



DELAWARE  
BOTANIC  
GARDENS  
AT PEPPER CREEK

## Contents

Behind the Scenes	1
Highlights of the Opening Events	2
Grand Opening – Behind the Scenes Notes	13
Volunteers & Tours Update	16
Horticultural Happenings	18
August 2019 Garden Pictures	20
Donations and Memberships	21
Thank You Partners and Sponsors	22

## Fall Newsletter

*Our roots are in the sands of coastal Delmarva*

*October 22, 2019*

## Behind the Scenes

News from President Ray Sander & Executive Director Sheryl Swed

Welcome to our fall newsletter. The Grand Opening was the culmination of more than eight years of heroic effort by the entire network that we have built around DBG — scores of dedicated volunteers, unselfish business partners, generous foundations, supportive elected officials and engaged media.

In the final phase of DBG’s opening, we needed to pass three tests. The first test was from Piet Oudolf, the creator of our amazing Meadow. It had been more than 18 months since Piet’s last visit to DBG and he was anxious to check out the Meadow and meet our new Director of Horticulture. During the intervening months since Piet’s last visit in June 2018, portions of the Meadow had suffered from flood damage,



\*

several beds had not survived and Gregg Tepper had departed. Our Dream Team of designers stepped in, suggested remedial steps, which were professionally implemented by Sam Cashdollar, Angela & Kurt Schaab, Rob Wisniewski, and several other hard working Garden Stewards. During the interregnum before Brian Trader’s arrival, key Garden Stewards stepped up to become task leaders, taking responsibility for key elements of the gardens — Angela Schaab in the Meadow, Jan Poli in the



Adrian Higgins & Piet Oudolf

Folly Garden and Craig Haggerty in the Hoop Houses & collection database. Angela was able to find and order replicate replacement plants, which were planted by our Garden Stewards. Her leadership and the work of our Garden Stewards in the Meadow helped restore and sustain Piet’s design. Piet heartedly agreed, writing “I was excited to see how the garden had grown in and how well it was taken care of by the many volunteers. Meeting Brian and assessing the garden during our walks makes me feel sure that he can carry the garden to a higher level.”

The second test was how the professional garden writers respond to our Phase One Grand Opening. We received a quick and resounding vote of confidence from Adrian Higgins, the renowned garden author

and garden writer for *The Washington Post*. In his [September 23 review](#), he wrote:

*“I adore this expression of gardening for loads of reasons: It’s naturalistic, it’s dynamic, it gets more interesting with each passing month of the season. For its maker, it allows countless permutations of plant combos. For the viewer, no matter how seasoned, it provides the thrill of discovering new varieties. Creating so much from nothing gets to the essence and power of garden making. This is why we do it, to create a paradise out of thin air. Dream a space, make it real, and let it speak to us.”*

The third test was how well our supporters and the public react to our Grand Opening. At the September 12<sup>th</sup> Grand Opening Dinner, the 340 guests’ response was phenomenal — they voted with an outpouring of financial support, over \$154,000 donated that night. The positive public responses continued throughout our opening week events, concluding with the ceremonial ribbon cutting on September 19, when we were joined by the many political and local leaders who have become DBG Champions. Since the Garden Gates Opened, we have welcomed over 1,000 guests, and in response to suggestions, we have expanded the days of operation to include Saturdays.

Just as a garden is never finished, the work of presenting a public garden is never finished. The Board, staff and dedicated volunteers have stepped up into the new routines of ensuring positive visitor experiences for our guests while continuing the maintenance of the gardens and volunteering for our open days. With our recently implemented Saturday openings, we need more volunteers to help staff the site on Saturday perhaps for two shifts 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. and 12 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Thank you all for dreaming of this space with us and for helping make it real. It has spoken to all of us. We now must let the Gardens speak to our visitors. We all must adjust to the challenges of offering our guests the opportunity to experience this very special public garden. We need your continued dedication and commitment. Thank you, Ray and Sheryl.

## Highlights of the Opening Events

**The DBG Grand Opening premiered with three major events** – The first event was DBG’s Grand Opening Dinner party on Thursday evening, September 12. This was followed by the public grand opening at 9 a.m. on Monday, September 16. The final event was the DBG - Bethany Beach-Fenwick Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting ceremony at 1 p.m. on Thursday, September 19. Those events took major efforts by many people, and you know who you are. We thank you!

There were also some important “background moments” with Piet Oudolf walking the meadow after his arrival on the September 11<sup>th</sup>; our informal “cook-out” dinner at Good Earth Market that evening; and before the dinner on the 12<sup>th</sup> Piet spent important afternoon time with Adrian Higgins, *The Washington Post*’s Gardening Writer discussing the Meadow Garden. Piet also spent some quality time with Brian Trader that afternoon. More on these background happenings later.



