



The Landis Arboretum Newsletter

Lape Road

Esperance, New York

Winter 1998

Volume 17, No. 1

"A Garden of Trees and Shrubs: A Celebration of the Human Spirit" *Spring Benefit 1998*

The Arboretum's Spring Benefit - its twelfth - celebrates the re-publishing of A Garden of Trees and Shrubs by founder, Fred Lape. (See p. 2.) This very special event will be held at the Mohawk Club on North Church Street in Schenectady's Stockade on Saturday, April 4, 1998 from 4 to 7 p.m.

The silent auction portion of the event will be held from 4-6 p.m. to the musical accompaniment of John Charles Cook, classical guitarist. Complimentary hors d'oeuvres and wine will be served, and a cash bar will be available. Attendees view the displayed items and make their bids with paper and pen - mostly in silence - but with spirit and with participants always mindful of competitive bids! The live auction, again ably hosted by Jack Aernecke of Channel 6, begins at 6 p.m. with special items open to live bidding, and the winners of silent auction items are announced. Among the special items offered this year are dinner at the Mohawk Club with an evening at Civic Players in Schenectady from the Mohawk Club. And, Nancy and Ralph Boericke are donating a week's stay at their home on Bald Head Island, North Carolina - a repeat of last year's popular live auction item.

Copies of the newly-published edition of A Garden of Trees and Shrubs will be available for sale. An optional dinner at the Mohawk Club, by advance reservation only, will begin at 7 p.m.

The Spring Benefit Committee is chaired by Nancy L. Boericke and includes Diane Armstrong, Anne Jaster, Elliess Reimer and Jaqueline Tomlinson. Invitations will be mailed in early March; responses are requested by March 25.

If you know an individual or a business that might donate an item or a service, call the Arboretum (875-6935). Items might include plants, bulbs, garden tools and furniture - items related to gardening and the outdoors - artwork, theatre tickets, a gift certificate for lunch or dinner, a weekend at an inn, or a stay at a vacation home.

From the Garden

- Patricia Rush

Friends of mine have asked me "What do you do out there during the winter? Isn't it awfully quiet?" I looked through my calendar for the last two months and thought to myself that "quiet" doesn't really describe the activities at an arboretum during the winter.

This winter in particular has been full of activity because of the computer grant that Landis has received through the efforts of Senator Seward. We have been choosing software for our membership and contributions database, and for our financial programs. We've also been pricing and choosing hardware - new computers and printers. Much work needs to be done to transfer data from our old system to the new one, and the days have been busy with the implementation of this important project.

This grant is one of several that have been received recently; the Kaplan Fund's publication program, Furthermore, has awarded Landis \$5,000 to bring out a new edition of Fred Lape's book A Garden of Trees and Shrubs. The New York State Council on the Arts has awarded us a grant to support the Quercus String Quartet's concert this coming summer.

Grant writing takes up a lot of time right now, as we plan for the new fiscal year. Getting to know our wonderful volunteers has been a special project of mine. Going to Chamber of Commerce meetings to represent the Arboretum is a key activity. Getting to know all of the wonderful arboretum family, both local and extended, is my ongoing project for this my first year as Executive Director. No, it is not very quiet here in the winter.

Yet, there is the quiet beauty of the Arboretum in winter, particularly after a snowfall. Right now, as I write, it's Christmas Eve morning. The sun is shining brilliantly on fresh snow from yesterday's storm. Our resident turkey flock has left large tracks near the farmhouse; they've just about stripped the brilliant red berries from the winterberry bush in the Van Loveland Perennial Garden.

Continued on page 2 >

The Re-Publishing of "A Garden of Trees and Shrubs"

- Nancy Boericke

Landis Arboretum has received a grant from Furthermore, the publication program of the J.M. Kaplan Fund, to re-publish a hardcover edition of Fred Lape's book A Garden of Trees and Shrubs, Practical Hints for Planning and Planting an Arboretum. Originally published by Cornell University Press in 1965, the book contained a foreword by John M. Fogg, Jr. of the Morris Arboretum in Philadelphia. In that foreword Mr. Fogg wrote of the importance of small arboretums, and what he had to say is as relevant today as it was in 1965.

