAYS HOMAGE TO THE GARDENS' SUSSEX COUNTY PAST

Along the backroads of southern Delaware, in places where homesteads once stood, are the remnants of dooryard gardens—

Steps away from the Meadow Garden, at the edge of the woods, is a trace of the lives of people who once farmed this land. Where the old farmhouse stood generations ago, the remains of the brick foundation is now the centerpiece of the Folly Garden, an intimate remembrance of things past.



Within the old foundation Lenten roses and snowdrops will welcome spring to the sunken garden, giving way to daffodils and crocus as the earth warms. Bleeding heart, obedient plant, money plant, native phlox, hardy cyclamen and the cool blues of the spring star flower will mark the arrival of summer.

THE WOODLAND PATH TO PEPPER CREEK

Three years ago, the twelve acre woodland was a snarl of greenbrier, a thicket so dense, the only passage possible was behind a machete.

Entering the Woodland from the Folly Garden, the path slopes down toward Pepper Creek and the pathway edge is marked with a stone wall built by staff and volunteers.

Under towering oaks, sweet gum and maples are American hollies, sassafras and dogwood, and beneath those, highbush blueberries, native ferns, and azaleas.

Hundreds of natives were planted in the Woodland Garden in 2017 by DBG staff and volunteers. Views of Pepper Creek brighten the trail along the way, and three vernal pools sing with frogs in spring. There are fanciful 'nests' built from collected branches, and benches built from fallen trees.

Box turtle Photo credit: Gregg Tepper



The blue waters of Pepper Creek come into view from many vantage points on the Woodland Trail. Photo credit: Ray Bojarski

A PLACE FOR LEARNING

At the end of 2017, plans were in place for the creation of the Wetland Outdoor Classroom.

Working with Envirotech Environmental Consulting Inc. on design and planning, and with underwriting from Dogfish Head Brewery, the Wetland Outdoor Classroom is nearing completion. It will be a learning place for all students and visitors to the Gardens. Around the wetland will be the Inland Dunes Garden, a re-creation of a rare and disappearing habitat found in western Sussex County along the Nanticoke River.

GOOD FOOD AND GARDENS GO TOGETHER

For five years, the DBG has partnered with Good Earth Market and SoDel Concepts to produce a magical 'Farm to Table' dinner and 2017 was our most successful yet. 200 guests dined and reveled, and generously donated \$110,000 for the DBG. In 2018, the first 'Dinner Party in the Gardens' will be held on site.

TREE-MENDOUS PARTNERSHIP MAKES BIG THINGS POSSIBLE

The TREE-mendous Delaware Tree Planting, a project of the Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs (DFGC) is one of many partnerships that are making the creation of the Delaware Botanic Gardens possible. DFGC President Lisa Ami, started the program to encourage Delaware garden clubs to help purchase trees for the DBG Woodland Garden through donations of \$100 to honor or remember a loved one, friend, or business colleague.



An artist's rendering of the Wetland Classroom and the Inland Dune Gardens,



Gregg Tepper, DBG Director of Horticulture, Sheryl Swed, DBG Executive Director, and Lisa Ami, DFGC President Photo credit: Ken Ami



Photo credit: Ray Bojarski

MANY HANDS...WITH THANKS TO A REMARKABLE TEAM

A ballet of gardeners in choreographed motion—such was the scene in late September, when volunteers planted 17,000 perennials in the Meadow Garden. Teams were led by Director of Horticulture Gregg Tepper and Advisory Council member, Barbara Katz, and augmented by other professional horticulturists, landscape architects and designers from around the country who volunteered their time for the chance to work with Piet Oudolf. A rock star in the garden design world, Oudolf is renowned for his work on the High Line in New York City.

From the early months of 2017, the team of DBG volunteers grew from fifty people logging about 100 hours per month, to a team that meets weekly to tackle tasks at the Gardens. Directed by Garden Volunteer Coordinator, Janet Point, who is herself a board member and volunteer, 115 people answered the call in 2017 to come to the Gardens dressed to get dirty; to plant, to weed, to mulch and be part of a team now called the Garden Stewards. (New members are encouraged to apply!)