**Grand Opening Dinner on September 12<sup>th</sup>** – The festivities began at the September 12th Grand Opening Dinner, where over 340 guests gathered to commemorate the eight plus year journey to create a public botanic garden in Delaware. Guests of honor included former Governor Jack Markell and Carla Markell who serves as chair of the DBG Advisory Council. We thanked them for their support.



Carla Markell, Chair of DBG Advisory Council, addresses dinner guests with Sheryl Swed & Governor Jack Markell



Our other guest of honor at dinner was the internationally award winning master garden designer Piet Oudolf, who created the beautiful 2-acre Meadow that is receiving accolades from garden experts.

Piet thanked all our supporters and paid tribute to the Garden Steward Volunteers. He said, “I design the gardens, but it is the gardeners who must tend to the gardens and keep it for others to enjoy.” He said the meadow was in “good shape” and praised the volunteers and the past leadership of Gregg Tepper, former Director of Horticulture for his work. Then, Piet said he just met Brian Trader, new Deputy Executive Director and Director of Horticulture, and he was sure from their talks in the meadow that they would have a very good relationship in the future.

Piet Oudolf addresses dinner audience

Brian Trader has “hit the deck running” and has done

amazing things in both the gardens and in providing management insights from his experience at Longwood Gardens. We are so pleased that Piet and Brian have quickly established a solid working relationship.

This spectacular dinner party was sponsored by SODEL Concepts, Banks Wine & Spirits, Dogfish Head Brewery, and Coastal Tented Events. We thank them for a great dinner, seafood boat, appetizers and great drinks.

It was a very special time. Just as our 340 guests were about to sit down for dinner, a rainstorm lasted for about 15 minutes, followed by a faint rainbow. Our great SODEL Team led by Chef Ronnie Burkle, reset some of the wet tables and the delicious dinner proceeded as scheduled. The wet crowd seemed to bond together in this unique shared experience. Music by Vince Varrassi and Friends added to the celebration. It seemed like nobody wanted the evening to end.

The rainbow must have been a good sign because in the \$75,000 challenge, led again this year by Ron Bass & George Robbins, we raised over \$154,000 a record thanks to our wonderful dinner supporters. Ron Bass and George Robbins not only were our match challengers at the dinner, but also sponsored the Knoll in the Woodlands and helped host our public grand opening week.

We were pleased to have the multi- talented Michael Sprouse, as our Dinner Master of Ceremonies. Michael is a beach area celebrity artist and radio host and had the audience laughing and giving.



Brian Trader chats about Meadow Garden maintenance with Piet Oudolf and Ray Sander



A faint rainbow followed the hard rain



Coastal Tented Events sail tent kept everyone mostly dry during rainstorm



Docents at the Grand Opening Dinner with Piet Oudolf



SODEL Corporate Chef Ronnie Burkle



Emcee Michael Sprouse

After the very successful dinner, Ray and Sheryl sent out an email to the team that had worked so hard. They said in part,

*“Thanks to the entire DBG Team. We maintained our focus, we never wobbled, we each knew what we had to do and we each did it. Each of you know how you contributed to this success and you should enjoy the wonderful feeling of our shared achievement.*

*“Hopefully we will never forget that we all participated in an amazing project to create a public garden. We have overcome long odds. We have all given our time, talents and resources. Together we have succeeded. Together we will continue to make the Delaware Botanic Gardens a special place for our guests. On to opening week events and our garden’s future. Thank you all. Ray & Sheryl.”*

We give special thanks to our dinner sponsors, who are all listed at the end of this newsletter. We could not have done it without you!



Ray Sander & Piet Oudolf welcome dinner guests



Karen Dudley & Piet Oudolf before dinner



Cathy Anderson & Jeremy Hager



The Raw Bar Boat was a big hit!



The rainstorm lasted 15 minutes



Ron Bass standing & George Robbins seated to right  
The Challengers



Rodney Robinson & Carla Markell



Governor Markell, Sue Robinson & Speaker of the House  
Pete Schwarzkopf



Sam Cashdollar used as incentive to donate by  
Governor Markell



The rain did not bother Vincent Varrassi and Friends

**Public Grand Opening September 16 at 9 am** – Our first public guests were at the gate at 9:00 a.m. sharp. Our leadership team met them and escorted Sheldon and Karen to the Welcome Center. The

hospitality docents were all smiles as they checked-in our first guests! In short, the public grand opening week was a success thanks to our volunteers and staff.



Opening the Garden Gates on Day 1



Karen & Sheldon Schwartz (3rd & 5th from left) are greeted by Carol McCloud, Sheryl Swed, Brent Baker, and Ray Sander



Carol McCloud briefs docent team on day's events showed as admissions turned into new memberships.

During the public opening week, a daily team of 12 - 15 Volunteer hospitality docents welcomed over 640 guests. Our guests participated in special tours, lectures and a ladybug release. Thanks to a lot of detailed and intense volunteer training, organized by Vice President and Volunteer and Tour Coordinator Carol McCloud, we had a trouble free opening. Carol will describe in more detail the hospitality docent training, performance and tours in her comments.

