

2015 Year in Review

Friends of
Laurelwood Arboretum

Connecting People with Nature



Our Mission

To preserve Laurelwood Arboretum as an oasis for the enjoyment of nature and to provide opportunities for environmental awareness through educational programs, community involvement and outreach activities.

Our Vision

To connect people with nature

Our Core Values

Stewardship – Commitment to the conservation of this treasured oasis for present and future generations

Environmental Education – Engaging the public through ecological workshops, programs and activities

Horticulture – Pursuing excellence in landscape design and horticultural practices

Teamwork – Realizing our mission through the cooperative efforts of the FOLA Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, Wayne Township officials and employees, community organizations and members of the public

Leadership – Cultivation of emerging leaders

Community – Promoting involvement through membership, volunteerism, events, programs, tours, social media and outreach

Financial Responsibility – Ensuring the future of Laurelwood Arboretum through effective fiscal management and fundraising initiatives

Organizational Excellence – Commitment to the highest standards of professional conduct

FOLA was incorporated in 2003 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

In 2007, a partnership was formed between FOLA and the Township of Wayne.

FOLA assumed responsibility for maintaining and improving the arboretum.

The FOLA Board of Directors oversees the activities of more than 200 volunteers, who contribute more than 9,000 hours of work in the arboretum each year. FOLA is funded by membership dues, plant sales, grants and donations from individuals and businesses.

Message from the President



Knippenberg Center for Education

This has been a transformational year for Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum. We dedicated the Knippenberg Center for Education and the Native Plant Demonstration Garden and completed our Educational Greenhouse. We now have an indoor space for programs and meetings, as well as handicapped-accessible restrooms. We have a dedicated greenhouse for horticultural displays and hands-on educational activities. And we have a Native Plant Demonstration Garden that serves as landscaping for the Knippenberg Center but also has the educational purpose of teaching adults and children about the importance of native plants and their use in their home gardens.

FOLA volunteers updated the self-guided tour brochure and created three new educational self-guided tours and a brochure for the Native Plant Demonstration garden. These and other information for visitors are available at the Knippenberg Center, at the notice board near the parking lot, and on our website www.laurelwoodarboretum.org.

The arboretum's parking areas have been completed, and we have the requisite number of spots for handicapped parking. Thanks to a grant from the Passaic County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust, the deteriorated Long Valley greenhouse has been replaced by a new modular workshop facility for repair and maintenance projects.

The number of visitors to the arboretum has been in the thousands each week. To accommodate all this activity, we added two part-time seasonal employees—an Office Manager, who is at the Knippenberg Center Tuesdays through Fridays from noon to 4 pm, and a Greeter, who is there weekends from noon to 4 pm. Both worked from April to November. Our weekend greeter keeps track of those who stop in at the Knippenberg Center. Some days she counted more than 150 visitors.

We are pleased to report a substantial growth in membership in 2015. We had 350 members at the end of 2015 and hope to reach 400 next year. Our members are the mainstay of our organization. They represent a constituency that supports our mission and helps to secure the future of Laurelwood Arboretum as a unique natural preserve in Wayne Township.

We have a core group of volunteers both onsite and behind the scenes. FOLA volunteers logged a total of 9,252 hours in 2015. The estimated value of these volunteer hours amounts to \$237,591. In addition to our Master Gardener volunteers, people have been stopping by or calling to tell us they would like to volunteer to help support our work in any way they can. This is great news because so much of FOLA's work is done by volunteers in the gardens and on our many committees.

One important project that is being managed by volunteers is plant identification. This is critical if we are to position ourselves as an arboretum. In 2015, the Rhododendron Study Team concluded the first phase of its project to identify and tag all of the arboretum's rhododendrons. A larger Plant Identification Committee has embarked on a long-term effort to identify important plantings throughout the arboretum, catalog and computerize the information for research purposes.

With the opening of the Knippenberg Center in July, we were able to schedule programs and tours without having to cancel due to inclement weather. FOLA sponsored five programs for adults, four hands-on workshops, a monthly children's story time, monthly gardeners' journal meetings, and a number of programs for scouts and brownies. These were very well attended and attracted new members.