"...arboretums have emerged as necessities rather than luxuries...Regardless of their size and the nature of their scientific, educational, and aesthetic potentialities, they should be enthusiastically welcomed...One of the reasons why the present volume is so valuable is that in creating his arboretum its author started from scratch and thus can speak from his own experience of the multitudinous problems that such an undertaking involves..."

"Lape's book should have a universal appeal. For the established arboretum it should prove immensely valuable. For the college, school, or civic group that is contemplating the establishment of an arboretum, it should constitute an indispensable guide. But perhaps its widest audience will be among landowners who wish to improve their property and to increase the variety and enhance the quality of their plantings."

Personally, when I read this book I found direction for what had previously been haphazard plantings on my own property in an attempt to fill a large expanse of less-than-beautiful lawn covering a steep hillside. The steep hillside suddenly presented the perfect place for trees and shrubs - maybe even a sun pit!

When I was unable to obtain a copy of this slim volume for myself from any of the rare book dealers to whom I was referred, I suggested (to anyone who would listen) that the arboretum might benefit by re-printing the book. Luckily, Gloria VanDuyne, our previous Executive Director, was listening and, before she left us last summer, began an application to the Furthermore program which subsequently resulted in our receiving money to support the printing of a hardcover edition of A Garden of Trees and Shrubs.

A new preface will be added to the book by Dr. Richard Lighty, Director of the Mt. Cuba Center for the Research of Piedmont Flora, located in Greenville, Delaware, just outside of Wilmington. Dr. Lighty visited the Landis Arboretum in 1995 to professionally evaluate the site and the operations, giving advice for future development of this unique facility. We are one of very few arboretums not supported by some other, larger institution.

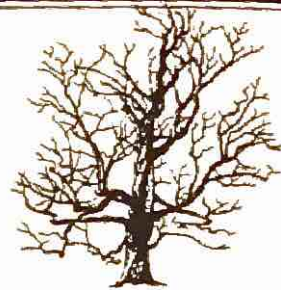
The appendices are being updated by our part-time, temporary horticulturist, Donna Gueli, so that the the referrals to books, plant materials, nurseries and other sources of plant material, equipment, and organizations will be current, making this 123 page volume an excellent reference tool.

A hardcover edition, this new volume will be suitable for libraries and reference collections. It will have a dust jacket for further protection and the book itself is a comfortable 7 x 11-inch size.

From the Garden - Continued from page 1-

Deer browse close to Lape Road, up near the Meeting House. The structure of the trees is so beautiful right now, particularly as their shadows are etched in the new snow. The evergreens, green against the brilliant blue sky, come into their own in winter. The old oak stands sentinel, on its promontory overlooking the Schoharie.

Winter is the time for planning, for preparing, for anticipating. It is a busy season. It is also a quiet time, and for me, a winter lover, never long enough.



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.

Editor

Fran Finkbeiner

Contributors

Nancy Boericke, Carolyn Edwards,
Herm Finkbeiner, Anne Jaster,
Cindi Mickle, Pat Rush,
Schoharie County Master Gardeners,
Viktoria Serafin, Tamara Wilson,
Carol Wock

Printer

Shipmates

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Nancy Boericke, Vice President, Finance
Herman Finkbeiner, Vice President, Planning
Carol Wock, Vice President, Program
Claudia McLaughlin, Secretary
Nancy Boericke, Treasurer
Christian Cash, Michael R. Durante,
Frank Gilmore, Linda Ohlerking,
Richard Ohlerking, Mervyn Prichard,
Susan Sagendorf, Mary Ann Tomlinson,
Earl Van Wormer III, Lucinda Willemain,
Nicholas Zabawsky

Emeriti

Merrill Bousman, Mabel Harkness,
Gilbert Harlow, Robert Raymond,
Richard Southwick, Will Roth

ARBORETUM STAFF

Patricia Rush, Executive Director
Carolyn Edwards, Office Manager
Tamara Wilson, Office
Ron Needle, Groundskeeper
George Steele, Science Educator

Address correspondence to:

Newsletter Editor

The Landis Arboretum

P.O. Box 186

Esperance, New York 12066

Phone: (518) 875-6935

Plant Sale Preparations

- Carol Wock

Planning for the 1998 Spring Plant Sale actually began immediately after last spring's sale when the committee met to evaluate the just-ended event.