Most of the volunteers are experienced home gardeners, some are Sussex County Master Gardeners, and many are members of local garden clubs, but all are there to help ‘Open the Garden Gates.’

But, there are many paths to service at the DBG, and not all require garden gloves. Volunteers lead our communications team, do community outreach at festivals and events, write grants, manage the website, provide photographic services and provide financial and legal expertise.

Volunteer Don Klima builds a stone wall along the woodland path. Photo credit: Gregg Tepper





VOLUNTEER GARDENERS

This list includes our Garden Stewards and those who joined them to assist on the Meadow Planting days in 2017.

Jeanette Akhter
 Dawn Anderson
 Ken Arni
 Lisa Arni
 Cyndy Aviles
 Luis Aviles
 Terri Barnes
 Mary Bartlett
 Meredith Beach
 Adam Becker
 Mike Berkley
 Amanda Binning
 Sue Blackwood
 Ray Bojarski
 Ramona Bourque
 Wendy Brister
 Naomi Brooks
 Tony Broomfield
 Donna Buono
 Suzanne Butterbaugh
 Ruth Rogers Clausen
 Joan Clow
 Robert Collins
 Jeff Conti
 Amy Comelius
 Douglas Croft
 Laura Cruz
 Jaime Doane
 Janet Draper
 Don Duca
 Karen Dudley
 Christopher (Kit) Fecko
 Susan Fiske

Jonathan Forte
 Carol Gentes
 Peter Giaquinto
 Eugene Gonzalez
 Lee Gordon
 Patrick Gravel
 Carla Hackley
 Ruth Craig Haggerty
 Anne Hanzel
 Elaina Hanzel
 Margaret Heffernan
 Karen Hinman
 Virginia Hitz
 William Hitz
 Oksana Hoey
 Elizabeth Hollyfield
 Rick Hydeman
 Douglas Isaac
 Lauri Johnson
 Mary Jones
 Colin Kahn
 Howard Katz
 Donald Klima
 Sue Kohl
 Walter Kohl
 Betsy Kuharich
 Liz Lear
 Lynn LeBrun
 Anamaria Leon
 Kathy Lesperance
 Susan Lyons
 Nikki Marten
 Vern Marten
 Joan McAleer

Carol McCloud
 Doug Mearns
 Christine Moore
 Margaret Moore
 Elizabeth Nalle
 Karen Nowell
 Joseph O'Brien
 Hanna Packer
 Edward Palmerino
 Judy Pfister
 Angela Phinney
 Nancy Pilchen
 Wallace Pill
 Zachary Pittinger
 Janet Meenehan Point
 Jan-Marie Poli
 Robert Poli
 Cheryl Quirk
 Margaret Ravida
 Charles Reisdorf
 Jane Rice
 Richard Robbins
 Marty Ross
 Melanie Ruckle
 Dave Rufft
 Trixie Rufft
 Chelsea Ruiz
 Maureen Ryan
 Ray Sander
 Pauline Santorelli
 Sally Scarangella
 Angela Schaab
 Kurt Schaab

Jean Sewald
 Max Sewald
 Dianne Shawley
 Marianne Smith
 Thomas Smith
 Clay Stradley
 Sheryl Swed
 Mardi Thompson
 Alan B. Tuttle
 Larry Woda
 Pamela White
 Bonnie Wright
 Joe Zaia
 Elaine Zawaleta



Photographers Ken Arni, left and Ray Bojarski have volunteered their time and services to document the creation of the Gardens. Photo credit: Ken Arni



Photo credit: Ray Bojarski

TO BUILD A GARDEN IS TO CREATE A LEGACY...

To build a garden from scratch...to take a former farm field and woods and envision a plan, create a design, and put it on and in the ground is monumental. This is the work that a group of committed volunteers inspired by the land and each other are doing at the Delaware Botanic Gardens at Pepper Creek.

The DBG is the beneficiary of tremendous generosity from volunteers, partners, and foundations, but the costs of this endeavor are great. Most all of the funds raised so far have gone into design and planning, infrastructure, plants and equipment. There is still much to be built.