Our volunteer hospitality docents shared their enthusiasm with our guests and it was magic. The guests' garden experience was very positive and it

showed as admissions turned into new memberships. One of the great outcomes of the public opening is a surge in new memberships. In our first two weeks, we signed up 42 new or renewed members. In fact, 25 of the new members initially paid admission and, after experiencing the Gardens, came back to the Welcome Center and requested that their admission be changed to memberships. Also, we had some very positive feedback from our visitors:

*"The mix of meadow and woodland gardens was delightful. Workers were helpful. Loved the photos for sale at the Welcome Center. We'll be back in the spring."*

*"Everyone was so pleasant and helpful."*

*"Everything was laid out beautifully. What a delight to have this wonderful garden in our own back yard. Many kudos to all who made this possible. I'm happy to be a new member."*





Margaret Kimmel instructs on Lady Bug release-Opening Day



Emily Randel shows daughters how to release Lady Bugs

**DBG / Chamber of Commerce Ribbon Cutting, Thursday, September 19 at 1 pm** – We hosted 100 guests at a DBG / Bethany Beach-Fenwick Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting in front of the Welcome Center. The Welcome Center deck became our ceremony stage. Before and after the ceremony, we had music provided by the Delaware Symphony Orchestra's brass quartet. The sun was shining, the wind was blowing slightly, and you could hear the brass quartet all the way to the woodlands.



The Delaware Symphony Brass Quartet played at the Ribbon Cutting

President Ray Sander and Executive Director Sheryl Swed were emcees at the ribbon cutting ceremony.



Ray Sander said, "Let's cut the ribbon!"

Ray began the ceremony by recognizing and thanking several key people including:

- Mark Davidson represented Pennoni Engineering in Milton. Ray said, "Pennoni took the garden from back of the envelope to sketches to engineering drawings and then took us through the approval and permitting process at the county and state levels. Chuck Pennoni's company, and Mark as project coordinator, did all this work pro-bono. We thank Pennoni."
- Cam Yorkston, DBG's Development Consultant - Yorkston Consulting. Ray said, "Cam was the only development person we went to that told us he would help us build a list of major donors, and he did just that. We raised \$3.5 million thanks in large part to Cam. He and his wife Kathy have been with us every step on our eight year journey."
- Non-profits in Sussex County were recognized by Ray. He said, "These non-profits are our partners in providing a great synergy of community services, including cultural services and a better quality of life in Sussex County." Ray recognized partner representatives present from Clear Space Theater, Easter Seals, Delaware Symphony Orchestra and the Center for Inland Bays.

Sheryl Swed said, "This is a dream come true." She then recognized and thanked:

- The DBG Board Members for their time, talent and treasure. Present were Board Members: Carol McCloud, Vice President and Volunteer Coordinator; Brent Baker, Secretary and Director of Communications; Tom Bason, Technology Advisor; Scott Thomas, Executive Director of Southern Delaware Tourism; Peter Carter DBG's Education Expert; Ron Bass our Dinner Challenger and major supporter; and Kathy Johnson, Treasurer.
- Brian Trader, Deputy Executive Director and Director of Horticulture
- Sam Cashdollar, Manager of Grounds and Facilities
- Jeremy Cole, staff at Grounds and Facilities
- Ray Bojarski our Chief Photographer and drone pilot
- The Bethany Beach-Fenwick Chamber of Commerce Team including Lauren Weaver and Fred Thomas
- Todd Lawson, Sussex County Administrator
- Brian Baull, Mayor of Dagsboro

Finally, Sheryl said, "I want to recognize all our volunteers who helped build our gardens. Give them a hand. Thank you all!"

Ray Sander introduced the guest speakers, including:

- Delaware Lt. Governor Bethany Hall Long. A Sussex County native, she congratulated the DBG Team and said,

*"You all worked so hard. I remember when I was first told about this plan. It was outlined on the face of a napkin." She said, "Governor Carney and I like it when we bring on new opportunities for education and economic growth to our state and county." She continued, "The best part of this garden is that it is located two miles from my mother's house where I grew up. When I was growing up on a farm near here, I was probably one of the few to have ridden my bicycle down Piney Neck Road. It is great day when partners come together to make this happen. Thanks to all of you at DBG. I look forward to the future - to see this garden become a cultural hub and bring so much vitality to our state and Sussex County. Thank you!"*

- State Senator Gerald Hocker said:

*"Today we celebrate this public garden built by the community for the community. I remember about eight years ago Susan Ryan and others visiting me. They said they had a dream to bring a botanic garden to Sussex County. You made it happen. I can't thank the volunteers enough because 37,000 estimated volunteer hours – we couldn't have opened this without you. In a community, once they have faith in someone they give - individuals have given about \$900,000 to the gardens. The business community has given about half a million dollars of in-kind services. This is what a leadership team does. You put the right people behind this garden and it becomes a reality. This land was once planned to be a sewer treatment facility. However, before that happened the land was donated to the Sussex County Land Trust. The Land Trust had faith in what this leadership team was doing and so they leased this land to the DBG for a dollar a year for 99 years. DBG was in the state's 2019 and 2020 Bond bills. The downstate legislators all fought to get Bond Bill funds for two different Sussex County non-profits - Freeman Stage and Delaware Botanic Gardens. We got \$300,000 over two years for Delaware Botanic Gardens in the Bond Bill, and we put DBG on the Grant – in-Aid Bill. When you give funds to a non-profit like this, which brings so much to a community - why would you not give them funds? Thank you."*

- State Representative Rich Collins said:

*"The dedication that you have shown, the number of volunteers, the leadership and the time keeping your nose to the grindstone is a wonderful thing. We have a lot of change in Sussex County and some people do not like that change. But everyone agrees that this garden is a very positive change. I look forward to many years of success for these gardens. Thank you."*

- Sussex County Councilman John Rieley said:

*"When I first heard of this project I was the President of the Georgetown Chamber of Commerce and my unspoken reaction was 'Boy that is a heavy lift'. It seemed like such a massive project. However, here we are. It's a testament that nothing succeeds like persistence. You have to have a vision, and they had a vision. The county has backed this and*

*it's a higher and better use than a sewer treatment plant. We in Sussex County are lucky to have this. It is going to be a real gem in our crown. I applaud all your efforts and thank you."*



Ray Sander & Sheryl Swed



DE Lt. Governor Bethany Hall Long



State Senator Gerald Hocker



State Representative Rich Collins



Sussex County Councilman John Rieley



Mark Chura, Sussex County Land Trust

- Mark Chura, Sussex County Land Trust said:

*"First, I would like to recognize two people at the Land Trust who were critical to getting this done. First is Dennis Forney who was the long-time chair of the Land Trust Board, and still serves as treasurer. Dennis was in on the early meeting with the gardens' people saying we have this wonderful idea and we need a site. They were looking at a site further east than this. Dennis realized we had this property here and listening to the garden people he said, 'Boy do I have a place for you.' It was Dennis' vision that helped pull this together. So, it's one thing to have a vision; then you have to translate that into action and tie down all the details. That task fell to my predecessor, Wendy Baker. Wendy worked with the county, members of the*

*Board and Sheryl Swed to compose the lease. It was an enormous amount of work. One final thought about land preservation in Sussex County. When we support partnerships and as we move forward, it is important to be able to point to examples - to say this is a success - look at what we did here, and please help us to do more. This property, and what has been done here by you, really allows us, as a land entity and our partners, to say look you can protect land in Sussex County and open it to the public for important public purposes. Delaware Botanic Gardens is a great example, which helps us in land preservation. So, of all the things you have done this is another thing you have done. Thank you."*

## Grand Opening – Behind the Scenes Notes

**Piet arrives at airport - goes directly to DBG** – Piet was greeted by Board members Ray Sander, Carol McCloud, Sheryl Swed, Brent Baker and Ron Bass. Also welcoming Piet back to the gardens were Brian Trader, Angela and Kurt Schaab, Jan Poli and George Robbins.

This was a chance for the Volunteer Task Leaders to show Piet the work they had done to prepare the meadow for the Grand Opening.

During Piet's review of the Meadow Garden, he told Ray Sander that the garden was in good shape. He thanked the volunteer gardeners for taking good care of the meadow.



Carol & Piet meet with Volunteer leaders, Angela Schaab, Kurt Schaab & Jan Poli



Piet addresses board members and volunteers

**DBG Informal Cook Out** – Wednesday evening, September 11 there was a small, informal gathering of Board Members and Volunteers at Sue Ryan's Good Earth Market. Ray and Piet thanked the volunteers for their devoted work in the gardens and Ray welcomed Piet back to Sussex County, Delaware.

Piet and Brian Trader, Deputy Executive Director and Director of Horticulture, had the chance to walk the site together in the morning and afternoon of the September 12 and talked at length about the state of the Meadow Garden and plans for the future.

**Piet and Adrian Higgins in Meadow** – On the afternoon before the dinner, Adrian Higgins, *The Washington Post's* Gardening Writer, arrived at the gardens to report on the Delaware Botanic Gardens Grand Opening.

Piet Oudolf showed Adrian Higgins his Meadow Garden design drawings before they walked in the meadow.

Adrian then explored the Meadow Garden with Piet and Brian. Later, Adrian interviewed Ray Sander and Brian Trader and was the Garden's guest at the Grand Opening Dinner.



Piet briefs Adrian Higgins with Sheryl, Ray & Brian

Adrian then explored the Meadow Garden with Piet and Brian.

