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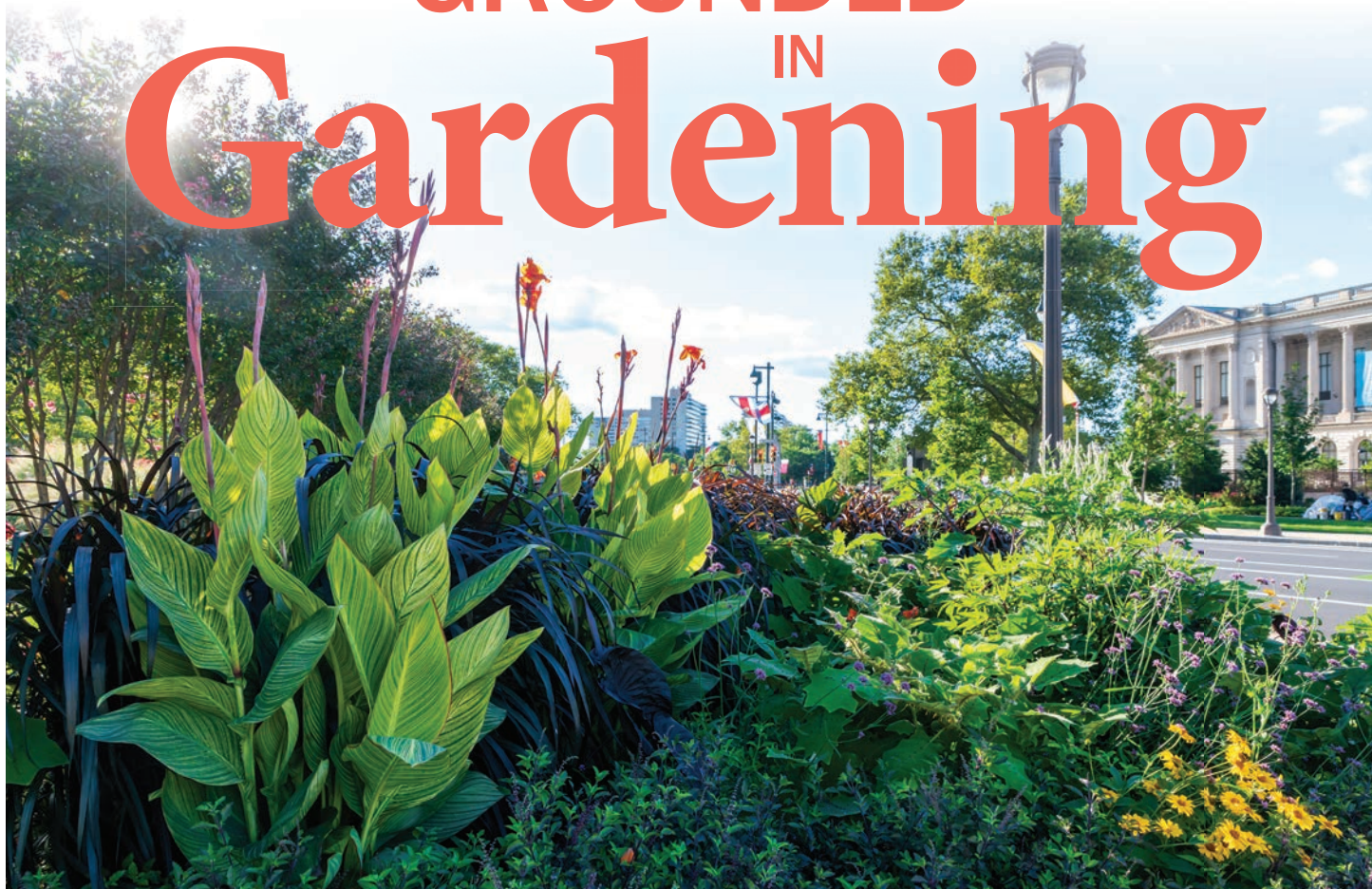
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GROUNDDED IN Gardening



TURNING TO THE EARTH DURING A PANDEMIC

By Pam Baxter

Last year, we did something that virtually no one alive today had done before: We learned how to live in a pandemic. We masked up and became experts at Zoom meetings and drive-by birthday celebrations. We ordered tons of take-out from our favorite restaurants, binge-watched movies on Netflix, and finally started those home improvement projects. We home-schooled and began to wonder when our kids would be able to be back to in-person classes. And — banned from movie theaters, museums, and gatherings of any size in enclosed spaces — we turned to the outdoors for recreation, even if was just a walk around the block for a chance to chat with a neighbor.

We also did something else. When the world started spinning out of control and we felt the need for something stable to ground us, many of us found refuge in growing flowers and vegetables — some for the very first time.

During the two World Wars, people planted Victory Gardens to support the war effort. But while we talk about the “war on COVID,” last year’s turn to gardening represented something deeper.

The COVID shutdown and subsequent sequestering from friends and family created a need to find a deep connection to something eternal. And so, we looked to the Earth for a sense of security, and to help us feel rooted, just like the plants we began to tend.

It’s not surprising that we turned to gardening to — literally — stay grounded. Philadelphia’s own Dr. Benjamin Rush, the “father of American psychiatry,” noticed the beneficial effects of gardening in his work with psychiatric patients at Friends Hospital in Philadelphia in the early 1800s. Over time, Rush noticed that those patients who worked in the garden were calmer and less agitated. Working with plants turns out to be great therapy, and the evidence from this past year shows that thousands throughout the Delaware Valley have discovered this on their own.