To complete the ten-year master plan will require the help of all who see what this will offer to Sussex County and Delaware as a community amenity, an economic driver for the area, a protection of open space, a harbor for Delmarva native plants and pollinators, and a place of beauty and enjoyment.

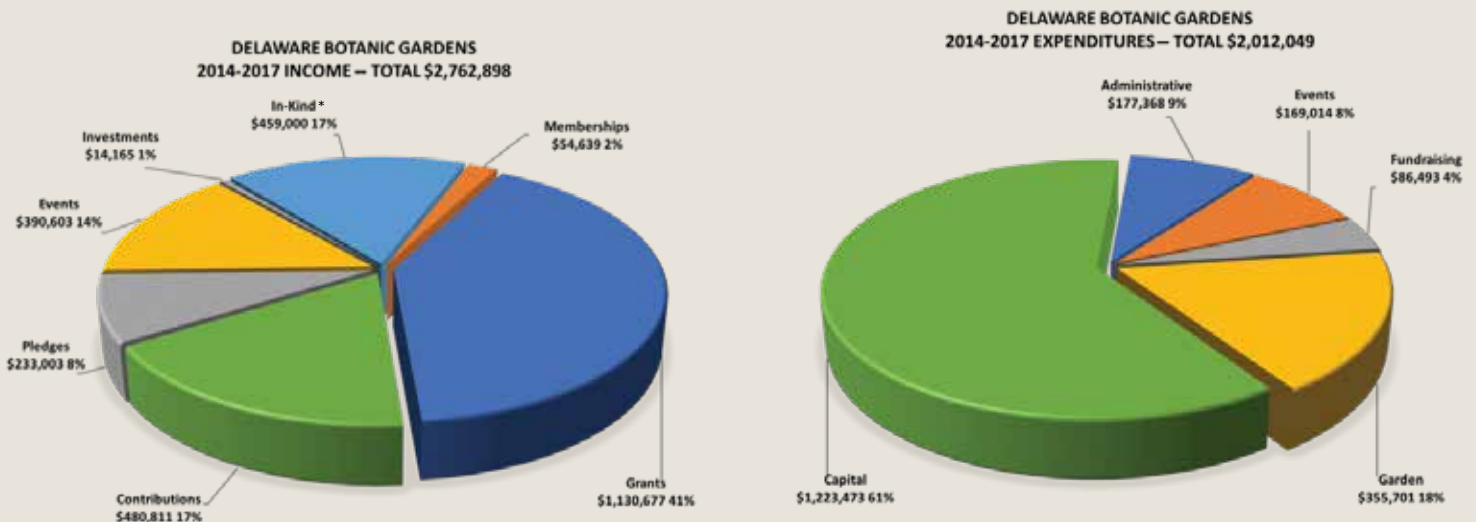
81% of our expenditures in 2017 were spent directly on the development of the Gardens. We could do this because of volunteers—our Garden Stewards who are in the Gardens week by week planting and tending—and all of the advisors and coordinators who give their time and experience pro bono in communications, business and legal assistance, outreach, website management, grant research and writing, videography and photography, volunteer coordination and executive management.



Gregg Tepper, Director of Horticulture
Photo credit: Dr. Evelyn Maurmeyer

“We define beauty at the Delaware Botanic Garden as not only aesthetics, but also the ability to support life—to be respectful of resources and other beings that inhabit the space—bees, insects, birds, wildlife, and the life in the soil.”

—GREGG TEPPER, DIRECTOR OF HORTICULTURE



* The true value of the DBG 37-acre site is not reflected in the in-kind income. The land was last valued at \$1.2 million and the Sussex County Land Trust leases it to DBG for \$1 per year for 99 years, renewable twice.

FUNDS RAISED

With thanks to our members and contributors for their vision. The following donors made gifts from January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2017, through Memberships (\$250 and above), Annual Giving, Capital Campaign, In Kind Giving, and Matching Gifts/ Sponsorships from Special Events. We strive to insure names and giving levels are correct. If you believe there is an error, please contact us.

FOUNDATION GIVING

\$750,000+

Longwood Foundation, Inc.

\$250,000–\$749,999

Ellice & Rosa McDonald Foundation, Inc.