**Washington Post Coverage, “How a soybean field became a buzzy botanic garden”** – On September 26 Adrian Higgin’s one and ½ page *Washington Post* article, with five of his color photos was published, headlined, “In an unlikely place, a soybean field became a botanic garden.” Higgins wrote:

*“In September, the garden is more a medley of textures and end-of-season earth tones than an explosion of color – that occurred over the summer – but it’s power and depth are not subdued....”*

Higgins continued,

*“Oudolf’s gardens function on two basic levels. Broadly, they are a canvas of textures, colors and horizontal lines. Closer up, the plants are in a dance with their immediate neighbors. It’s a hoedown that changes with each step, as your viewpoint shifts, and it’s at this level that you see value in September of seemingly “dead” material — that is, the ghostly dark remnants of the yarrow blooms of June, the blackened seed heads of coneflowers or the declining remnants of the architectural eryngium known as rattlesnake master. They convey a moribund beauty that is part of what is known as the fifth season, the period of top-growth decline in early to mid-fall as the perennials retreat into the ground for the winter.*

We thank Adrian for his keen gardening insight and sharing of his thoughts and his wonderful photographs.



Brian & Ray with Jimmy Hoppa & Lisa Bryant on WBOC’s Delmarva Life

**DBG In the News** – We want to thank the DBG Communications Team for a wide range of publicity the Gardens received as part of the media buildup to Opening the Garden Gates. This summer and fall, we launched a wide-ranging plan of news media coverage. We had fantastic coverage from *The Washington Post* to *AAA Magazine* to regional newspapers (*The Cape Gazette* and *The Coastal Point*) to several Delaware radio station interviews, and Delmarva regional TV stations. TV coverage

included; WBOC-TV (CBS), WRDE-TV (NBC) and WMDT- 47 (ABC). Ray and Brian had a great interview on WBOC-TV's "Delmarva Life" program, which was seen throughout the Delmarva region. We also worked online media coverage in such garden focused blogs as "The Garden Diaries" by Claire Jones.

We executed a multi-media advertising and public relations campaign and our public recognition is very high. When our first guests arrived, we asked them how they heard about DBG, and the answers often referred to our media coverage. For example, our first public guests – Sheldon & Karen Schwartz from Ocean View had read about the DBG in *The Coastal Point* and had taped the news article on their refrigerator to be sure they were at the gardens at 9 a.m. on September 16<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to all who were involved in the "Open the Gates" media campaign.



Tom and Sheryl discuss Website

**Website is DBG Information Central** – Our website (delawaregardens.org) is still the central up-to-date Information hub for DBG. The entire site has been refurbished as we transitioned to open and operate the gardens. This was a major task led by Tom Bason, our technology and online advisor. We want to thank Tom for all he does for DBG. Tom sends out our news releases electronically to the media. He did the research on what point of sale (POS) system we would use and has ensured the system is up and ready to go. The Welcome Center's Internet and phone lines, as well as our Wi-Fi were all

coordinated by Tom. All our electronic communications efforts pass through Tom's capable hands. We thank Tom – he is our true technology champion.

**Visitors** – Even before we officially opened, we have hosted hundreds of visitors from Girl Scouts to University of Delaware Landscape Design Students to U.S. Representative Lisa Blunt Rochester and U.S. Senator Tom Carper. Even when we are closed, we are always open for special guests and groups.



Senator Tom Carper with Ray



University of Delaware Landscape Design Students



Girl Scout Troop 20566



Congresswomen Lisa Blunt Rochester with Sheryl and Ray

## Volunteers & Tours Update

News from Carol McCloud, DBG Vice President

**Volunteers** – When I first came to the Delaware Botanic Gardens as a volunteer, it was in early 2016. DBG gave an informational presentation and mini tour of the property to inform the community about the project. After a few minutes on the site, I was hooked, and I’ve been volunteering ever since. To see the site evolve from a barren piece of land to our Phase I garden completion has been an incredible journey and labor of love. Like myself, our volunteers at DBG are dedicated and passionate about the Gardens. To date, we have logged over 15,000 Garden related volunteer hours since 2016.



Visitor talks to Carol McCloud

As Garden Steward and Docent Coordinator, I am once again in awe of our volunteers. What a privilege it is to volunteer alongside these wonderful volunteers. We’ve volunteered hand-in-hand with our staff, Brian Trader, Director of Horticulture, Sam Cashdollar, Maintenance & Facilities Manager and Jeremy Cole, Gardener, to achieve the goal of Opening the Garden Gates. What an incredibly successful month we enjoyed in September. Because of our volunteer contributions, all our gardens were stunning for our Grand Opening Dinner September 12, 2019 and our Grand Opening week of September 16, 2019. We are an amazing team!

There is not enough space in this Newsletter for me to begin to “Thank” all our volunteers for their continued dedication and love for the Gardens. However, I would like to recognize our task Leaders, Craig Haggerty, Jan Poli and Angela Schaab as well as Margaret Kimmel for going above and beyond



as volunteers. Yes, it truly does take a village to build a Botanic Garden and we have. We are all proud that we achieved our dream.