GOING GREEN

Andrew Bunting, Vice President of Public Horticulture for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS), reports a huge



trend in the resurgence of houseplants, especially right in Philadelphia. “Gardening doesn’t have to be in the ground,” Bunting notes. “It can be on your kitchen windowsill. It can be on the 50th floor of your high-rise apartment building.”

A particularly exciting rising demographic, says Bunting, is among teens and young adults, where he has seen a “mammoth interest” in houseplants during the pandemic.

“We hope this carries forward with them as they go on to eventually own their own homes and have their own gardens,” he said. “What gardening becomes for a lot of people is a hobby and passion for their whole life. Unlike some other more physically demanding activities, gardening will see you through a lifetime.”

DIGGING IN

Just as apartment dwellers turned to houseplants, many people in the Greater Philadelphia area turned to their backyards. Chester County resident Jamie Flanagan with his wife and his daughter started a vegetable garden when they realized that the COVID lock-down was going to last much longer than first predicted. Noted Flanagan, “During the pandemic, gardening and landscaping have been our solace.”

The three fledgling gardeners are already hard at work on this year’s plot. “For my family, gardening has unlocked a passion from within during these crazy times,” Flanagan said. With a new goal of “going to the grocery store as little as possible,” the Flanagans are expanding their garden this year. They’ve added twelve more four-foot by three-foot raised beds, built a trellis for grapes, and have ordered several columnar apple trees. They’ve even started raising portabella mushrooms in the basement. Being at home and having time — a “silver lining” — has been key, Flanagan said.

New and expert gardeners alike want a sense of success when they plant something. Gardening is one of the slowest ‘art forms,’ so PHS provides expert gardening advice and guidance to help ensure success during the growing seasons. “For PHS, it’s all about introducing people to the joys of gardening and providing educational resources to help make a success of it,” says Bunting. As an example,

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Tickets

Tickets to the 2021 Philadelphia Flower Show, June 5 – 13, are available for purchase at www.PHSONline.org/flowershow. Attendees are asked to select their preferred date and session at the time of purchase. To allow for social distance protocols, a limited number of tickets will be available for each day and time segment. Early purchase is highly recommended.

Show Dates and Hours:

Saturday, June 5:

- AM Entry: 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.
- PM Entry: 1 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Sunday, June 6 – Sunday, June 13:

- AM Entry: 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
- PM Entry: 2 p.m. – 7 p.m.

PHS members enjoy special privileges, including a variety of ticket offers, such as ticket discounts or complimentary admission during special preview hours. To become a PHS member, visit: PHSONline.org/support-phs/membership

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he points to PHS's Gold Medal plants. These are trees, shrubs, vines, and perennials that have been selected for their ease of cultivation, availability, and value to wildlife. The winners offer multiple seasons of interest for gardeners and are chosen for their hardiness in the Greater Philadelphia area, although many are also suitable for other regions as well. (See this year's list of Gold Medal Winners).

SO, WHAT'S AT WORK?

When we garden, we do more than connect with the Earth.



We connect with something deep in ourselves, with others, and with the long history of agriculture in southeastern Pennsylvania, as well as a long, rich history of horticulture.

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) was founded in Philadelphia in 1827. Just two years later, the Philadelphia Flower Show — the largest flower show in America — was held for the first time. It's the longest-running flower show in the world, held annually here in our own backyard.

One of the best features of the Show is that there is something for everyone — from experienced designers and growers, to people who want to increase and hone their gardening knowledge and skills, to those who want inspiration on how to start a garden, and for those who just love the beauty of plants. There is truly inspiration for everyone, at a multitude of levels. And that inspiration is needed, now more than ever.

ADAPTING TO CHANGE

PHS's approach to this year's Flower Show is a wonderful example of what we all did through the challenges of the past year, i.e., we found ways to adapt, just as nature does. It's inspiring to see that while the Show couldn't be held indoors this past March, as in years past, PHS has found a way to present the Show by changing both the date and the venue. This year's show offers visitors a new perspective on the world of horticulture and gardening that would not otherwise have been possible.

For the first time, ever, the Show will be held outdoors, at Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Park in South Philadelphia. The park, which is a nationally registered historic district, was designed by the renowned Frederick Law Olmsted, one of the designers of New York City's Central Park. It was the host location for the 1926 Sesquicentennial Expo of the United States. One of the benefits of the Show's move is the increased acreage

PHS 2021 GOLD MEDAL PLANT WINNERS

Each year, the PHS Gold Medal Plant Committee — made up of nursery owners, horticulturists, expert gardeners, and professional growers — reviews newly available and classic species and cultivars of plants, shrubs, and trees. Together, they select the best performing and most attractive specimens based on their ease of care, beauty, appropriateness for the Mid-Atlantic climate, and resistance to pests and deer.

This year, PHS has awarded its Gold Medal to seven exceptional plants, selected especially for home gardeners. Gardeners can now spend more time in the garden and less time hoping for success with their efforts. Gold Medal Plants take the guesswork out of the plant selection process.

REDBUD (TREE):	<i>Cercis canadensis</i> 'Appalachian Red'
BLACK-EYED SUSAN (PERENNIAL):	<i>Rudbeckia</i> 'American Gold Rush'
PEONY (SMALL SHRUB):	<i>Paeonia</i> 'Bartzella'
HYDRANGEA (SHRUB):	<i>Hydrangea paniculata</i> Bobo® Planetree (tree) <i>Platanus x acerfolia</i> Exclamation!™
SWEETBOX (EVERGREEN GROUNDCOVER):	<i>Sarcococca hookeriana</i> 'Fragrant Valley'
DIXIE WOOD (FERN):	<i>Dryopteris x australis</i>

View the entire PHS Gold Medal Plant database at PHSonline.org/for-gardeners/gold-medal-plants.



the outdoor venue affords — 45% more than previous indoor shows.

