



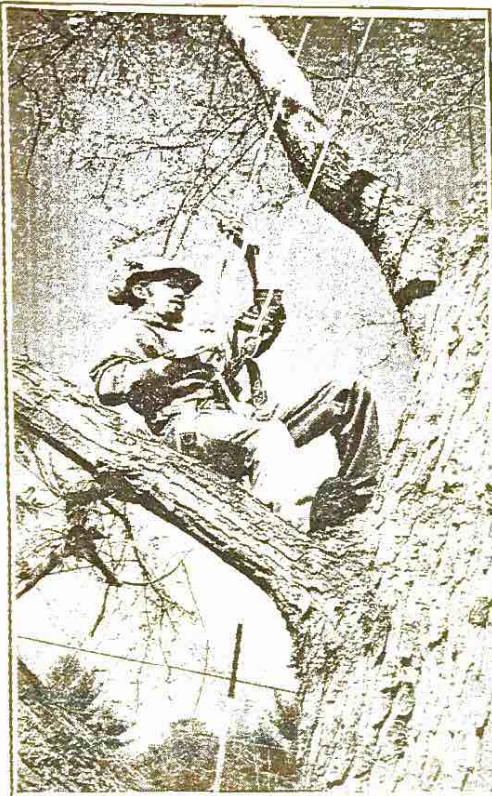
# The Newsletter LANDIS ARBORETUM

Esperance, New York

Fall 1999

Volume 18, No. 4

## From the Garden - Nick Zabawsky



### Table of Contents

From the Garden.....	1 & 2
New Certificate Program .....	3
Long Range Planning.....	3
Acorn Shop News .....	3
Fall Work Day .....	4
Volunteer Thank Yous.....	4
Arboretum Update .....	5
Wish List.....	5
Winter Workshops.....	5
Step Right Up	
To See the Living Fossil .....	6
Lady Bug, Lady Bug .....	7
How Does Our Garden Grow.....	7
Arbor Day Contest Winners.....	8
The Paradox .....	8

### A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO SENATOR SEWARD

The Arboretum will have funding to continue its renovation efforts on the farmhouse and other facilities, thanks to a grant obtained through the efforts of Senator James Seward. The \$10,000 member item grant was approved as part of this year's NYS budget, and will be administered through the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation. The funds for this grant will become available once the Arboretum files the necessary paperwork with the state, and a contract is executed for the funding. Senator Seward has been a longtime member and supporter of the Arboretum, and we are most grateful for his efforts.

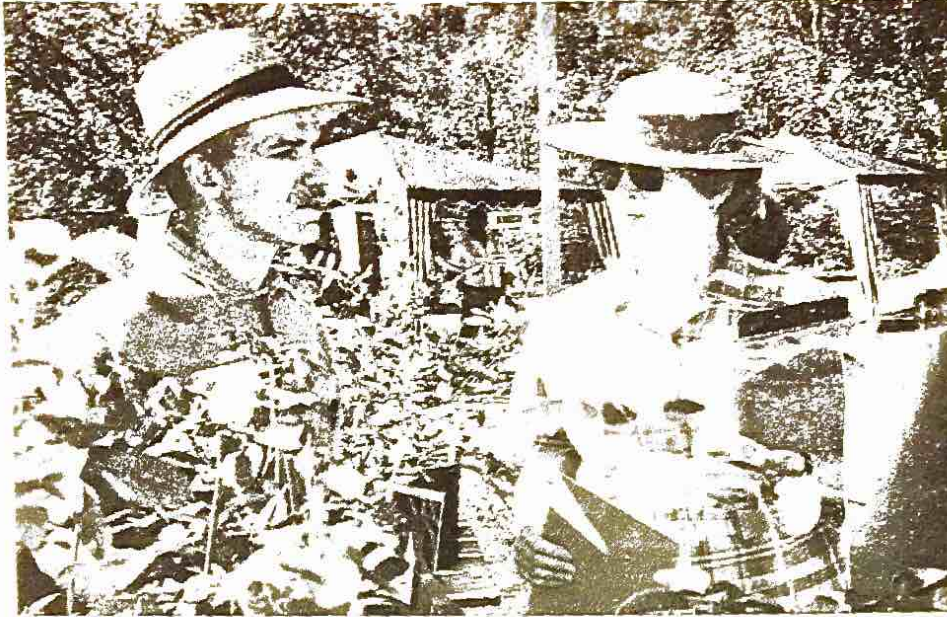
### LANDIS TRUSTEE MAKES SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION

Many volunteers, employees, and trustees donate a considerable amount of time, talent, and funding to help the Arboretum achieve its goals. These donations are made all the time, and we are all very grateful for them. These donations are truly the lifeblood of our organization. However, there are times when a donation stands out from the rest, and special notice is in order. Such is the case with the recent contribution of Dr. Mervyn Prichard. Merv is a very dedicated and hard-working trustee, who can always be counted on to help with special events such as plant sales, fall cleanup days, and the like. But this year, he also made a major financial contribution, in the form of a donation of 500 shares of LSI Logic stock. The stock, once transferred to the Arboretum, was then sold for almost \$50 per share, resulting in \$25,000 in proceeds for the Arboretum. Landis owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to Dr. Prichard for his act of philanthropy. The donation will be added to the Arboretum's endowment funds to ensure the organization's financial viability for future generations.

### MYSTERY BENEFACTOR

The Arboretum has a secret friend. This special person feels very strongly that for the Arboretum to achieve its potential, the position of staff horticulturist needs to be funded on a permanent basis. Those who have seen the work of Fred Breglia, our current horticulturist, can testify to the great improvements he has made since the position became a fulltime year around one. Our mystery benefactor wants to ensure that those good works continue by building an endowment to support the horticulturist's salary on a permanent basis. Last year our mystery friend donated \$10,000 toward this endowment. During 1999, this person committed to donate another \$10,000 to the endowment, as long as it was matched by an additional \$10,000 donation by trustees and others. Several trustees have taken up the challenge. Herm Finkbeiner led the effort with a total \$4,000 donation, including a GE match. Trustee Nancy Boericke pledged \$2,000 including match

*(Continued on page 2)*



ABOVE: Nick Zabawsky, Board President, and Carol Wock, former Board President and Fall Plant Sale volunteer, confer at September's plant sale. This year's Fall Sale netted \$3,740.16 for the Arboretum. Photo: Rick Ohlerking

funding, and Nick Zabawsky promised another \$1,000. Former Arboretum President Ann Jaster also pledged \$1,000 including match funds. So far, we have \$8,000, which is still \$2,000 shy of the \$10,000 challenge. We certainly don't want to let our mystery benefactor off the hook, so if you feel the horticulturist's position should be permanently funded, please do not hesitate to join us in meeting this challenge.

#### LANDIS IS BENEFICIARY OF HELEN BEALE ESTATE

The Landis Arboretum was recently the recipient of \$63,000 from the estate of Helen Beale, who was a longtime member and benefactor. As with the donation from Dr. Prichard, the proceeds will be placed in the endowment fund to provide future income to the Arboretum.

#### FRED BREGLIA CERTIFICATION GRANTED

Fred Breglia, Arboretum horticulturist, recently successfully completed the certified arborist examination administered through the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). The purpose of the certification program is to improve the level of knowledge and standard of practice within the tree care profession. The ISA is a scientific and educational organization devoted to the dissemination of information in the care and preservation of shade and ornamental trees.

#### FAREWELL TO PAT RUSH

Our executive director, Patricia Rush, has joined her husband Chris in retirement. We are sorry to see her leave, as the Arboretum made great strides during her term of office. During Pat's tenure, the Arboretum made improvements to its physical facilities including renovations to the farmhouse and barn, as well as substantial improvements of the grounds and the collections. Fundraising and grant writing efforts expanded, and Pat brought in the first grant through the Department of Environmental Conservation for labeling and expanding our tree collections. She also was instrumental in initiating the horticultural certificate program and played a major role in starting the long range planning process that will chart the Arboretum's future course. Pat will be missed by all of us. We wish her the best of luck in her new endeavors.