Many of our Garden Stewards have also become Docents for our Welcome Center. We held several training sessions for our Docents prior to our Grand Opening. Our last training session included a fun-filled activity of role-play as we invited friends and family to visit the gardens as guests prior to opening. This was a fun day of learning and practicing our guest services. Our Docents interacted with the guests just like they are doing now that we are open. Our feedback from garden guests is that our Docents have made the guest experience extraordinary. Their smiles, interaction and knowledge of the gardens have created a lasting and positive experience.

Also, as part of their training, several of the Docents learned to use our new point of sale system. I'd like to acknowledge and thank our IT team Tom Bason, Alison Willocks and Kathy Johnson (Treasurer) who trained our Docents on this computer system.



Kathy Johnson, DBG Treasurer, checks point of sale system with docents Kathy Lewis, Craig Haggerty & Donna Buono



Welcome Center docents Karen King, Donna Buono, & Jane Carroll with Point of Sale Advisor Alison Willocks

**Tours** – Prior to opening, we offered a series of small individual guest tours (20 or less guests) to the public. Since September 16, we have offered daily guest tours at 10:00 a.m. each day that we were open. You can go to our website ([delawaregardens.org](http://delawaregardens.org)) to make a reservation. The cost of the tour is \$10 plus the price of admission. If you come to the gardens without a tour reservation, you can sign-up and pay for the tour and admission if there is an availability. If your business, garden club or other organization would like to know more about group tour availability or to book a group tour, please contact me, Carol McCloud at ([carol.mccloud@delawaregardens.org](mailto:carol.mccloud@delawaregardens.org)). The cost is \$25 per guest.



Carol McCloud leading guided tour of gardens

## Horticultural Happenings

Brian Trader, Deputy Executive Director and Director of Horticulture



Brian Trader, Deputy Executive Director and Director of Horticulture

For my first newsletter column, I would be remiss if I didn't thank the entire Delaware Botanic Garden team for welcoming me warmly into the family. It has been a tremendous pleasure working alongside the dedicated and passionate volunteers who've made the gardens a reality. The Board has been gracious and trusting and their vision for the garden is steady. Sam Cashdollar and Jeremy Cole have been amazing, and I'd be lost without their ingenuity and tireless efforts. In short, the transition into my new role has been quick and busy!

For this and future columns, I'd like to share a little bit of our progress in the gardens and focus ahead to new and exciting projects and developments. While we have made great strides in the garden over the summer months and we need to celebrate these accomplishments, a garden is always changing, and this evolution keeps guests returning and all of us enthused.

A few victories to celebrate from the summer:

We won a significant battle against the weeds. This wouldn't have been possible without our garden steward volunteers, especially battling rogue aster species and hybrid seedlings of *Schizachyrium scoparium* in the Meadow Garden. In the weeks leading to our grand opening, our Volunteer Task Leader, Angela Schaab lead the "editing" of the garden to ensure integrity of Piet Oudolf's design. We discovered a new disease in our Meadow Garden this summer, Southern Blight. This disease is especially challenging in our garden because it infects a wide range of plant species and is difficult to control. While we have been successful in the removal of infected plants, we continue to monitor for spread.

In August, we worked closely with Board Member, Jeremy Hager and his business Coastal Plant Care to identify and remove any dangerous trees and branches from our Woodland Gardens. Jeremy and his team worked an entire week in the woodlands to ensure safety of our paths for our guests. Our volunteers partnered with Sam Cashdollar and Jeremy Cole to use logs from the Woodland Gardens to restore our pathways and to create parking bumpers in our newly finished parking area. A railing was constructed and installed in the Woodland Gardens by Sam and Jeremy Cole to allow safe access to the Knoll Garden using our stairs.

The overall aesthetics and ambiance of the garden and Welcome Center was led by Volunteer Task Leader, Jan Poli. The addition of plantings, floral arrangements, and planters to welcome our guests has been well received and provides seasonal interest for all to enjoy. Our Volunteer Task Leader, Margaret Kimmel worked collaboratively to ensure we had beautiful maps and handouts for our guests to enjoy our gardens.

A final victory is our hosting of a very special group of Freshman Landscape Architecture Students from the University of Delaware. As a part of a new program, the Bridge Program, thirty students and several faculty from the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences enjoyed a tour of Delaware Botanic Gardens and a Master Planning workshop delivered by Ray Sander and Sheryl Swed.

Looking ahead, I am ecstatic to enhance the gardens' mission of education with projects in winter and early spring. One key project in partnership with the Delaware Department of Natural Resources (DNREC) and the Center for Inland Bays (CIB) is the installation of a living shoreline and viewing platform on our Pepper Creek waterfront. This shoreline will help prevent erosion and create important ecological habitat to protect and restore our valuable resource. A component of this project is to implement different living shoreline strategies to be used for evaluation and education.