Ordering of plants began the first week of July with the arrival of the first spring wholesale catalogue. Ordering continued through summer and fall, and was about three quarters complete by year's end. Small specialty nursery catalogues are arriving now and ordering will soon be finished. Is there a special plant you would like us to find for you? If so, call the arboretum or add a note to your advance order form.

We've made a few organizational changes in the committee. Herm Finkbeiner will serve as General Chair, Vice-chair Carol Wock will continue to concentrate on plant selection and ordering, and Peter Rumora will again serve as Vice-chair in charge of greenhouse production.

Recently some members have asked to be on the sale committee. If you are interested in serving on the planning committee, or on Plant Sale Day, please let us know by calling the office.

Last year's **Preview Party** for members was extremely popular and we'll repeat it this year. Details and the reservation form will be in the next newsletter.

Just a Reminder...



If you haven't already renewed your membership in the Landis Arboretum, please send in your renewal to assure prompt delivery of your next newsletter.

Also, if you are receiving duplicate mailings, or have changed your address, please notify us at 875-6935.

Mark Your Calendar!

- George Steele

The Arboretum's Calendar of Events will be included in the *next* issue of the newsletter. In the meantime, two of the Family Programs take place before your Arboretum calendar arrives. Please note the following events.

April 25. Saturday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., with a hawk identification program from 2 to 3 p.m. - **Spring Hawk Watch** - Last year's watch was a big success with many species of hawks and other birds being observed. You can join us any time during the day to help scan the Schoharie Valley for hawks on their way north.

May 9. Saturday, 7:30 to 9 p.m. - **Songs of Spring Night Walk** - Join us for a walk around the Arboretum listening to the songs of spring as the frogs, birds and insects herald a new year of growth.

Adopt-an-Area

- Cindi Michel

The Landis Arboretum is expanding an Adopt-An-Area program designed to provide dependable and continuing maintenance for specific areas of the Arboretum, and to reclaim other areas.

For a number of years the Master Gardeners of Albany County have worked diligently to maintain and enhance the Van Loveland Gardens, the colorful area that visitors see when they first arrive at the Arboretum. More recently, two other areas have been adopted. Boy Scout Troop #42 from Esperance adopted the Woodland Trail, and Chris Cash, an Arboretum trustee and staff member at SUNY Cobleskill, is responsible for the holding beds near the greenhouse.

Descriptions of various specialty areas have been compiled, areas with varying degrees of difficulty of maintenance. We are particularly eager to have the peony bed and the lilac collection adopted.

If you, or your club, or a group of friends with similar interests would like to spend time together on a rewarding project, call the Arboretum.



Coming Soon!

THE ACORN SHOP

We're ordering new merchandise in preparation for our May 15 re-opening, which "just happens" to coincide with the Spring Plant sale!

The Shop will be open weekends and for special events from Spring through Fall.

It's a fun job and a way to meet interesting people. We would welcome helpers! Call the Arboretum if you would like to help out.

- Judy Lott & Barbara Hunt

Barn Restoration Update

- Herm Finkbeiner

Significant progress has been made on the restoration of the barn. The perimeter drain, which was completed last February, is working well. On this January 11 there was a substantial stream leaving the daylight end of the drain and the area around the barn is much drier than in previous years.

We have four firm bids in hand; a decision about which bid to accept will be made in the next few days. At least one of the potential contractors says he would be able to work through the winter and would be able to start as soon as an agreement is signed. With luck that could mean that the barn will be useable by the Spring Plant Sale, May 15-17.

There is a need for very special help, however - one might say *hands on help*. When the start date is determined, the entire barn will need to be emptied. The work may have to be completed very quickly and we'll need all the help that can be mustered. If you think you will be able to help out, please put "Barn Clean Out" on your volunteering list, and when the call goes out, step forward!

Profile of a Donor:

Alan C. Bugbee

- Pat Rush

When you walk through the Arboretum this spring, you'll notice many new engraved plastic labels on trees and shrubs, labels that weren't there last year.

These labels are a gift from Alan Bugbee, West Simsbury, Connecticut, who has given not only of his time and skill in making these labels on his antique manual engraver, but also purchased the materials to use. Alan has engraved over 190 labels already, and is working on a list of almost 90 additional labels from a list sent him by Donna Gueli who worked as our part-time, temporary horticulturist from May through December.

Alan Bugbee became interested in the Landis Arboretum when he attended a meeting of the International Wood Collectors Society which was held here last year. In the generosity of his spirit, he offered to make the labels when he learned of the Arboretum's need to replace many of the original plant identification signs.