This was a successful fundraising year. Many business and individual supporters made donations for the Knippenberg Center Dedication brochure. We also launched a Patio Paver project to raise funds for a beautiful walkway around center. These are one-time income sources, so we need to develop additional fundraisers to bolster our annual budget.

Friends of Laurelwood is indebted to the many people and businesses who made in-kind donations to the Knippenberg Center complex this year—the Chalfin family and Samuelson Furniture for a complete suite of handsome indoor furnishings, Haeier Corporation for the high-definition televisions, NBC Studios for the office furniture, architects Louis A. Salamone and Gianni Intilli, engineers William Darmstatter and Andrew Lawn, contractors David Trinidad and GT Minnitto, interior designer Penny Tarpey, Faber Brothers Broadloom, Wayne Tile, Chris Kelly for the security system, graphic designer Peter McHugh, Jones Hardware, Subway, Strawberry Blossom Home and Garden Center, and Virtual Forum, Inc. for computer and information technology services.

Finally, we wish to thank Wayne Mayor Christopher Vergano for his unflagging and enthusiastic support of Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum, the Wayne Township Council for authorizing the funds we need to manage the arboretum, the Passaic County Board of Chosen Freeholders for their continuing support, and Ray Egatz, Chairman of the Passaic County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust for helping us to secure the grants that are so important to us.

Our 2016 Board meetings are the 3rd Thursday of each month at 5:00 pm at the Knippenberg Center, except for January, February and March when they are in the Mayor's Conference room. Board meetings are always open to the public.

Alice Moskowitz

President, Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum

Executive Director's Report



Vinca Volunteers

- **Volunteers** - Volunteer days at Laurelwood Arboretum are Tuesdays and Fridays. At the start of each week I send out an “email blast” to nearly 150 volunteers to tell them the plans for the coming week. The Tuesday group averaged 14 volunteers, and the Friday group numbered eight on average. Tuesday volunteers end the morning with a snack “Dorothy Knippenberg style” – cheese and crackers in the Pavilion.

While our volunteers are pruning, planting, weeding and mulching, we try to make it an educational experience. For example, during the fall planting of spring-blooming bulbs (1,850 daffodils, fritillaria and allium) they learned to identify different bulbs and be aware of tops vs. bottom, time of bloom, color combinations, deer resistance, and proper planting techniques. They were also given a Rutgers Fact Sheet on spring-blooming bulbs. Other “training and work” programs included soil erosion control during vinca planting, lilac pruning, deer resistant perennial planting, and native plant groupings by sun and soil requirements.

Laurelwood would not look as gorgeous as it does without the help of our volunteers. They all deserve our thanks and recognition. Volunteer hours in 2015 equaled 9,252! This year, we honored one of our special volunteers, Tom Hennessey, with an engraved Knippenberg Center patio paver to thank him for all the work he has done in the arboretum with his John Deere tractor.

Corporate work days, service groups, plant societies, and William Paterson University college students have also contributed time and friendly help. These groups included the Marriott Corporation, Columbia Bank, Benway School, the North American Rock Garden Society, Boy Scouts, Lion's Club and two interns from William Paterson.

The FOLA Board of Directors is a very involved group of volunteers who are dedicated to the management of Laurelwood Arboretum. About 25 committees are led by FOLA board members. A small sampling includes Plant Identification, Tour Guides, Education, Site, Greeters, Fundraising, Membership, Donations, Art Show, Plant Sale and Greenhouse. Laurelwood Arboretum would not be the success that it is without this energetic Board of Directors.