THE LANDIS ARBORETUM

#### NEWSLETTER

is published quarterly for its members. The Arboretum's mission is to provide natural history and horticultural education through its programs and through its plant collection.

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Fran Finkbeiner

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Florence Grimm, Barbara Hunt, Anne Jaster,  
John Manion, Cindi Mickle,  
Nick Zabawsky

#### Printer

Shipmates

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#### WELCOME TO CAROLYN EDWARDS

Carolyn Edwards has returned to work in the Arboretum office. She is temporarily replacing Shelley Weed who left to find a fulltime position. Carolyn will be in the office from 9 am to 1:30 pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

## New! Certificate Program in Horticulture

- Nancy Boericke

Are you one of our members who has wished the Landis Arboretum would offer more educational programming? The enclosed brochure is your opportunity to participate in what we hope will be a well-received and highly regarded Certificate Program in Horticulture.

The Landis Arboretum and SUNY Cobleskill's Division of Agriculture and Natural Resources are offering a program designed to inform professionals, homeowners and garden lovers about the latest in cultural practices and landscape design. Foundation courses such as Introduction to Botany, Identification of Herbaceous Plants, and Tree and Shrub Identification have been included to refresh and broaden the education of all levels of gardeners.

Although most of the classes will be held in the newly refurbished library at the Arboretum, some classes (as noted) will be at SUNY Cobleskill. You will note that a brief description of courses planned for the year 2001 is included so that you might make plans to continue the series and complete the Certificate Program.

Read the brochure and consider registering for one or more of the courses offered in 2000. Make copies for friends, if you'd like, or have them contact Dr. Goodale's office (518) 255-5323 for a copy of the brochure. Registrations may be made by check or credit card.

## Long Range Planning Committee

We all know that the Landis Arboretum is the result of a grand vision by Fred Lape. As the years pass, many more options and many directions have become apparent - all worthy - but choices must be made and a coherent plan developed to make the best use of our resources. The Board of Directors recognizes that a long range plan is necessary to provide a clear vision for the membership, staff and volunteers, a vision that we may convey to funding agencies, donors, visitors, and to the communities that Landis serves.

On August 28, 1998 the Landis Arboretum Planning Committee met for the first time with Ken Wing (Chair), Chris Cash, Herm Finkbeiner and Nick Zabawsky, Committee Members in attendance. Donald Rakow, Director of Cornell Plantations, gave a presentation on long-range planning. Retreats to obtain input from the entire board were held at SUNY Cobleskill on November 7, 1998 and on March 6, 1999; another retreat is scheduled for November 13, 1999.

While the work is far from complete, a great deal has been done. Mission, vision and value statements have been developed and accepted by the Board. Development of goals and strategies for five key areas - collections, physical plant, programs, finance, personnel - are well under way with good outlines of our strengths, weaknesses, and the critical issues in each area to help evaluate present conditions and future potential.

In addition to our utilization of the resources at the Arboretum and on our Board, the Department of Landscape Architecture at Cornell and SUNY Cobleskill students and faculty may be able to assist us with physical aspects of the emerging master plan.

Among services to be obtained are detailed topographic and aerial maps at a feasible cost.

Progress reports from the Planning Committee will be included in future newsletters.

## Acorn Shop News - Barbara Hunt

The Acorn Shop at the Arboretum officially closed on October 31; it will reopen in May 2000. We thank all of you who stopped by to shop and we thank all those volunteers who helped to run the shop on weekends. We look forward to seeing all of you here next year!

But now Landis gift items are a year around part of the Departure Shop at Albany International Airport also! Florence Grimm, Judy Lott, my husband and I attended the official opening and ribbon cutting ceremony at the airport on October 19. The Departure Shop is splendid and well-arranged; anyone going to the airport should take a look for themselves.