GROWING COMMUNITY

When you plant a garden, no matter how large or how small, you become part of a community of other gardeners and of the Earth. PHS itself is all about community. Many of us see PHS in action annually during the Flower Show, but PHS is hard at work all year long throughout Philadelphia and surrounding communities -- establishing and maintaining public gardens, producing educational programs, and supporting community gardens.

Founded when the population of the greater Philadelphia area was around 200,000 people, PHS has survived and continues to thrive, because of its resiliency and its ongoing ability to adapt, change, and grow.

At this year's Flower Show, along with all the practical tips and treasures that you'll find (yes, the Marketplace shops will be set up!) you'll have a chance to tap into the regional gardening community that PHS represents. While you're at it, consider becoming a member and making this new passion for gardening a lifelong commitment.

For information on membership and tickets to the Show, go to www.PHSONline.org/the-flower-show.

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HISTORIC FLOWER SHOW IN **First-Ever** **Outdoor Setting**

By Michelle Lynch

Reimagined as an outdoor event this June, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's 2021 Philadelphia Flower Show exhibition in Philadelphia's Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) Park will focus on how plants impact people and critters where they live.

"Plants provide food, shelter, healthier environments, and more," says Sam Lemheney, Chief of Shows and Events at PHS. "That isn't just good for wildlife; it's good for humans, too."

Planting diverse flower species can create beautiful gardens and enrich natural habitats, improving our lives. That truth is the inspiration behind this year's Philadelphia Flower Show theme, "HABITAT: Nature's Masterpiece."

"We know plants can provide connections with nature and reduce stress," he said. "Creating healthy spaces really helps im-

prove the health and well-being of individuals, neighborhoods, communities, and towns."

OUTDOOR PARK SETTING ENABLES SOCIAL DISTANCING

This year's setting in FDR Park, with its beautiful vistas and rolling landscape, is an ideal venue for demonstrating the Show's theme. The expansive 15-acre footprint of the park allows increased space for displays and social distancing.

Public safety is a critical component of the upcoming show. Reserved tickets for morning or afternoon sessions, with other health and safety measures, such as maximum occupancy limits, required masks, and adherence to government health recommendations, will help keep Show attendees, staff, and



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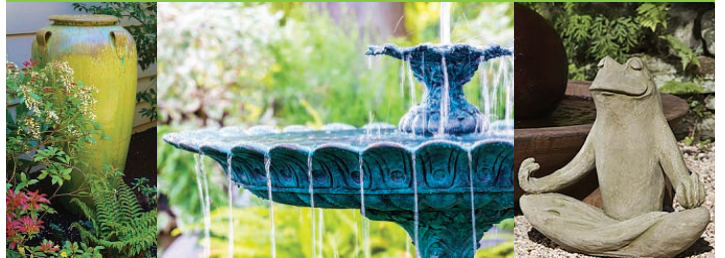
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FDR Park's nearly 450,000 square feet — a 45% increase over previous Flower Shows held in the Pennsylvania Convention Center — also provides more room for activities and exhibits.

FDR PARK IS A GEM IN ITSELF

Bordered by the Philadelphia Sports Complex on South Broad Street, the park, at the confluence of the Schuylkill and Delaware rivers, was chosen for its spaciousness, beauty, and easy accessibility by car and public transportation.

Originally named League Island Park, the park was designed by Olmsted Brothers, the firm of John Charles Olmsted and Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., sons of famed landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted, one of the designers of New York's Central Park. Its ornamental buildings, meandering pathways, meadows, and lagoons formed the backdrop for the 1926 U.S. Sesquicentennial Expo.

"We couldn't have picked a better location for an outdoor setting," Lemheney said.

Although the creative team chose the HABITAT theme about two years ago, much of the planning had to be done in less than a year.

A week after last year's show closed, the first wave of the pandemic struck the Philadelphia area and all of Pennsylvania shut down. "We spent the rest of March recapping, and as April

rolled around, started brainstorming," Lemheney said.

"By May, we decided to move the Show outdoors. It all happened so fast." The site was chosen by the end of that month, he said, but a public announcement was not made until later in the year. "In the almost 200-year history of this Show, it has never been outside before," he said.

NEARLY 200 YEARS OF IMPACT

The first Flower Show dates to 1829, when the then two-year-old PHS held what is thought to have been the first public flower show in the U.S. Coincidentally, that first Show more than 190 years ago also took place in June, inside the Masonic Hall on Philadelphia's Chestnut Street.

Among the hundreds of plants on display was a red-leaved specimen shown by botanist Joel Poinsett, the first U.S. Minister to Mexico. Now a Christmas staple, the brilliantly colored plant he introduced at the now-historic Show became known as the poinsettia.

Shows were held most years thereafter, with the exception of a few years during World War II, and in various locations until 1867, when PHS built the first of three horticultural halls, near Broad and Locust streets. The halls also were used for other exhibitions.

The first two halls were destroyed by fires, and the last, sold in 1916, was demolished the next year. The Show then moved



from venue to venue until 1996 when it landed in the Philadelphia-based Pennsylvania Convention Center, which served as its home until this year, Lemheney said.