- **Participation in Special Events** - Laurelwood Arboretum participated in several promotional programs this year: SpringFest, New Jersey Flower and Garden Show, William Paterson University Green-A-Fair, Wayne Day, and Holiday Open House at Skylands.
- **Challenges** - Problems we dealt with this year included pine sawfly on two-needled pines (controlled with soapy water sprays), hemlock wooly adelgid and scale control, drought, deer, voles, diseased or damaged trees, and stream and pond remediation.
- **Guests** - We hosted the following groups: Brownies, Girl Scouts, North American Rock Garden Society, local teachers, League of Women Voters, William Paterson professors, and the New Jersey Botanical Garden staff.
- **Our Staff** - Weekly meetings with the FOLA Executive Committee and Site Manager and Horticultural Manager Joan Scott-Miller allowed us to set priorities for maintenance and improvement projects. Our seasonal gardeners, Head Gardener Eddy Lantiqua and Assistant Gardener Felix Fernandez, worked diligently to keep Laurelwood looking its best.
- **New, New, New** - A ribbon-cutting Dedication Ceremony opened the long-awaited Knippenberg Center for Education. It's a treat to see the expression on visitors' faces as they enter our lovely building. We have had several educational programs in the building since the July Dedication, with many more planned for next year.

Our new state-of-the-art greenhouse has hosted several programs and will overwinter plants for our spring plant sale. Work benches, including a child-sized bench and a potting area, complete the greenhouse.

Two grants enabled Laurelwood Arboretum to design and plant a Native Plant Educational Garden just outside the Knippenberg Center for Education. I spent the winter and spring analyzing the site for sun/shade and wet/dry soil conditions and drawing up a landscape plan. The staff and volunteers removed or relocated small non-native plants in the spring. New plant material was installed by a hired crew. Plants were labeled. A graceful paved path was built through the 5,000-square-foot garden. Two "faux bois" benches were placed at the end of the paths.

Elaine Fogerty

Executive Director, Friends of Laurelwood Arboretum

Accomplishments

- **Knippenberg Center for Education** dedicated on July 19. This was funded by grants from the Passaic County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust and Wayne Township's Open Space Trust. It was also made possible by the support of the Wayne Department of Parks and Recreation and the Water and Sewer Department, as well as the efforts of FOLA's board of directors and its many dedicated volunteers.
- **Native Plant Demonstration Garden**, funded by grants from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust and the Ira A. Roschelle, MD Family Foundation, was dedicated on October 24. This garden serves as the landscaping for the center. A full-color brochure is available and an interpretive sign welcomes visitors. We are planning educational programs focused on the importance of native plants in our environment and their use in home landscapes.



Native Plant Demonstration Garden

- **Educational Greenhouse** completed, funded by the Passaic County Open Space and Farmland Preservation Trust. The greenhouse provides space for educational programs and displays.
- **Office Manager** joined our staff of seasonal employees. Her duties include scheduling tours, programs, weddings, photo shoots and other events; answering telephone and email inquiries; bookkeeping; filing; and welcoming visitors.
- **Weekend Greeter**, a seasonal, part-time employee, welcomes visitors on Saturdays and Sundays.
- **Rhododendron Identification Project** to insure the continuation and improvement of the Knippenberg horticultural legacy. Archival photos and journals are being used to establish location and authenticity of plant materials, and rhododendrons have been labeled and their locations mapped.
- **Exotic Tree Tour** developed to be used by visitors as a self-guided or guided tour, supplementing the existing General Tour and Native Tree Tour.
- **Resource Library** created to house and catalog Knippenberg books and archival materials and horticultural books.

- **South Rock Garden Restoration Project** continued in an effort to bring Dorothy Knippenberg's favorite garden back to its original condition. The project is being managed by the New Jersey Rock Garden Society and FOLA volunteers.



South Rock Garden Restoration

- **Comprehensive data system** implemented to manage FOLA membership, donations, volunteers, and event registrations.
- **Security increased** in the arboretum with additional cameras and signs. This has resulted in a significant improvement, with almost no thefts and minimal damage to plants or structures.

Administration

In November, FOLA elected two new members to a 1-year term on the Board of Directors to replace Peter Lowry who resigned as treasurer and board member John Hegrans, who also resigned.