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ABOVE: Pictured left to right, Bob Grimm, Spiro Socaris, Fred Breglia, Rick Ohlerking and Terry Staley are enjoying a food break at the Fall Work Day. Photo: Florence Grimm

## Fall Work Day - Cindi Mickle

Twenty hearty souls, including five SUNY Cobleskill students, spent October 23 preparing the Arboretum grounds for winter. Leaves were raked; repairs were made on the greenhouse roof; Thompson's sealer was put on the kiosk and library; shingles were replaced on the library roof; deer fencing was installed around the library plantings; bulbs and rhododendrons were planted; chain saw work was done on the Woodland Trail; tree identification signs were "planted"; and the picnic tables were put away. The grounds look lovely.

This wonderful crew was fed a bountiful lunch with generous donations from Stewarts at Route 20 & 30, Countryside Food Mart in Sloansville, P&C Foods, Price Chopper, and Howe Caverns. Tools for the workday were donated by Agway and Selkirk Hardware, both in Cobleskill. CT Farm & Country donated work gloves.

To everyone involved in Fall Work Day '99 - thank you, thank you, thank you. All your efforts are appreciated.

The involved logistics that made this day possible included contacting food donors, and picking up and setting up the food. The Plant Science Club and other students at SUNY Cobleskill were told about the day. Lumber for the greenhouse roof was purchased, the pieces cut and holes drilled. Extra long ladders were furnished, and the trash was taken away. More than 130 volunteer hours were tallied for this successful event. >>

## Volunteer Thank You - Florence Grimm

The Arboretum put on a wonderful display of color this fall. And, it's time to say thank you to many wonderful volunteers. To Jerry Horton, for using his newly-learned skills in pruning, and to Terry Staley for being the "Jack of All Trades" - thank you. Bob Ringlee is to be thanked for his help with pruning the lilacs. Durward DeGroff is our "Jack of all the woodworking trades" - thank you. Many things work so much better now that Durward has fixed them. A thank you goes to the Albany Master Gardeners - Carol and Vivien. Thanks to volunteer Viktoria Serafin for the donated hosta plants. A thank you to Florence McKie and all the other office volunteers. Thanks to Gil O'Brien, Ron Neadle and Dick Clowe. The list is long; there are many I've missed. **A hearty thank you to you all. You are needed and appreciated. A volunteer is a very valuable person.**

The next season is year 2000. The aim is to get the farmhouse painted. That means storms off, painted, glazed; shutters off, painted and a few new ones made. There is much work to be done. Many volunteers are needed to make this a fast and easy job. While the brush is wet, the picnic tables and benches need to be painted. The next newsletter will have exact dates for starting this project.

Have a good Holiday Season.

Plans are already in the making for the Spring Work Day. We encourage everyone to join us for this event; to volunteer for this and other events, contact the Arboretum at (518) 875-6394.

Gary DeLuke



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## Arboretum Update

- Fred Breglia

As I have been walking the grounds and working outside, I've been overwhelmed by the beautiful colors that have surrounded me. During periods of drought like those we had this summer, trees will react either by shutting down and the leaves browning out and dropping off, or they will show bright, vivid colors that are short-lived. This year the colors were very bright but they are now past their peak as the season moves on. This fall has been very busy for me and it seemed to go by faster than ever before.

I have been working on the DEC grant to label the arboretum's Notable Trees. The new labels are 5" x 7" and made of a metal guaranteed to be free of defects for 30 years. The information includes the common and botanical names of the plant, its native range, and the common and botanical family names. The information is inscribed by a laser process and is guaranteed never to fade. (See photo, right.) As part of the grant we will be able to produce a brochure which will serve as a self-guided tour of the Notable Tree Collection and will include a brief description of each tree along with a map showing locations.

The grant also includes money to make labels for other trees in our collection, particularly the Cornell Recommended Street Trees. The signage will be the same as for the Notable Trees, except a smaller 3" x 5". The first batch has arrived and another will soon follow, giving us many permanent identification labels in our collection.