With the move outdoors, the timing was changed from winter, yet another advantage, he said. June is the height of the gardening season and that will allow for an increase in the number and diversity of flower and plant species, the most ever showcased.

The Show will be divided into three districts for visitors to enjoy: the Design District, featuring large-scale floral and landscape designs; the Plant District highlighting the variety and diversity of plants; and the Garden District, where guests can learn how to implement innovative ideas in their home gardens.

In addition, the newly-designed Gardeners Green will serve as a nod to an historic public commons and offer approaches for enhancing everyday living through horticulture. Ideas will include edible landscaping and more. "It (the Philadelphia Flower Show) has always been about showing the public the impact of horticulture and providing great resources for your garden," Lemheney said.



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HABITAT: NATURE'S MASTERPIECE Finds a Perfect Home



By Dan Sokil

The 2021 PHS Philadelphia Flower Show, “HABITAT: Nature’s Masterpiece,” June 5 through 13 at FDR Park in South Philadelphia, will be filled with new experiences for all who attend.

This first-ever move to the great outdoors after 192 years will allow for designs like no visitor has seen before. “Plan for a beautiful, park-like stroll. It will be a lovely day, no matter when a visitor comes,” says Seth Pearsoll, Director of Design for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS) which has staged the Flower Show — the nation’s largest and longest-running horticultural event — since 1829.

Last year’s show, held the first week in March, was the final event at the Pennsylvania Convention Center before it shut down by order of the State Department of Health to mitigate the spread of the coronavirus. “COVID hit the last full week-end of our (2020) show — that next week, everything shut down,” Pearsoll said. It would take many discussions following the 2020 Show for the PHS team to even think about future events.

HABITAT, A SERENDIPITOUS THEME

“Because we work ahead on an 18-to 24-month planning cycle for an event as large as the Flower Show, we already knew



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that the theme of this Show was going to be ‘Habitat,’” says Pearsoll. “It is a theme ironically well-suited to this year’s outdoor location.”

In its 2021 location, FDR Park will house the Flower Show, using 15 acres of the Park’s roughly 300 acres, located just off Broad and Pattison Streets near the Philadelphia sports complex. “With lakes and marshes to the east, a circuitous road within the park, trees and other park amenities, it makes for a nice, self-contained environment, just to the west of the sports stadiums,” Pearsoll said.

“This year’s Show is going to be unique. It’s going to feel much more expansive — yet also like a garden nestled among 60- and 70-foot-tall trees. It will be quite different than previous years at the convention center,” he said.

The outdoor location gives those designing exhibits a different approach and new opportunities, particularly because the show is being held in June rather than the traditional early March dates.

“Floral and landscape designers will have a more expansive plant palette to work with because at this time of year, more plant materials are available to use,” Pearsoll said.

“You’re going to see the garden stories change; the content of their gardens change; the way we’re able to curate the space is totally different because it’s outdoors.”

This year’s space will be divided into three districts — “Plant,” “Garden,” and “Design.” Each area will resemble the traditional Flower Show sections indoors, but in a new arrangement.

BEAUTY OF HABITAT

“There are many different garden and design stories to tell, but essentially, we were looking at this great human story of how plants, horticulture, and gardens impact our lives as individuals,” explains Pearsoll. “There’s a great non-human story too, involving pollinators, wildlife, and beneficial insects.”

“Going outdoors this year serendipitously encouraged this particular theme, because it was already open to a bit more wilderness and the kind of gardens that can accommodate some of these outdoor elements,” Pearsoll said.

As visitors enter the Show, he advises them to take note of how the plants and gardens fit into the theme of Habitat and to think of the narrative and journey they can be taken on.

“There’s a meandering stroll in, and you will start to pass gorgeous free-standing floral elements — we call them ‘floral breadcrumbs’ — increasing in size and hinting of what’s to come,” Pearsoll said. “Once you cross the ticket threshold and enter the Show, you’ll see the equivalent of an entrance garden. The Park’s original gazebo will be spectacular, with great lower beds in front, and you’ll be walking under a great archway column-style approach,” he explains.

The typical indoor Flower Show covers ten to 12 acres of floor space inside the convention center, while the outdoor show will be closer to 15 acres, translating to more space for safe distancing and more gardens to see, with a 360-degree perspective.

THE BEST WAY TO EXPERIENCE THE SHOW

Pearsoll likes to think of each Flower Show like an IKEA furniture store layout: “Maybe there’s a strongly suggested sense of a path, and then cut-throughs that you can quickly get around in ways that are not rigid or inflexible. You can meander and wander anywhere you like.”

For those already familiar with the layout of FDR Park, the main show area will be nestled in the great lawn located between the boathouse and the American Swedish Historical Museum. Upgrades are already in the works to the Park’s sidewalks and streets throughout.

FDR Park was designed by the Olmsted Brothers, the same architectural firm behind New York City’s Central Park, and visitors may see similarities. “Parks of this era had these concepts of perspective and refuge, a place to pause,” says Pearsoll. “You will stroll through curvilinear paths to get from one place to the next.”

While enjoying the stroll, Pearsoll suggests visitors keep an eye out for big names: designers featured in the Design District will include Wambui Ippolito, Abdallah Tabet of Olin, Donald Pell, Patrick Cullina, Treeline Designz, WRT, Petit Jardin, and more.

“So many people use this park for gatherings, festivals, picnics, and sports — it is a very versatile, and special space. The same applies to this year’s Show,” he notes. “It is certainly one not to be missed!”