\$40,000–\$249,999

Coltman Family Foundation
Crestlea Foundation, Inc.
Crystal Trust
Marmot Foundation
Welfare Foundation, Inc.

Up to \$39,999

Benanav Family Foundation
Dorothy G. Bender Foundation
EXXONMOBIL Foundation
Global Delaware Fund
Henry A. Strohming Family Foundation, Inc.
Kimberl-Clark Foundation
Raymond James Charitable Trust
Wakefield Family Fund

GIFTS IN KIND

\$1 Million+

Sussex County Land Trust

\$150,000+

Pennoni Associates

\$30,000 to \$70,000

Baird Mandalas Brockstedt
Banks Wine & Spirits
Delaware Electric Cooperative
Dogfish Head Brewery
Nickle Electric
Robinson Anderson Summers, Inc.
Sposato Irrigation

\$10,000 to \$29,999

Archetypal Press
Bancroft Construction
Bryant Design
Coastal Tented Events
East Coast Garden Center
George & Lynch
Good Earth Market
Lake/Flato Architects
MacImpressions
SoDel Concepts
Yorkston Consulting

\$5,000 to \$9,999

EDiS
Nason
Tunnell & Raysor PA
Quillen Signs

Up to \$4,999

Roy Diblik
Austin Eisenshed
Barbara Katz

Horticultural Material

Appgar Turf Farm
Babikow New Moon
Cavano's Nursery
Ruth Rogers Clausen
East Coast Garden Center
Gro Wild Nursery
Hoffman Nursery
John Mickle
Pepper's Greenhouses
Putnam Hill
Gregg Tepper

CORPORATE/ ASSOCIATION GIVING \$50,000+

Dogfish Head Companies
George & Lynch, Inc.

\$10,000–\$49,999

Bancroft Construction Company
Barefoot Gardeners
Pennoni Associates, Inc.

\$5,000–\$9,999

Coastal Tented Events
Delaware Federation of Garden Clubs
Piet Oudolf
Robinson Anderson Summers, Inc. (RAS)
SoDel Concepts & Plate Catering

Up to \$4,999

1st Choice Properties, LLC
After Glo Spa
Alban Tractor Company
All About U
Alpha Zeta Fraternity at UD
Apple, Inc.
Archetype Press, Inc.
Babikow Greenhouses
Baird Mandelas Brockstedt
Banks Wines & Spirits
Beach Life Magazine
Beach Pilates & Wellness
Bethany Beach Ocean Suites
Bethany Fine Arts Gallery
Bin 66
Blue Skies Farm
Bryant Design
Burke Equipment Company
Cape Gazette, Ltd.
Carl M. Freeman Golf Facilities
Carolina Street Garden & Home
Cavano's Perennials, Inc.
Clayton Theatre
Coastal Point
Country Wicker, Etc., Inc.
Custom Fitness by Lisa
Delaware Nursery & Landscape Association

Dellinger, George & Suzanne Hain
Delmarva Environmental, Inc.
Delmarva Hosta Society
Delmarva Sedation Dentistry
Denney Lighting & Design
Duck Creek Horticultural Society
Eastern Sussex Democratic Club
East Coast Garden Center
Envirotech Environmental Construction
Fulton Bank N.A.
Gallery One, LLC
Garden Club of Millsboro
Garden Gate Garden Club
Gardeners by the Sea
Gardening Angels
George H Bunting Jr Insurance
Georgetown Arts and Flowers
Good Earth Market, LLC
Haupt-Berlin
Heidi Lowe Gallery
Hocker's Super Center, Inc.
Hoe 'n Hope Garden Club
Hoffman Nursery, Inc.
Inland Bays Garden Center
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Lake/Flato Architects, Inc.
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London Landscapes, LLC
Lord Baltimore Lions Charities, Inc.
Lord Baltimore Women's Club, Inc.
Lord's Landscape & Garden Center
Lupo Italian Kitchen
Made by Hand International Cooperative
McCabe's Gourmet Market, Inc.
Middletown Odessa Garden Club
Midge Smith Fine Art Gallery
Minuteman Press-Dewey
MissionSeekers/Roxana Zion
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Oxford Garden Club
PDK Horticultural, LLC
Pottery Place
Quillen Signs
Red Clay Garden Club
Red Sky Websites
RentAMobileMovieTheater.com
Sableware Pottery
Salon on Central
Salt Air Gardeners
Salt Pond Women's Club
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Silver Pine Garden Club
Smith Farm
Southern Sussex Rotary Club
Spade & Trowel Garden Club
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Sussex County Land Trust
Tidewater Physical Therapy & Rehab Assoc.
Trinity Logistics
Tri-Supply & Equipment Company
Tunnell and Raysor
Turtle Moon Designs
Worcester County Garden Club
Womanswork
WSFS Bank
Yorkston Consulting
Zonko Builders, Inc.