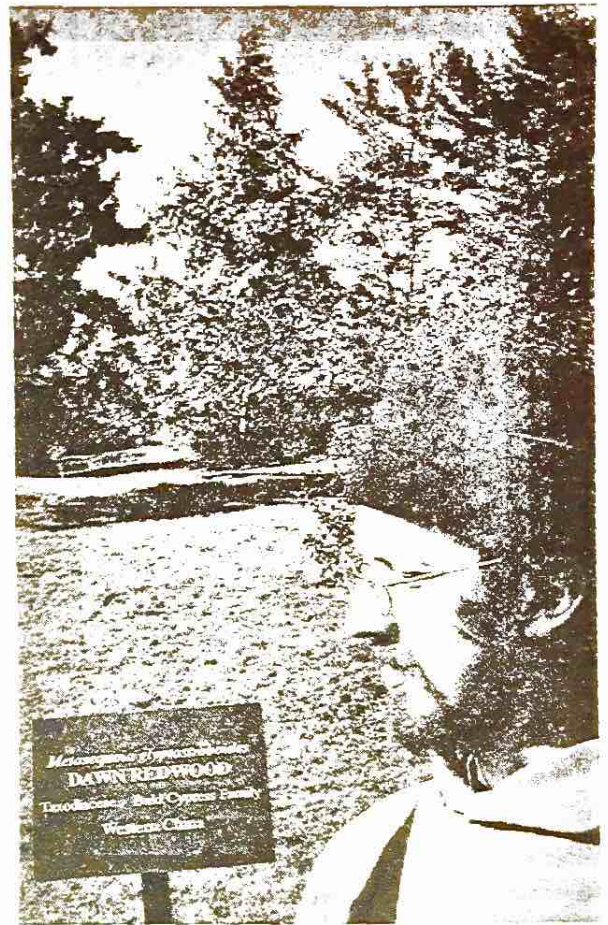
We have also worked on many of our mature trees. I have inoculated mycorrhizae, a beneficial fungus, into the soil around tree feeder roots. The fungus attaches to the feeder roots and begins to grow outwards through the soil beyond the tree's own root system. It brings in water and nutrients from the soil to the tree, greatly improving the health of the tree. It is a symbiotic relationship between the tree and the fungus - the tree receives nutrients and water always in the soil and necessary but unavailable to the tree; and the fungus receives a by-product of photosynthesis necessary to its own well being. The mycorrhizae is incorporated into the soil with a gas-powered drill that bores a hole 1.35" in diameter and 18" deep; the holes are drilled in the feeder root zone of a tree and mixed with existing soil.

Pruning of many of our mature trees is another task that kept me busy this fall. I've used ropes and harness to climb many specimens in order to cut out dead, diseased and crossed branches. A lot of these trees are really nice specimens that simply had some dead branches in the canopy that gave the tree a bad appearance and could lead to poor health and decline.

Come on out and see the improvements in your arboretum!

## Winter Workshops

Two workshops are planned for winter 2000: "Tree Identification," presented by Landis Horticulturist Fred Breglia will be held on Saturday, February 12 at the Arboretum, and "Time-Saving Secrets for Your Garden's Care and Upkeep" by Carrie Mendez will be held on Thursday, March 2 at the Unitarian Church in Schenectady. Additional information about the latter program will appear in the first quarter 2000 newsletter, to arrive in your mailboxes in mid-February. For class times and other information about "Tree Identification," or to register for either presentation, phone the Arboretum at 875-6935.



## Wish List

Our wish list hasn't changed much from the last issue. We purchased CB walkie talkies to make it possible for the horticulturist, working alone on the grounds, to maintain two-way contact with the office staff.

- We would appreciate donations toward the purchase of a heavy duty chain saw, a tool that is essential to the work here at Landis.
- Expansion of the arboretum's collection to include Cornell's list of trees suitable for urban planting makes the use of a larger tractor and accessories essential. If you can **suggest a means for borrowing or leasing, at a feasible cost**, a John Deere tractor 700 or a machine of equal quality, 30 HP, with 4-wheel drive, backhoe and loader - please contact Fred Breglia. Of course, chores at the arboretum - tree planting, moving mulch, maintaining a compost pile, and many day-to-day activities - would be more easily and efficiently done over the years if we could **purchase** the tractor.