For information on membership and tickets to the Show, go to www.PHSONline.org/the-flower-show.

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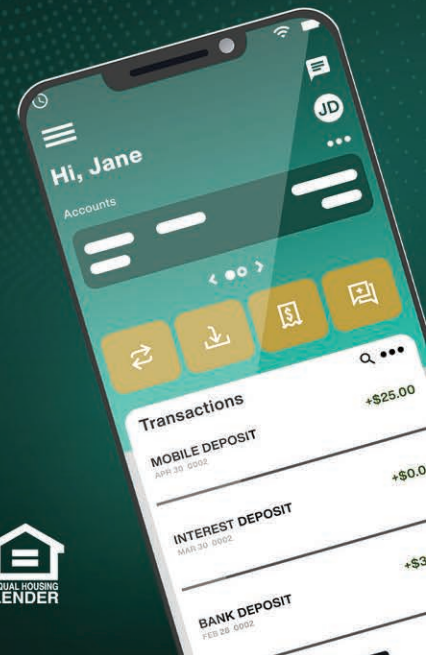
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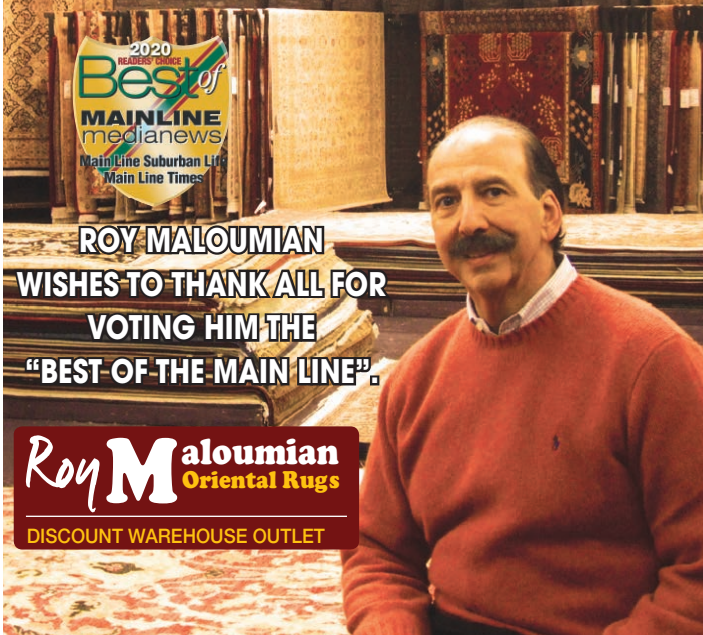
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By Pam Baxter

For many of us who live in the Delaware Valley, it's hard to imagine what it would be like not to have enough food to sustain an "active, healthy lifestyle." Providing fresh and healthy food for yourself, your family, and your community is a basic human right. Yet, lack of healthy food access remains a pressing problem in our region. In 2019, 16.3% of people in Philadelphia didn't have access to enough food to sustain an active and healthy lifestyle, and that number is estimated to climb as high as 21.8% due to the COVID pandemic.

Parents across the region struggle to feed their children, and food banks and pantries have been hard-pressed to meet the marked increase in the need for food assistance, both in the City of Philadelphia and in the suburbs.

These most vulnerable members of our communities were already at the highest risk when COVID arrived last year; unfortunately, the pandemic has only made the level of food insecurity worse. "Your environment and your social connections determine a lot about how healthy you are. Going through something like COVID, you realize how important it is to have resources close by," says Julianne Schrader Ortega, Vice President and Chief of Healthy Neighborhoods of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society (PHS).

A NEW INITIATIVE FOR THE TIMES

In 2020, the PHS community was comprised of more than 300,000 people, working in more than 250 neighborhoods



throughout the Greater Philadelphia region. To help offset the rising need for food due to the pandemic, PHS mobilized 10,000 people to dig in even deeper and plant more food crops with extra to share through its Harvest initiative – a collective effort of gardeners that grew and shared over 44,000 pounds of fresh produce in their communities and promoted networks of self-reliance in neighborhoods across the region.

Harvest was designed for anyone to be able to participate — from individuals who had not gardened before and were looking for healthy food for their family, to those with gardening expertise that could grow enough to share and help support food banks. The level of success for Harvest was monumental — from thousands of pounds of produce donated, to inspiring new gardeners, to motivating people to learn to provide for themselves. Again in 2021, PHS will renew its Harvest initiative to build on the success from last year.

CREATING ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD

Schrader Ortega says that the first priority for PHS and its comprehensive Community Gardens program is simply to increase access to healthy food. Sufficient food, especially nutrient-rich fresh vegetables, is one of the main building blocks for health. Unfortunately, along with insufficient income to provide enough food, many people live in historically disinvested

neighborhoods with limited access to healthful and affordable food. For example, the nearest place to buy food might be a corner store where there are mostly snack-type foods, high in fat and sugar, and low in nutritional value. The nearest full-service grocery store may be too far away for convenient access. Without access to healthy foods, the local community can become at higher risk for conditions like obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.

To help offset this deficit, PHS strives to make it easy for people to grow food, even in small spaces. One way is by providing educational resources, such as information on how to start a vegetable garden — whether in containers, window boxes, stoops, or decks, and where to access tools and supplies. PHS also provides how-to webinars on its website.

“We want people to learn how to grow food for themselves, and to share their extra harvest in their community,” Schrader Ortega said. For those who are growing food to donate to others, PHS provides a list of those vegetables most important to food pantries.