Alan's love of trees and wood manifests itself in several ways. He is a member of the International Wood Collectors Society, and has built a collection of over 1,000 wood samples. Alan is also a woodworker; his primary interest is in ornamental lathes. He is a graduate of Bowdoin College and is a retired advertising executive.

The Landis Arboretum is grateful that Alan chose to help us out by making engraved labels for our collection. - Pat Rush

How Does Our Garden Grow?



New Members - Please note that the names listed here are new members who joined us during the 4th quarter of 1997. **We wish you welcome!** A complete list of members and contributors will be provided once each year.

A list of 1996 members was included in the last issue of this newsletter; that list included errors and omissions from an overcrowded file. As noted by Pat Rush in "From the Garden," the Arboretum staff is transferring membership data to the Arboretum's new equipment. Along with the transfer, corrections will be made, and a 1997 membership list will be provided as soon as possible. Please bear with us. **If your name is incorrect or missing, please call the Arboretum (875-6935).**

Sarah Lynch Disney
Robert J. Flynn, MD
Kenneth J. Griffin
Holly Kahabka

Mary Ann Phibbs
Kenneth W. Ritchie
Dan Schuppel
Lewis and Barbara Wilson

Wish List

We received a ladder from Melita Gesche from the last newsletter's wish list. Thank you!

Still needed:

- a volunteer coordinator
- garden cart
- submersible pump
- small air compressor
- axe
- pipe wrenches
- chains for the arboretum tractor
- blade for the arboretum tractor
- someone skilled in the repair of old stone walls
- wheel barrow, 5 cu. ft. or larger
- 10 amp battery charger
- sledge hammer
- grease gun
- mechanic's tools
- assorted nuts and bolts to fix equipment
- a garden tractor, 15-16 HP



Your Timing Could Not be Better!



Now is the time to take advantage of the record-high stock market to maximize your charitable giving while enjoying tax advantages. The market is anticipated to continue to thrive, despite some recent ups and downs!

Your gift to the Arboretum of appreciated stocks, bonds, or mutual funds will help us protect this wonderful natural resource. In addition, such a gift can provide you with a charitable income tax deduction and may eliminate or reduce your capital gains tax (the tax you incur when you sell appreciated stock).



For more information, consult your broker or tax adviser, and call the Arboretum, at 875-6935.



George Landis Arboretum

PO Box 186 ~ Lape Road ~ Esperance, NY 12066
518-875-6935



We would like to extend our thanks to the following businesses who help support the Arboretum

WANT TO SEE YOUR BUSINESS LISTED IN OUR NEWSLETTER?

Advertise With Us!

Your ad will be seen by Arboretum members in our quarterly newsletter. Various sizes and prices are available.

For more information on how to place an ad in this newsletter, call the Arboretum office at 518-875-6935.

Wholesale Growers of Quality Landscape-Size Perennials

Behn's Best Perennials, Inc.

Excellent containerized perennial plants ready for resale and landscape use. 380 hardy varieties, 40,000+ plants on hand. Wide selection, wholesale only, weekly delivery for retail garden centers and landscape gardening professionals. Sales only to the trade.

1998 plant list available, call (518) 766-9820. Open March 2, M-F, 8-5.
Joseph and Caren Behn, Malden Bridge, NY 12115



George Landis Arboretum

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Yes! I would like to become a member

Name _____ New Member Renewal

Address _____ Phone _____

Membership amounts in excess of \$15 are tax-deductible

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$25 | <input type="checkbox"/> Supporter \$75 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$125 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contributor \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> Betty Corning Benefactor \$500 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Fred Lape Founders Circle \$1000 |

Make your check payable to:
Landis Arboretum

and mail to:
George Landis Arboretum
PO Box 186, Lape Road
Esperance, NY 12066

Yes, I would like to be a volunteer.

The Lilacs at Landis - Viktoria Serafin

Viktoria Serafin spent 600 productive hours at Landis Arboretum between May through October 1997 to complete the internship requirement for her Bachelor of Technology in Plant Science degree from SUNY Cobleskill.

Viktoria lives on Glenbrook Farm, Charleston, where she and her husband raise Finnsheep and Dorsets, including a hundred breeding ewes, soon to add greatly to the farm's population.