We are grateful for your donations of rakes and other hand tools; they are necessary and appreciated.

If you can help us with donations or if you have suggestions how we may acquire the equipment described here, call Fred Breglia (518) 875-6935.

# Step Right Up To See the Living Fossil

- John Manion

*John Manion, plantsman and persuasive Arboretum Plant Sale volunteer, currently is working on a Bachelor of Technology degree in plant science at SUNY Cobleskill.*

It's difficult to imagine a tree with a more intriguing genealogy than *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, commonly known as dawn redwood; the account of its history reads like a botanical thriller. It was in 1941 that a Japanese paleontologist realized that the fossils he was examining were of a tree that was unknown to the world; he named it *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*.

As usual, one can tell much about a plant by dissecting its name. The entire name is derived from the Greek and breaks down thus. *Meta* means changed; *sequoia* refers to the sequoias of our West Coast; *glypto* means to carve; *strob* is from *strobilus* meaning cone (in reference to the cones having a carved appearance); and *oides*, which means like that of, is in reference to its resemblance to the Chinese water cypress (*Glyptostrobus*). It was placed in the Taxodiaceae, the Bald Cypress Family.

Later that year a Chinese forester, who had been sent to check on firewood supplies in eastern Szechwan Province, found a curious-looking tree that he was unable to identify. It was growing near a stream, adjacent to a temple in remote inland China. The local villagers called the tree "water fir." Through a series of events such as seeds being lost and then found, it wasn't until 1947 that the tree was identified as *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*. This must have been very exciting news for the world of science when word spread of the tree's discovery. The media of the time referred to the event as being "the equivalent of a live dinosaur being discovered." From that point on the tree was given the nickname "The Living Fossil." In fact, research has shown that metasequoia once flourished across the Northern Hemisphere along with the dinosaurs, and that there were so many of these trees three million years ago during the Crustacean Period (the Age of Reptiles) that it would have been considered a weed. The cause of its disappearance is unknown and only adds to the intrigue. As if this tale isn't exciting enough, this is the only discovery of a hardy tree genus in the twentieth century.

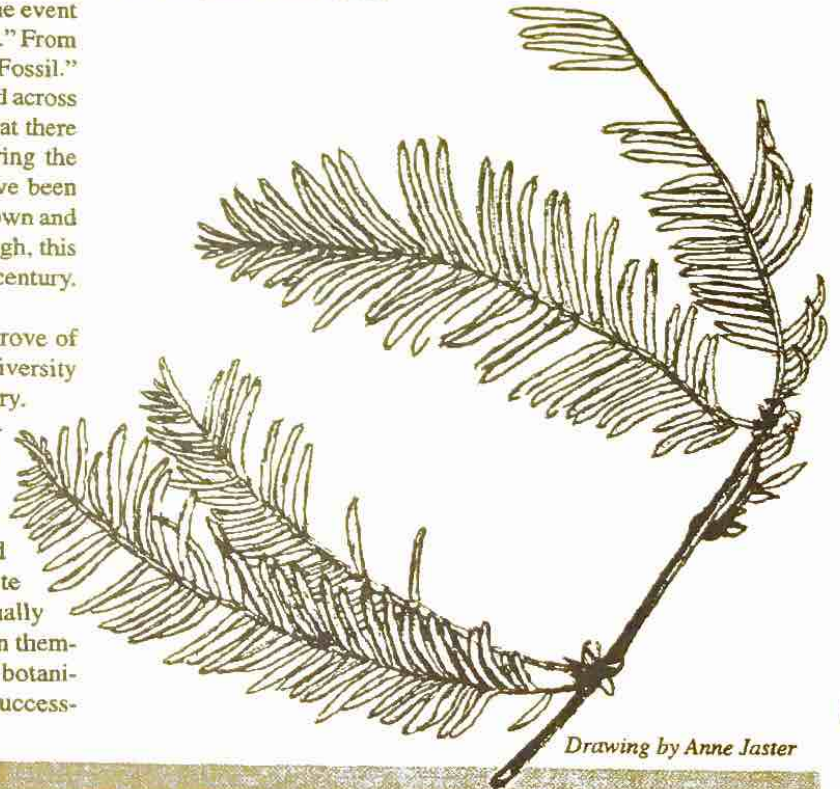
Shortly after the tree was positively identified, a whole grove of them was found and the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University financed a seed collecting expedition to the area of discovery. Coincidentally, the Chinese dendrologist that first identified the tree was one of the first Chinese botanists to receive a PhD from Harvard, in 1925.