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Cecile O'Connor
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Marilyn Panagopoulos
Virginia Papke
Charles & Joan Partridge
John & Christine Pearson



Governor's Award for Conservation

In February 2017, RAS, DBG landscape architects, submitted an inspirational Master Plan for a 21st century public garden. Site work began in early 2017 and in May, the plan and its implementation were recognized for excellence—the DBG was awarded the 2016 Governor's Conservation Award for excellence in the fulfillment of urban conservation activities in Sussex County. DBG Executive Director, Sheryl Swed said that "the award was a validation of the outstanding professional work of our designers, engineers and construction experts."

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 Angela Phinney
 Wallace Pill
 Robert & Patricia Pilkington
 Janice Pinto
 Jack & Sandra Powell
 Shirley Price
 Charles & Olivia Pritzlaff
 Dale Pupillo
 Natasha Reatig
 Cheryl Rehrig
 Charles Reisdorf & Robert Fish
 Valerie Ricklin
 Geoffrey & Michelle Robbins
 Stephen & Jill Roberts
 David & Anne Marie Rogerson
 Eileen Rosenthal
 Laurel Rupprecht
 Diane Ryan
 Mary Ryan
 Maura Ryan
 Maureen Ryan
 Albert Salas
 Lenore Savage
 Nick & Sally Scarangella
 Jerry & Pamela Schiavino
 Beth Shank
 Thomas & Judith Sharp
 Kelly Sheridan & Debra Quinton
 Moira Sheridan
 David & Courtney Sieck
 Leslie Sinclair & Donna Wood
 Sandra Skidmore
 Bernard Slosberg
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 Judith Smith
 Midge Smith
 Steve & Jenny Smith
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 Douglas Tallamy
 Judith Teoli
 Mary Thormeyer
 Ginna Tieman
 Eugenia Timmer
 Stephen Timmons

Pat Torelli
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 David van de Graff &
 Christy Sander
 David & Lynn Vismara
 Ben & Sara Waide
 Lauren Weaver
 Philip Webre
 Judith Weitz
 Audrey Wyatt
 William Wyman
 Steven & Martha Yates
 Joseph & Paige Zaia

Up to \$99

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 Lolita Anderson
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 Eugenia Athan
 John Baker
 Alex Belano
 Barbara Bitondo
 Elizabeth Boettger
 Colleen Bugler
 John & Ethel Cabry
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Left to right: David Doane, Janet Meenehan Point, Bob Batley, Carol McCloud, Peter Carter, Sheryl Swed, Gregg Tepper, Ray Sander, Patti Drago, Ruth Rogers Clausen, Cam Yorkston, Richard Weissmann.
Photo credit: Ray Bojarski



Executive Director, Sheryl Swed, and DBG Board President, Ray Sander are at the Gardens or on the road most days, winning friends, raising funds and working to 'Open the Garden Gates.' Photo credit: Gregory Fisher

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- **Become a member** delawaregardens.org
- **Become a sponsor** of our annual Dinner Party in the Garden
- **Volunteer!** In the Gardens, with community outreach, as a docent, or 'in the office.'
- **Learn** about naming opportunities in memory of or tribute to a loved one.

"We are grateful to all who have given their time and treasure to create this place of natural and horticultural splendor—the Delaware Botanic Gardens on Pepper Creek. For those who have given and those yet to give, we need your continued support to 'Open the Garden Gates' in 2019."

—SHERYL J. SWED, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



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