A Southeast facing slope in Esperance, sunlit and surrounded by ancient stone walls, is dotted with shrubs of all sizes and a few trees. A heavenly fragrance wafts on the spring breezes. Blossoms from glistening white to deepest purple hide the foliage of most of the shrubs. It is lilac time at the Landis Arboretum.

Fred Lape, the founder of the Arboretum, envisioned the field on his family farm as the home of his lilac collection. Lilacs were among the first plants he planted here, and Lape planted what he liked instead of trying to include one of everything. In his book A Garden of Trees and Shrubs (Cornell University Press, 1965), Lape says that "the flowering shrubs most pleasing to the public are undoubtedly the lilacs."

Today the collection includes well in excess of one hundred lilac species, hybrids and cultivars. In 1997 the bloom time began on May 22nd with *Syringa x hyacinthiflora* 'Assessippi', a lilac pink old variety, and with the French hybrid 'President Lincoln', which is one of the bluest. The last blooms of the season were those of the Japanese Tree Lilac, *S. reticulata* var. *reticulata*, which did not fade until the middle of July. (See photo, right, by Viktoria Serafin.) In a warmer spring, the lilac season could begin as early as Mothers' Day and attendees at the Arboretum's annual Spring Plant Sale could enjoy the show of lilacs as well.

Fred Lape's favorite lilacs included *S. x chinensis* 'alba', white Chinese Lilac, and the *S. vulgaris* hybrids 'Charles Joly', purple; 'Lucie Baltet', double pink; and 'Macrostachya', single pink. The specimens of the white Chinese Lilac and 'Macrostachya' at the Arboretum are especially lovely.

In the mid 1960's Fred Lape obtained seeds of two lilac hybrids, 'Caprice' ('Kapriz') and 'Cheat, from behind the Iron Curtain (the botanical garden in Alma Ata). He also obtained seeds of *S. x henryi* and *S. komarowi* from the Academy of Science in Kirghiz. He succeeded in growing a number of seedlings. After several years' wait for blooms and subsequent evaluation for vigor, form and bloom quality, in 1976 Lape registered *S. x henryi* 'Summer White' with the International Lilac Registrar at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton, Ontario. The seed for it came from Alma Ata. Six more selections, three seedlings each of *S. vulgaris* 'Cheat' and 'Caprice', were registered in 1982. 'Mohawk' and 'Catskill' bear single blooms of purple and pale purple; 'Schoharie' is a semi-double with light violet blooms; and 'Esperance', 'George Landis' and 'Van Loveland' have double blossoms in shades of purple. 'Summer White' has been available commercially; 'George Landis' can be found at the Royal Botanical Gardens; and several of the others are growing here at the Arboretum. Some of these hybrids



were sold to the public at the Rare Plant Sales from 1980-82. The Arboretum would like to hear from anyone having them in their gardens.

Lape also obtained lilac specimens from a local hybridizer, Edgar Polin of Charleston, who grew lilacs from seed in the 1950's. The acquisitions included French hybrids as well as some of Polin's own hybrids, which also can still be found here.

A well-known Central New York lilac grower made a generous donation of lilacs to the Arboretum last year. This donation added several new varieties to the collection. 'Dappled Dawn' is a variety grown not so much for its pale lavender flowers as for its bright green leaves mottled with gold, which add interest to a lilac planting when there is no bloom. 'Nike' is a *S. x prestoniae* hybrid; this group blooms two weeks after the Common Lilac and its hybrids, with a less pleasing, more privet-like fragrance. Other new additions include *S. x hyacinthiflora* 'Esther Staley', purple; *S. vulgaris* hybrids 'President Grevy', blue; 'Jessie Gardner', 'Louis Giels', 'Vesper Song', 'Yankee Doodle', and arguably the most beautiful one of them all, 'Krasavitsa Moskvyy' (Beauty of Moscow), which has pink buds opening to double white flowers. More varieties were donated for the Spring Plant Sale, and these included 'Lois Utley', *S. julianae* 'George Eastman', 'Sensation', 'Ruhm von Horstenstein' and *S. patula* 'Miss Kim'. Continued >