Because of war raging in China at the time which placed several obstacles in the way of obtaining seeds, it took quite a while for them to finally be delivered to Harvard. Eventually they were able to procure enough seed to begin propagation themselves as well as to disseminate seed to other arboreta and botanical gardens. Over the last fifty years, the tree has been successfully grown in many parts of the world.

Dawn redwood is one of the few deciduous conifers and drops its needles (if one can call something so soft and feathery needles) late in the fall. Its foliage turns a beautiful coppery-reddish-brown color in the fall and looks beautiful in the vicinity of other fall reds, yellows, purples etc. As the tree matures it takes on a symmetrical pyramidal form, and the bark that is reddish brown in youth becomes darker and fissured in an undulating manner, with age, eventually exfoliating. With maturity, the dawn redwood's trunk becomes buttressed, the limbs reminding one of uplifted arms, each with an exposed axilla beneath. The cones are approximately an inch in diameter and are horizontally incised. Because of these traits, this is an excellent choice of specimens to plant for winter interest. Relatively fast-growing, under ideal conditions it will grow two to three feet a year vertically and eventually reach 70 to 110 feet in height and 25 feet in width. *Metasequoia* does best in full sun and even though it prefers moist soil, it is tolerant of many soil conditions and is hardy from USDA Zones 5 to 8. It has no known pests or diseases.

Our specimen of dawn redwood here at the Landis Arboretum grows on the knoll above the lower parking lot and can be seen from there. (You'll see it in the photo on page 5.) To reach the tree, take the Fred Lape Trail that begins just to the right of the information kiosk at the end of the parking lot.

Come see our "living fossil" and think about its fascinating genealogy as you gaze upon it. I don't know about you - but I've never metasequoia I didn't like.



Drawing by Anne Jaster

## Lady Bug, Lady Bug, Fly Away Home... Wanted! Asian Ladybeetles

- Fred Breglia

With fall upon us and winter under its wing comes cooler temperatures and shorter days. When these environmental changes occur, the Asian ladybeetles (*Hippodamia convergens*) begin to look for places to overwinter. In the process of looking for suitable hibernation spots they will accidentally make their way into many of our homes. Once inside they will be subjected to death by vacuum cleaners, sprays, and fly swatters. Even if you let them spend the winter in your house, they will die of desiccation (drying out).

Ladybeetles are general predators that prefer aphids of all sorts but will feed on scales, thrips, and caterpillars; both larvae and adults feed on aphids. The adult females will lay clusters of orange, oval-shaped eggs on the underside of leaves near heavy populations of aphids. The adults will consume about 5000 each during their lifetime.

For those of you who are not familiar with ladybeetles, they are small orange beetles about 1/4 inch or less and have from one or two to fifteen or more black spots on their backs.

This year I'm going to be collecting ladybugs from around the arboretum, and with your help, from your homes as well. I will have a collection site here at the arboretum and we'll store them over the winter. Then, in spring, we'll have our first Annual Ladybeetle Release Day. Building up a healthy population of ladybeetles around the arboretum will help to keep pest populations at bay, while at the same time, help reduce chemical use, leading to a cleaner environment.