Another exciting project is the preparation, design and planting of the Rhyne Garden (our parking area) and the storm-water swell located parallel to Piney Neck Road. We have been fortunate to receive a grant from DNREC to plant these areas and reduce water infiltration from our parking and roadways. The grant also includes an education component in support of our mission and vision.

In addition to these projects, we will do some planting and design enhancements of the Meadow, Knoll, and Folly Gardens. These plantings will extend season-long interest for these special gardens and entice visitors year-round. As we add to our garden plantings, we will continue to curate our existing plant collections. We have been working closely with Garden Task Leader, Craig Haggerty, to procure IrisBG and geolocation resources to map, accession and better develop Delaware Botanic Gardens' plant records. The ability to curate our living plant collections will enable us to achieve our mission of education and substantiate our role as a botanic garden.

On the topic of education, we are keen to begin outlining future programming and partnerships to amplify this pillar of our mission. We envision outreach through community lectures, college/university visits, Girl and Boy Scouts projects, engagement with FFA chapters, and collaborative workshops with industry. We hope to launch and develop continuing education and professional development courses and programs. Immersion of formal education in the gardens could support high school cooperative education, university internships, and student capstone projects. A final opportunity for education is research partnerships with faculty and local institutions to study ecology, plant diversity, and even plant trialing.

There is much to be thankful for in this season and even more to be excited about in the future. We look forward to seeing you in our gardens!



Upper section of Piet Oudolf Meadow Garden August 2019



Lower section of Piet Oudolf Meadow Garden and Welcome Center August 2019

## **We Opened the Garden Gates – Thank you!**

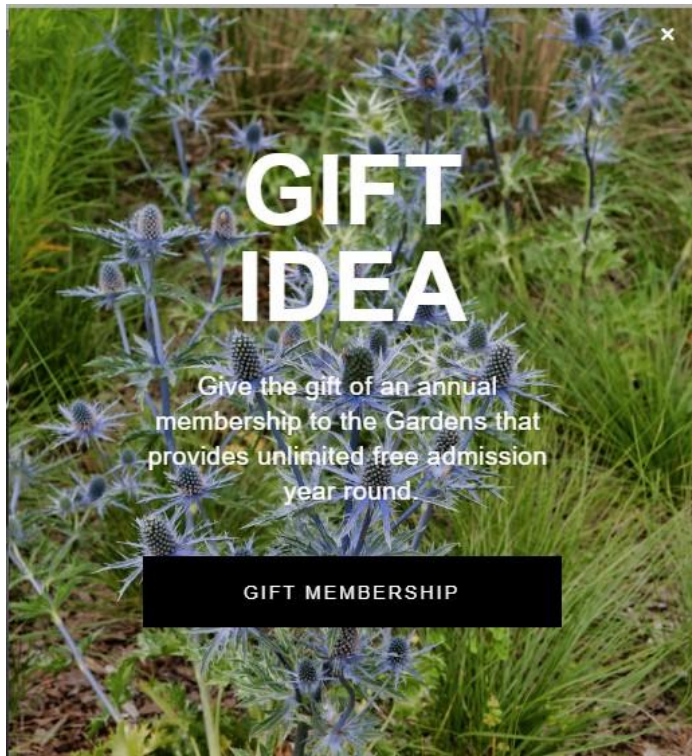
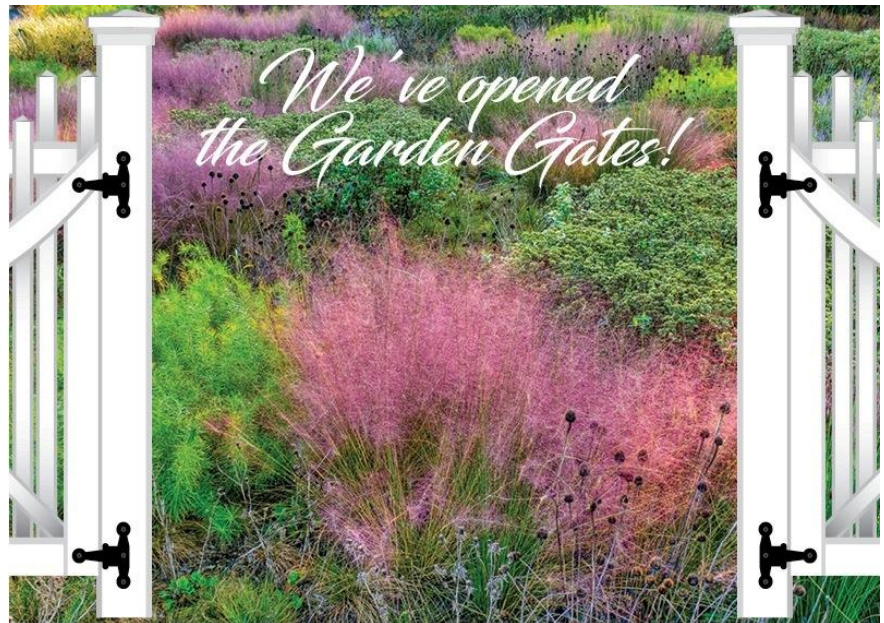
All photographs by Ray Bojarski except as cited.