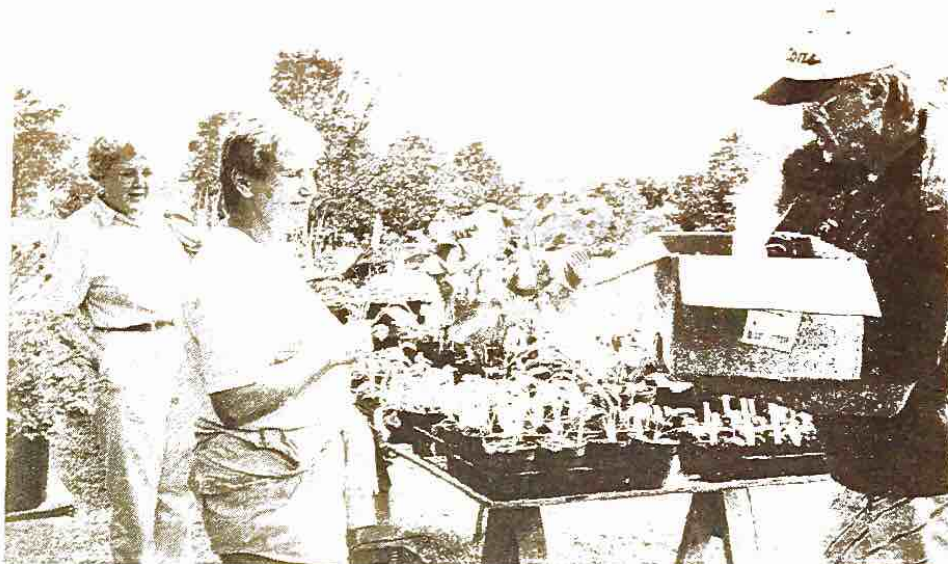
Some of the best specimens in the collection today are the previously described white Chinese Lilac, *S. x hyacinthiflora* 'Assessippi', 'Macrostachya' and 'President Lincoln'. Outstanding also are double white 'Alice Harding', and magenta purple 'Andeken van Ludwig Spaeth'. There are also large specimens of the Japanese Tree Lilac, *S. reticulata* var. *reticulata*, and Pe-kin Lilac, *S. pekinensis*, which are the last lilacs of all to bloom in late June.

The Common Lilac and one of the later-blooming ones, the Hungarian Lilac, *S. josikaea*, are native to southeastern Europe; all other lilac species come from the Far East, including China, Korea, Japan, and the Himalayas. In all there are about thirty species. There are no native American species. Lilacs were first brought to North America in the 1600's by colonists.

The most famous hybrids were the product of Victor Lemoine in France; he did his hybridizing in the late 1800's, and many of his lilacs are still among the most popular. The Arnold Arboretum has published a list of the 50 best lilacs for the Northeast and it includes many Lemoine hybrids as well as many that can be seen at the Arboretum. 'President Lincoln', 'Sensation', 'Charles Joly', 'Paul Thirion', 'Rhum von Horstenstein', 'Primrose', 'Lucie Baltet', 'Jan van Tols', 'Krasavitsa Moskvj', 'Miss Ellen Wilmott' and 'Assessippi' are all on this list. The best lilacs for very cold areas are the species *S. emodi*, *S. persica* and *S. laciniata*. Gardeners with limited space can still enjoy *S. patula* 'Miss Kim', the Manchurian Lilac, *S. microphylla*, Littleleaf Lilac and the hybrid 'Lucie Baltet', which stays smaller than most.

Lilacs are used for specimens and hedges. While they can be and are used for wind-breaks, the species *S. wolfii*, Wolf Lilac, has brittle new wood, and strong winds cause breakage.

Besides their lovely blossoms and fragrance, lilacs are also popular because of their ease of culture and adaptability to most conditions. Their basic requirements are full sun, good air circulation and good drainage. They are best transplanted in the spring, but container-grown lilacs can be planted at any time until the leaves are shed in the fall. Powdery mildew, which is the most common problem with lilacs, can be



In addition to her efforts in the lilacs and other areas of the Arboretum, Viktoria (shown here, center) worked on last year's plant sales.

controlled by good air circulation and, while unsightly, it usually does not harm the plant.

A number of recommended lilac hybrids will be offered at the Arboretum's Spring Plant Sale on May 16-17. These include the *S. vulgaris* hybrids 'Primrose', the only yellow lilac, 'Paul Thirion', 'Mrs. W.E. Marshall', 'Rochester', 'President Grevy', 'Edward J. Gardner' and 'Lucie Baltet', *S. x prestoniae* 'Miss Canada', which has the reddest flowers of all lilacs, and *S. laciniata*, grown more for its divided atypical foliage than its blooms.