Board of Directors 2015

Alice Moskowitz – President
 Jim McHugh – 1st Vice President
 Carol Huber – 2nd Vice President
 Peter Lowry – Treasurer
 Ruth Hayden – Recording Secretary
 Alex Fadynich
 Barbara Hegrans

Margaret Kerstner
 Bill Mains
 Sara McHugh
 Roland Reynolds
 Ray Vanaria
 Rick Wild

Membership

Membership is currently 350. Of that number, 216 are from Wayne. **We now have 13 Lifetime members. We are particularly proud of our rate of membership retention, which reflects a strong base of support for FOLA.** Throughout the year many members made contributions to FOLA over and above their membership dues (including scheduled monthly donations).

- In the coming year, we will continue to focus both on retention and on attracting new members.
- We started our membership year with a *“Thank You”* program for FOLA members and Master Gardeners attended by more than 70 people. The program featured a talk on, “Medicinal Plants of the Civil War” presented by Dr. Lesley Parness, Superintendent of Horticultural Education at the Morris County Park Commission and president of the Garden State Gardens Consortium.
- In a successful effort to enroll new members and encourage current members to renew, we had a membership table at the spring plant sale, Wayne Day, all tours and programs, special volunteer events, the Volunteer Recognition Luncheon and our Annual Meeting.
- We kept the Notice Board at the arboretum supplied with membership materials and remittance envelopes throughout the year.
- Substantial growth in membership expected with the opening of the Knippenberg Center, which will offer an array of community activities and educational programs.
- Our membership committee welcomes new members with ideas for increasing membership in FOLA and reaching out to new constituencies.

Tours

Three new tours were created in 2015. The Plant ID committee created a **Native Tree Tour** and an **Exotic Tree Tour**, each with an educational brochure. In addition, fact sheet notebooks were created for each tour to further educate the tour guides. A **General Tour** and descriptive brochure were also created that feature the primary buildings and gardens. All brochures are available at the Notice Board and at www.laurelwoodarboretum.org.

FOLA had volunteer tour guide training sessions throughout the season. These were well attended, and there are now 15 people who can give one or all of the tours.

There were **six public tour** opportunities, with a total of approximately 400 attendees.

More than **10 private tours** were given to local recreation groups, schoolchildren, scout groups, senior citizens and municipal, state and county groups, with approximately 200 attendees in total.

The Lions Club of Wayne donated a second motorized cart to FOLA. These enable us to provide an opportunity for the elderly and physically challenged to experience the arboretum.



Touring in the Motorized Cart

Education

With the opening of the Knippenberg Center for Education, FOLA was able to expand its program offerings. This was a highly successful initiative with an average of 30 participants at each program. Approximately 450 people attended programs in 2015.

The membership benefit of free programs was continued. Though most participants were members, each program brought in several new memberships and donations.

Meetings were also held with William Paterson University educators to investigate joint programming, opportunities for interns and education initiatives.

Programs:

Medicinal Plants of the Civil War – Dr. Lesley Parness, Director of Education/Frelinghuysen Arboretum – Program for Members

Native Plants of New Jersey – Elaine Fogerty, Executive Director of Laurelwood Arboretum – FOLA Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon

Medicinal Weed Walk through Laurelwood Arboretum – Herbalist Robin Rose Bennett

Fun Family Butterfly Program – Rick Mikula, “The Butterfly Guy”

Fall Bird Migration – Patrick Scheuer, Director, NJ Audubon Society’s Lorrimer Sanctuary



Rick Mikula, “The Butterfly Guy”

Monthly Series:

Children’s Story Time – Nature book and project – Margaret Kerstner and Sara McHugh, retired teachers

Gardener’s Journal – Horticultural Discussion – FOLA volunteers Dawn Healey, Bonnie Joachim

Workshops:

Perennial Plant Division – Elaine Fogerty

Medicinal Herb Preparation – Robin Rose Bennett

Wreath Making from Scratch – William Joachim, retired floral designer



Perennial Plant Division

Scout Educational Programs included several workshops and tours led by Sara McHugh with cub scout and brownie troops working on nature badges.

Community Outreach

The FOLA website www.laurelwoodarboretum.org was updated, improved and expanded with new menu items and information. Website traffic increased, with close to 75% new visitors.

We also created a Facebook page and are encouraging people to “like” us on Facebook and “share” our postings. In addition, we sent eblasts to our members and supporters to keep them informed of upcoming programs and events.