PHS created a map of soup kitchens and food pantries, to include their locations, what foods they accept, and when they’re open for donations. “Through community food gardens, people make deeper connections with their neighbors and form networks of self-reliance,” says Schrader Ortega.

GROWING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Each year, PHS trains people for gardening-related jobs, such as landscaping and landscape maintenance through its Workforce Development programs. The programs are primarily for those who have difficulty finding employment upon release from the Philadelphia Department of Prisons. Since 2010, PHS has helped train and place over 20 people in horticultural jobs. Along with the necessary landscaping and garden maintenance skills, participants also learn how to create a winning resume and perform well at job interviews.

Program participants often secure jobs with local contractors who work with PHS to clean and green abandoned lots in the City. According to Schrader Ortega, there are 40,000 vacant lots in Philadelphia, and the trash buildup and unwanted activities in many of these lots have a negative effect on the community. “Statistics show that there is a 29% reduction in gun violence when vacant lots are cleaned and greened,” she said. “Our goal is to turn these vacant lots into assets and job opportunities by working with the City, local community groups, and contractors to clean and green them.”

IMPROVING THE LIVABLE ENVIRONMENT

PHS’s Community Gardens program also helps to improve the livable environment of more than 150 neighborhoods. PHS helps champion gardening as a means to improve the health and well-being for these communities, while allowing gardeners to grow produce they enjoy surrounded by their neighbors. “Community gardens are a critical piece of the City’s infrastructure,” Schrader Ortega pointed out. “As places that provide fresh food and common ground for neighbors to connect



with each other, these community gardens are crucial. At PHS, we continually look for ways to make sure that the volunteer gardeners that tend these spaces are supported and their expertise is shared with others learning to grow food.”

In addition to providing much-needed, healthy produce, neighborhood gardens help build community, something needed now more than ever. “It’s easy to become insular, especially during something like this pandemic,” Schrader Ortega said, “and a community garden is a great way to get to know your neighbors. It helps folks recognize that neighbors may need support. Plus, everyone loves to share food from their garden.”

MANY WAYS TO HELP

In addition to programs within the City, PHS also aims to help people in Philadelphia’s suburbs learn how to grow food, both for themselves and to donate to others.

One example is the new PHS Green Resource Center at Norristown Farm Park in Montgomery County, where PHS is partnering with Montgomery County to launch a teaching farm in Spring 2021. “We’ve been working since the 1970s to make Philadelphia and the surrounding areas more sustainable,” says Schrader Ortega. Run by the county on 690 acres of state-owned land, Norristown Farm Park is one of the largest remaining open areas in Montgomery County, with the PHS Green Resource Center utilizing two acres to support the community’s food gardening needs. “The program is still in the build-out stage,” Ortega says, “but eventually there will be a full gardening education program, along with plenty of volunteer opportunities, and it will support job training efforts of the YWCA Tri-County Area.”

Schrader Ortega noted that the Harvest initiative, which will continue even after the pandemic subsidies, is just another part of PHS’s overall impact on food security in the Delaware Valley, where several hundred thousand people are already devoted to gardening for the greater good. That group of people includes volunteers, financial supporters, PHS members, and participants in the organization’s year-round educational programs.

An excellent place to start gardening for the greater good is by becoming a member of PHS. As a member of PHS, you join a community of people that believe in the power of horticulture to make positive social and environmental change. In addition, your membership gives you access to PHS’s inspiring *GROW* magazine, as well as many other valuable member benefits. Signing up this Spring allows you access to discounts or even free tickets to the Philadelphia Flower Show, PHS’s landmark event. The Show takes place this year from Saturday, June 5 to Sunday, June 13, outdoors at FDR Park in South Philadelphia. Membership, ticket, and other information at www.PHSONline.org

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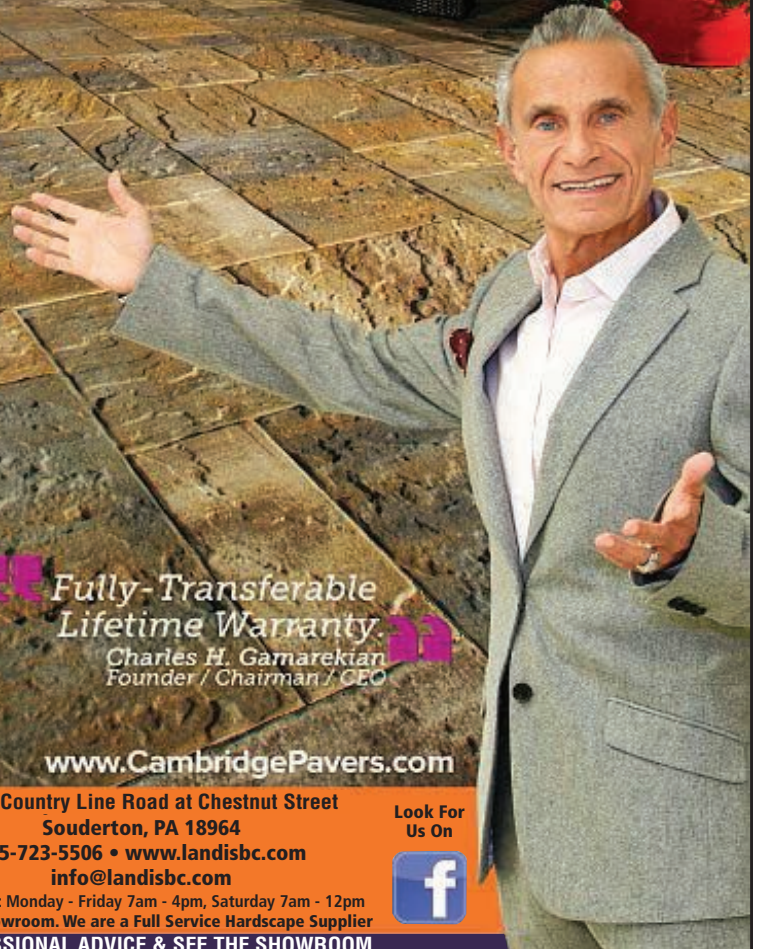


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GARDENERS GREEN

Beauty, Inspiration and Learning:

WHO COULD ASK FOR MORE?