For added pleasure, the lilac area can be accessed through the rhododendron area where, at lilac time, there are also many species and cultivars in bloom.

Who are the Master Gardeners? - Tamara Wilson

The Master Gardener Program was developed in 1972 in the State of Washington as a result of a cut in funding for Cooperative Extension. The Extension agents were overwhelmed with questions from amateur gardeners. They set out to find volunteer gardeners who, in exchange for specialized training, would volunteer to spend time answering questions from the public. Thus, the Master Gardener Program was developed as one of the many non-profit, educational services of Cooperative Extension. Today, there are Master Gardener Programs in 45 states, employing the volunteer services of more than 60,000 certified Master Gardeners. In New York State, Master Gardener Programs are active in 48 counties.

To talk to a Master Gardener in your county or to find out more about the program, contact your local Cooperative Extension office:

Albany County	518-765-3500
Columbia County	518-828-3346
Fulton County	518-725-6441
Greene County	518-622-9820
Herkimer County	315-866-7920
Montgomery County	518-853-3471
Otsego County	607-547-2536
Rensselaer County	518-272-4210
Saratoga County	518-885-8995
Schenectady County	518-372-1622
Schoharie County	518-234-4303

- Tamara Wilson, Master Gardener Coordinator, Schoharie County. Tamara is also part of the Arboretum's office staff.

Questions and Answers

The information provided here, which we hope you will want as a continuing feature in our newsletter, is provided by the Schoharie County Master Gardeners and comes from Cornell University and other non-biased, research-based sources.

1. Is winter a good time to prune? If so, what? What are the dos and don'ts of pruning away winter storm damage on trees and shrubs? And, what is the best way to remove snow and ice build-up after an ice or snow storm? Or should you leave it alone and let Nature take its course?

One of the traditional winter tasks is pruning of woody trees and shrubs. Many plants can be pruned in late winter (just before bud break) including roses, summer blooming shrubs, evergreen shrubs, and most vines. Avoid pruning spring blooming shrubs such as forsythia and lilac because pruning will remove flower buds set the previous fall. Also, avoid pruning species prone to bleeding or cankering such as birch, calleryana pear, crabapple, elm, maple, ornamental cherry and plum, spruce, and poplar.

Damage that occurs from winter storms or snow load should be removed promptly to prevent further injury. Branches should be pruned back to their origins, cutting just outside the branch collar or swelling at the base of the branch, to prevent dead stubs that may harbor disease or insects. When removing a limb with a diameter exceeding 1 inch, use the 3-cut method to avoid tearing the bark. Make the first cut with a handsaw or chain saw on the underside of the limb, 1-2 feet from the trunk, cutting half-way through the limb. The second cut is made on the top of the limb, 1 inch further out, causing the limb to break between the two cuts. The final cut along the branch bark ridge will then be clean because the weight of the limb will be gone.

Winter damage can be minimized by a few preventative practices. Be sure to keep trees and shrubs healthy and vigorous by proper care and maintenance. Prune out narrow "V" crotches that are most often damaged by wind, ice or snow. Avoid overfertilization which promotes weak growth and late summer/early fall fertilization which stimulates late growth that is subject to winter injury. Mulch plants to

prevent the alternate freezing and thawing of the soil that causes root damage and heaving. And give trees and shrubs a good, long watering before the soil freezes to help prevent desiccation.

Heavy snow accumulation can be removed from trees and shrubs by gently brushing it off with a soft broom in an upward motion. Ice, however, can be much more damaging and should not be removed. Rather, prevent damage to foundation plantings by using A-frame shelters or other protection from snow and ice falling from house roofs. Upright branches of pyramidal evergreens can be lashed together with soft twine and horizontal branches of evergreens and young fruit trees can be supported with "Y" stakes.

2. We all know that forsythia forces well for indoor winter bloom. What else would you recommend?

Plants that force easily are forsythia, flowering quince, pussy willow and apple. Plants that are more difficult to force include horse chestnut, cherry, witchhazel, honeysuckle, magnolia, bridal wreath spirea, red maple, swamp alder, Norway maple, shadbush, European birch, hickory, redbud, flowering dogwood, apricot, flowering almond, pear and andromeda.