The Knippenberg Center Dedication Brochure was sent to all members and advertisers and distributed to libraries, realtors and other places in Wayne. Copies are also available at the Knippenberg Center.

2014 Year in Review Annual Report was sent to FOLA members, supporters, and township and county officials. Current and past reports are also available on the FOLA website.

Site Management

Elaine Fogerty was hired as Executive Director of Laurelwood Arboretum. Elaine holds a BA in Biology from Bloomfield College and an MA in Horticulture from Rutgers University and was formally the Assistant Agricultural Agent for Passaic County. Elaine’s horticultural and management expertise has added significantly to the professionalism of the arboretum. This cost is shared by FOLA and the Township of Wayne.

Tuesday and Friday volunteers worked April through November weeding, pruning, mulching, deadheading and planting. Education and the art and science of gardening are incorporated into each work project.

Winter Greenhouse volunteer group worked Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays throughout the winter propagating and maintaining plants for the seasonal displays.

Horticultural projects and programs adopted through the year include:

- Invasive and noxious weed disposal program
- Black vine weevil, hemlock woolly adelgid and sawfly control
- Identification and mapping of dead or damaged trees
- Bulb planting map
- Boxwood and rhododendron layering project
- Development of an arboretum maintenance schedule
- Documentation of equipment maintenance schedule
- Inventory of supplies and equipment
- Transplanting of rhododendron, leucothoe and boxwood near the Knippenberg Center

The South Rock Garden Restoration Project, spearheaded by the NJ Rock Garden Society, is an ongoing effort.

The Sensory Garden was very popular, with something always in bloom and many brightly colored flowers and butterflies.

The Native Plant Demonstration Garden was completed.

Finance and Fundraising

An annual grant from Wayne Township pays for employee salaries, insurance, some plants, and supplies. Wayne Township receives funds each year from the Knippenberg Trust that partially offset the township's grant to FOLA for the management of Laurelwood Arboretum.

FOLA's 2015 budget was funded by membership dues, donations and grants. The FOLA budget is for administrative expenses, publications, programs, membership, volunteers, equipment, garden plants and supplies, infrastructure maintenance expenses, and everything not covered in the township budget.

- **Member and visitor contributions** to FOLA, including The Gift of Green Campaign, memorial donations, and unrestricted gifts, totaled more than \$12,441.
- **Paver Donation Program** for the Knippenberg Center patio resulted in donations of \$20,750.
- **TD Bank's Affinity Program** continued and encouraged members with accounts at TD Bank to participate
- **We participated in the Amazon Smile program**
- **Many businesses and individuals contributed** extensive services and materials to the Knippenberg Center for Education including design and architecture services, carpeting, tile, alarm system installation and **all** furnishings in the building

Grants

A grant from the California-based Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust, supplemented with a grant from the Ira A. Roschelle, MD Family Foundation, made it possible for us to create the Native Plant Demonstration Garden.

We also had grants from the Passaic County Open Space & Farmland Preservation Trust for our Educational Greenhouse and for the replacement of the Long Valley structure. In addition, we had financial assistance from Wayne Township for the Knippenberg Center and for the improved parking facilities.

The Wayne Lions Club gave us a \$5,000 grant toward the purchase of a 5-passenger mobility cart, which we use to transport those who are not able to walk through the arboretum. This is the second cart funded by the Lions Club. Both are in use for our community tours.

2016

FOLA has been awarded a grant in the amount of \$20,000 from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust for the development of a horticultural master plan and programs. Grant funds will be used in 2016 to increase the work schedule of Elaine Fogerty, Laurelwood's Executive Director, from two days to four days per week. This will allow her to develop a horticultural plan for the arboretum and design and execute new horticultural programs for children and adults.

We received a \$5,000 grant from the Ira A. Roschelle, MD Family Foundation for the purchase and installation of an audiotour system for Laurelwood.

Columbia Bank has donated \$1200 for the purchase of a defibrillator for the arboretum. It will be installed in 2016, and FOLA staff and volunteers will be instructed on its proper use.