By Gary Puleo

With the outdoor setting playing a significant role in this year's 2021 Philadelphia Flower Show, the weather is expected to add a somewhat unpredictable but welcome facet to the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's signature event.

"With the element of the Show being outdoors, it's really going to be a unique experience and one that will be enhanced in a lot of ways," noted Nicole Juday Rhoads, Director of Audience Engagement at PHS. "To think that you'll be able to see these beautiful flowering grasses swaying in the breeze, and how plants look when they're in sunshine, rather than artificial light ... being outdoors gives us an opportunity to make the Flower Show more of a real-life example of what people can do."

Highlighting the opportunity for learning and being inspired

by the Show is a large exhibit area titled "Gardeners Green." "If you're a person who wants to see something beautiful you will not be disappointed. There will be everything from flowering vines and trees, perennials all in bloom, a formal vegetable parterre, interesting plant combinations, and various structures including a Victorian greenhouse. This will be a spectacularly gorgeous exhibit," says Rhoads.

Gardeners Green is geared toward creating a vision and a resource for the home gardener. The Park venue combined with the expansive nature of the exhibit have the potential of bringing Show visitors into something "really magical," she says.

"But this exhibit is also designed to pack in a lot of educational information for anyone seeking to advance their skills, whether they've been gardening for years or are just getting



started. For example, we will have a beehive to help tell the story of how plants and pollinating insects are really interdependent on one another, and how humans are dependent on the interaction between pollinating insects and plants,” Rhoads explained. “Visitors will see a ‘backyard’ chicken habitat and demonstrations of practices like composting and growing edible mushrooms.”

ALL THINGS TO ALL GARDENERS

No matter which type of gardening you’re interested in or what you’re able to accomplish within the confines of your space, PHS’s team of experts will be on hand in the Gardeners Green exhibit to answer gardening questions and share ideas. There will be several interactive elements including an old-style wattle fence that visitors will help construct with woven willow branches.

“From beginner to experienced gardeners, Gardeners Green will provide the ideas and the confidence to take it to the next level,” Rhoads said. “Within this exhibit will be beautiful examples of every possible type of gardening for any situation that you might have. If you only have a container on a stoop, there will be a lot of ideas for you. Whether you have a tiny or big backyard, there will be ideas. If you have deer, or only have shade, you’ll find many solutions to gardening situations,” she explains.

THE TOOLS OF SUCCESSFUL GARDENING

Space, time, money, interest, and confidence are the five essential qualities for gardening, Rhoads explains. “We can’t give people more time to garden but we can give them more confidence. A lot of people turn away from gardening because they feel unsure of how to pursue it. We want to share that it’s not hard, you just need to have good quality information.”

It turns out that money is only relative when it comes to gardening.

“We’re hoping that we can change people’s perceptions that gardening is a costly activity,” Rhoads said. “People spend more money on their lawn than any other kind of gardening, and Gardeners Green will show that there are alternatives to lawns where you’re not spending as much money taking care of it -- and you’re not burning a lot of fossil fuel and putting a lot of chemicals down.”

“There are approaches that can increase your satisfaction, decrease the amount of money you’re spending, and decrease negative environmental effects. We’re going to show how you can make something beautiful out of very inexpensive, or even free, materials,” Rhoads added. “It’s like any hobby. You can do the free version, or you can do the ridiculously expensive version, depending on how far you take it. We want to show that money is not a requirement to pursue gardening and that PHS is a great resource for gardening information.”



As always, PHS hopes that guests find the Show to be an enlightening experience that endures long after their visit. “We want to make sure that everyone that comes to the Flower Show who is really interested in gardening leaves feeling like they have a lot of inspiration and have really clear ideas and information for what they want to do next. We want to set people on a path for gardening success, with an eye to being environmentally friendly and creating a place that’s a sanctuary for themselves but also for wildlife,” Rhoads said.

DOWNLOADING SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR UNIQUE GARDEN NEEDS

PHS will debut a number of online gardening guides this year, Rhoads added. “We’ll have about 45 how-to guides to download for free, from container gardening to wildlife-friendly gardening, growing vegetables, growing fruit trees, composting, to raising chickens.”

PHS is a resource for anyone who is a gardener on their own, or with their neighbors. “We want to make sure everyone understands that PHS is the place that you can go to get that support, information, and the confidence you need to be a great gardener,” Rhoads said.

For information on membership and tickets to the Show, go to phsonline.org.

Thanks Mom!

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Fun, Food, and Family-Friendly Activities Abound



‘BUTTERFLIES LIVE!’ IS BACK AND EVEN BETTER OUTDOORS

By Stacie Jones

Trumpeting the arrival of summer 2021 is the long-awaited Philadelphia Flower Show, celebrating the season's sights, sounds, and colors for the first time outdoors, making it a must-see for families with young children.