\*Photograph of Sheryl Swed and Ray Sander by Taylor Goebel

Give a gift that grows and grows.  
Donate online to DBG by going to [delawaregardens.org/donate](http://delawaregardens.org/donate).

You may also send a check to:

Delaware Botanic Gardens  
P.O. Box 1390  
Ocean View, DE 19970



You may also give the gift of a Delaware Botanic Gardens annual membership to the child, gardener or nature lover in your family.

Give a gift membership online by going to [delawaregardens.org/gift-a-membership](http://delawaregardens.org/gift-a-membership).

## Thank You Partners and Sponsors



### Honorary Co-Chairs

**Carla & Jack Markell**

### \$75,000 Challenge

**Ron Bass & George Robbins**

### BLUE LUPINE SPONSORS

Bancroft Construction  
Ron Bass & George Robbins  
Blessing Greenhouses and Compost  
Facility, Inc.  
Town of Dagsboro  
George & Lynch  
Carol McCloud  
Nickle Electric  
Edward V. A. Kussy  
Pennoni  
Ray Sander & Sheryl Swed  
Serendipity Quilt Shop  
Sussex County Conservation District  
Sussex County Council  
Sussex County Land Trust  
Yorkston Consulting

### GENTIAN SPONSORS

Baird Mandalas Brockstedt LLC  
Barefoot Gardeners Garden Club  
Brent & Malinda Baker  
Carol & Tom Bason  
Peter E Carter  
Envirotech  
Good Earth Market & Organic Farm  
Steve & Valerie Parsons

Village Improvement Association of  
Rehoboth  
WN Builders  
Jane Van Remoortere  
Jane Rice  
Joan Sharp  
Robert & Betty Shellenbarger

### SUNFLOWER SPONSORS

Junis Adkins  
Atlantic Bodywork Center  
Babikow Wholesale Nursery  
Cavano's Perennials, Inc.  
Ray Bojarski & Diann Corsnitz  
Coastal Plant Care  
Coastal Point  
Susan Crampton Davis  
Delaware Electric Coop  
Faith Denault  
Craig Haggerty  
Hoffman Nursery  
Jefferson, Urrian, Doane & Sterner,  
P.A.  
Lake | Flato Architects  
Barbara Peters  
Jan Poli

Rodney & Sue Robinson  
Robinson Anderson Summers, Inc  
Angela & Kurt Schaab  
SEA Studio, LLC  
Kelly Sheridan & Deb Quinton

### BIRD'S FOOT VIOLET SPONSORS

Margaret & Larry Brian  
Peter & Frances Buttenheim  
Salon on Central  
I G Burton & Company  
Sam & Cyndi Cashdollar  
Dagsboro Paint & Wallpaper  
Fred & Judy Dayhoff  
Delmarva Environmental, Inc.  
Gateway Garden Center  
Nikki Foy Designs  
Fulton Bank  
Jackson & Erik Haggerty  
Kathy Johnson  
Robert & Karen King  
M Insurance Services, LLC  
Marylinda Maddi  
New Moon Nursery  
North Creek Nursery  
Brian Trader & Tyler Monteith  
Alison Willocks



DELAWARE  
BOTANIC  
GARDENS  
AT PEPPER CREEK

www.delawaregardens.org

## Capital Campaign Gift/Pledge Form Donor Information

Please print name(s) to be used in all acknowledgements: \_\_\_\_\_

Email 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Email 2: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Company/Foundation (If applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

My employer will match this gift/pledge  My employer's matching gift form is enclosed  Please keep this gift/pledge anonymous

### Gift/Pledge Information

I/we pledge a total of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to be applied in its entirety to Delaware Botanic Gardens. I/we understand that Delaware Botanic Gardens is relying on the timely receipt of all pledge payments.

A single gift. Payment information is below

Equal annual payments of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ over  2  3 years; Start date \_\_\_\_\_

This gift is in honor of \_\_\_\_\_ or in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

### Check Information

Enclosed is my check for a gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ made payable to Delaware Botanic Gardens

### Credit Card Information.

Please charge my gift to my credit card.  Visa  MasterCard  American Express

Delaware Botanic Gardens has authorization to automatically charge my credit card when scheduled payment is due.

Cardholder's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ CVV# \_\_\_\_\_

Billing Address (if different from above): \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact me regarding:  Gifts of Appreciated Stock  Naming opportunities

Planned giving opportunities  Memorial Gifts

**Please return to:** Delaware Botanic Gardens  
P. O. Box 1390  
Ocean View, DE 19970



DELAWARE  
BOTANIC  
GARDENS  
AT PEPPER CREEK

Copyright © 2012–2019 Delaware Botanic Gardens, Inc. All Rights Reserved  
P.O. Box 1390 | Ocean View, DE 19970  
Member, American Public Gardens Association