"Forcing" simply means to provide conditions that make a plant think that it is time to bloom. Woody trees and shrubs need at least 6 weeks of cold temperatures before they will bloom, so branches can be brought indoors anytime after about January 1. Choose twigs with plenty of large buds on them; these large buds are generally the flower buds, whereas the small buds are the leaf buds. Prune carefully, making sure you take from several different areas of the plant to keep it evenly shaped. After you bring the twigs in, crush or slice an "X" in the base of the twigs to help them absorb water. Then submerge them in a tub of room temperature water overnight to reduce moisture loss. The next day, put twigs in a bucket or vase with water in a cool room with low light. This will allow the buds to develop as they would during early spring. Once buds start to swell, bring the branches into a well lit, 60-65 F room with indirect

sunlight. This will allow the color to develop and the buds to come into bloom. Warmer temperatures will cause faster bloom, but will diminish the overall color and development.

3. Do you recommend the winter time use of dormant oil? If so, on what plants is it safe and effective?

Dormant oils are petroleum-based products that are sprayed on plants to smother insects or eggs that are on that plant. Dormant oils are heavier than horticultural oils and must be used only when the plant is dormant and are used to control the overwintering stages of scales, adelgids and mites. However, since oils work by smothering insects and eggs, the pest must be present in order for oils to work. This means that dormant oil is preventative in that it will kill pests that are present and prevent them from surviving or hatching, but it will not prevent damage from insects that visit the plant during the growing season. Dormant oil can be used on most trees and shrubs, but some plants may be sensitive. These include thin-barked species such as maples, beeches and birches and evergreen conifers with waxy or powdery leaves. Oil may temporarily remove the bluish frosted material from the needles of "blue" evergreens and the natural bloom may not return for one to two years.

When applying dormant oils, keep the following in mind.

- The effectiveness of the treatment will depend on the thoroughness of application. The entire plant should be treated, including the trunk and undersides of branches.

- Apply on a cloudy, still day. Oil can magnify the intensity of the sun's rays and cause damage on a very bright day.

- Do not apply any oil 48 hours before or after freezing temperatures occur or are predicted.

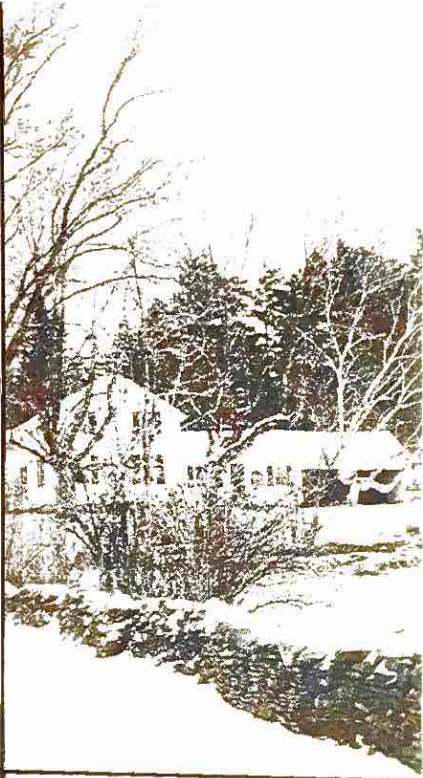
- Do not substitute horticultural oil for dormant oil.

- Finally, always read the label on the product. The label will state any extra precautions or procedures that should be followed and is the legal guideline for using that product. Dormant oils are a very useful tool and a least-toxic alternative for controlling pests.

Plant Sale Weekend

Members Only Preview Party: May 15, 5:30 to dark
Open to the Public: May 16 and 17, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Esperance, NY
Permit No. 6



The Landis Arboretum - Lape Road - PO Box 186 - Esperance, NY 12066

Winter Walk

Over the hill in the winter light
the wind roared, the snow went hissing,
the bare elms tossed their branches,
and down the hill I ran or was blown
into the woodlot, sombre and dark,
and quiet was there, and there I rested.

There I walked about a while
and calmed my mind from living's fury,
looked on the mossy trunks of trees,
fingered a beech leaf thin like paper,
and scuffed the leaves so quietly lying,
the end of fury, the final resting.
Then steeling my mind to meet them both
I tightened my coat and scrambled windward.

- Fred Lape
Along the Schoharie