It's the first-ever outdoor setting for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Philadelphia Flower Show in its nearly 200-year history. The theme "HABITAT: Nature's Masterpiece" offers a setting ideal for families. Taking place at the peak of gardening season, June 5 through 13 in FDR Park in South Philadelphia, guests can immerse themselves in horticultural beauty that will span 450,000 square feet, a nearly 50% increase over previous years' Shows, held indoors.



INSPIRING DESIGNS AND HANDS-ON ACTIVITIES

In addition to seeing world-class floral and landscape designers displaying their inspiring work, families can learn about plants and insects native to Pennsylvania at several educational stations, through interactive activities, and in the Park itself. The Show provides a hands-on chance for parents to instill a lifelong connection to plants and gardening in their children.

The Show features three distinct Districts nestled within 15 acres of the Park. “The park itself is a beautiful destination that is easily accessible for families,” says Rebecca Schuchart, Director of Events at PHS. “So many of us have been home, inside, not able to do much due to the pandemic,” Schuchart said. “This is going to be outside, in a beautiful setting where people can see unbelievable designs and beauty.”

IN NEED OF A NATURE BREAK

Many people are craving a nature break, and children especially are anxious for a chance to explore. “Yes, the Show is definitely for kids, and not just because it’s entirely outdoors in the fresh air and sunshine. There is so much color, and so many

beautiful things to look at,” said Schuchart, who is the mother of young children herself.

A popular feature for families is “Butterflies Live!” an exhibit featuring more than 1,000 native and non-native butterflies, and the pollinator plants that attract them. The exhibit features 20-plus distinct species of fluttering butterflies in a calm, peaceful experience that is sure to delight young children. “Butterflies Live!” is also an excellent social media photo opportunity!

OPPORTUNITIES GROW IN THE OUTDOOR SETTING

“Holding the Show outside takes it one step further,” Schuchart said about the Flower Show, which has traditionally been held indoors in March. Last year’s Show at the Pennsylvania Convention Center was the center’s final event before the COVID-19 shut-down ordered by the State Department of Health in March 2020. “The move outdoors enables us to add even more family-friendly activities. The historic grounds of FDR Park will be open for exploration both before and after a family attends the Flower Show,” she added.

VARIETY OF DISTRICTS

The three Districts of the Show – Plant, Garden, and Design – emphasize learning and entertainment.

The Plant District will beckon to plant lovers with Hamilton Horticult, displaying hundreds of plants at their prime, along with plant galleries featuring new floral and plant varieties.

The Garden District will offer gardening techniques and interaction with experts. This is the home of “Butterflies Live!” Also, guests can find a shady place to relax, and can enjoy informative sessions on a variety of horticulture topics. The PHS Shop is offering merchandise celebrating the “HABITAT: Nature’s Masterpiece” theme.

The Design District, the largest district, showcases 360-degree views of displays of floral and landscape design. Here is where guests can view and experience trends in landscape, floral design, art in nature, and sustainability.

PLANNING A FAMILY DAY

“Butterflies Live!” will be open in the Garden District, 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily, and will allow up to 40 guests at a time to enjoy native butterflies in an outdoor setting, while also learning about pollinating plants. Admission is \$5 per person with purchase of a Flower Show ticket, and advance tickets are recommended.

Family Frolic takes place Saturday, June 12, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., featuring musical performances, a scavenger hunt, and live butterfly releases, at no additional charge. Circus performers, including jugglers, stilt walkers, acrobats, and aerial acts, will entertain visitors throughout the Show grounds.

SATISFY YOUR APPETITE

New this year, a “Park Picnic” can be reserved in advance of your visit. This reusable picnic tote will include brunch or



lunch for two. A meal for two is \$55; with wine it's \$70. In addition to the Park Picnic choices, there will be a number of kid-friendly food options at the Show, including chicken fingers, fries, hot dogs, wraps, as well as veggie and vegan options. Desserts and cold beverages will also be available throughout the Park. Pre-ordering for Park Picnics is required. For details, visit phsonline.org/the-flower-show/experience-the-show.

Other dining options will include cool beverage choices within each district, Schuchart said. "We're excited about the variety of flavors and options, providing an elevated experience," she said, adding that unique botanical cocktails will also be available.

WHEN TO CALL THE SITTER

If you're looking for a night out without the entire family, consider one of these after-hours events.

- Evening at the Flower Show (formerly Preview Party), 6 to 10 p.m., Saturday, June 5. An elegant evening fundraiser in which guests reserve a table to enjoy cocktails and small

plates, with musical entertainment. Ticket options start at \$500 per person. Proceeds benefit PHS's year-round work in the Greater Philadelphia region.

- Flowers After Hours, 8 to 11:30 p.m., Saturday, June 12. This 21-and-up evening party, happening on the second Saturday of the Show, is a fun dance party with a theme of "Hort Couture." Guests are encouraged to wear their floral best while listening to music by SNACKTIME PHILLY, a local brass band. Internationally known DJ Aktive is also providing music. Tickets are \$75 per person and include one specialty cocktail.

The PHS Philadelphia Flower Show will follow social distancing and occupancy limits, with reserved, timed tickets for morning and afternoon admission. Masks are required, and the show will adhere to health recommendations to ensure guest safety.

Tickets to the PHS Philadelphia Flower Show are \$45 for adults, \$30 for ages 18-29; \$20 for children 5-17, and free for children 4 and under. For details, visit www.phsonline.org/the-flower-show.



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