If you have ladybeetles in your homes, please collect them in a coffee can or jar with holes punched in the top to let in air, and a slightly moistened paper towel in the bottom to provide humidity. Keep them in your refrigerator until you can bring them out to the arboretum and drop them off. They will have a greater chance of survival if you can get them here as soon after collection as possible. Please call ahead to make sure I'll be here; my regular hours are 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



## How Does Our Garden Grow?

New Members - Please note that the names listed here are new members that joined during the third quarter of 1999. We wish you welcome! A complete list of members and contributors is available once each year.

Sandy Bobelak  
Joe Capobianco  
Dennis Drenzek  
Carolyn Hermes  
Wayne B. Hinds  
Lynn and Mark Kindinger  
Don Kruger  
Dorothy Lewandowski  
Michele Litty  
Marcia Lupe  
Shirley and Donald Martin  
Sandra Mengo  
Debbie Paden  
Pickett Family  
Joanne Rosman  
Jeff Schworm  
Laura Scoones  
Michelle A. Singer  
Florence Soah  
Pat Van Buren  
Ruth Wolfgram  
Nancy Young

The true meaning of life is to plant trees,  
under whose shade you do not expect to sit.

- Nelson Henderson

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## Trees

Trees give off beauty  
As they glimmer in the light.  
They sing and dance in the wind.  
But one at a time they are getting cut down.  
So plant one if you can.  
Trees are like humans; they feel, they breathe,  
they grow.  
Trees hold memories from the past, memories  
from the present.  
Trees give off beauty as they glimmer in the  
light.  
They sing and dance in the wind.

- Daniel Justa, 5th Grade, Hebrew Academy  
Mrs. Anapolsky, Teacher

**First Place Winner,  
1999 Arbor Day Contest, Landis Arboretum**

## A Birthday for the Trees

A birthday for the trees,  
The things that give us air to breathe.  
A birthday for the trees that give us shade,  
The ones under which we may have played.  
A birthday for the things  
that give us fresh fruit to eat,  
Coming from a tree, it's a special treat.  
The trees that we climbed  
when we were small,  
When we reached the top, we were very tall.  
The trees that take  
carbon dioxide out of the air,  
Without these trees, we would be nowhere.  
The trees that give beauty to our Earth,  
For all these reasons and more,  
We celebrate their day of birth.

- Sara Shechter, Grade 5  
Hebrew Academy  
Mrs. Anapolsky, Teacher

**Second Place Winner  
1999 Arbor Day Contest  
Landis Arboretum**

## The Paradox

- Written by a Columbine student

*This was given to me by a friend who had read it in another organization's newsletter. In turn, I am including it in the newsletters that I edit. - Editor*

The paradox of our time in history is that we  
have taller buildings, but shorter tempers;  
wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints;  
we spend more, but have less;  
we buy more, but enjoy it less.  
We have bigger houses and smaller families;  
more conveniences, but less time;  
we have more degrees, but less sense;  
more knowledge, but less judgment;  
more experts, but more problems;  
more medicine, but less wellness.  
We have multiplied our possessions,  
but reduced our Values.  
We talk too much, love too seldom,  
and hate too often.  
We've learned how to make a living,  
but not a life;  
We've added years to life, not life to years.  
We've been all the way to the moon and back,  
but have trouble crossing the street  
to meet the new neighbor.  
We've conquered outer space,  
but not inner space;  
we've cleaned up the air,  
but polluted the soul;

We've split the atom, but not our prejudice.  
We have higher incomes, but lower morals;  
We've become long on quantity,  
but short on quality.  
These are the times of tall men,  
and short character;  
steep profits, and shallow relationships.  
These are the times of world peace,  
but domestic warfare;  
more leisure, but less fun;  
more kinds of food, but less nutrition.  
These are days of two incomes,  
but more divorce;  
of fancier houses, but broken homes.  
It is a time when there is much  
in the show window  
and nothing in the stockroom;  
A time when technology  
can bring this letter to you,  
and a time when you can choose either  
to make a difference,  
or to just hit delete!