

# The Brooksider

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## President's Letter

Dear Friends,

With fall's glorious colors and the opening of the mum show in the conservatories, it's time for the Friends of Brookside Gardens Annual Meeting. Join us on Sunday afternoon, November 4, from 1:00 to 3:00pm at the Visitors' Center. We know you'll want to attend this year to hear the latest on the Brookside Gardens master plan. Brookside director Stephanie Oberle will give a presentation on the plan's implementation – with details on design and construction. Just phase one will make our garden an even more welcoming and beautiful destination. Aside from updates and news, as always, the annual meeting will have lots of door prizes. And Painted Trillium, the ensemble that's almost our resident musical group, will delight us with their music.

During the first week of October, you should have received your membership renewal information. I hope you noticed that this year there's an opportunity to make a designated donation toward the master plan as a "charter contributor." If you haven't yet sent in your renewal, please consider an additional donation for this purpose.

Our winter holiday greens sale is coming up soon! In this issue, you'll find an order form for FOBG wreaths, trees, and centerpieces. These are all constructed from boxwood and have a unique holiday appeal. The pick-up date will be Saturday, December 1. Don't forget: Orders placed on or before the annual meeting will receive a discount!

When you originally became a member of FOBG, you had the opportunity to volunteer for various FOBG activities. As FOBG grows, we're looking for more involvement from our



members as volunteers. Here are some of the ways you can help FOBG – and by extension, help Brookside Gardens: assist with the orchid sale and annual plant sale, write articles for *The Brooksider*, assemble wreaths and trees for the holiday greens sale, provide web site design, contribute to the FOBG Facebook page, and aid with membership responsibilities.

Now, something special: We have begun planning the FOBG silent auction for November of 2013, with the theme *Holidays in the Garden*. It's a huge undertaking, and we will need many volunteers to make it a success. The auction committees that now need volunteers are procurement, publicity, printed program, refreshments, registration, room and table design and set-up, and support for the evening of the auction. If you would like to become involved, please call our voice mail, 301-962-1435 or, email us at [friendsofbrooksidegardens@yahoo.com](mailto:friendsofbrooksidegardens@yahoo.com).

I hope to see you on November 4. Please come up and say hello!

Barbara

# PUT YOUR OWN SIGNATURE ON THE 2012 HOLIDAY SEASON



Get ready for the FOBG annual holiday greens sale: December 1, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm in the Visitors Center.

These 100% boxwood wreaths, trees, and candle centerpieces are especially long lasting and won't drop needles or turn brown like pine or some other evergreens. Each decorative piece is hand assembled by FOBG volunteers, who also hand-pluck the boxwood just before the day of the sale so it's super fresh.

The boxwood will bring a natural beauty to your holiday decor. The wreaths look great with a big red or gold bow, and any of them can be a starting point for your own creative touches – battery-operated twinkle lights, strands of silver beads, dried berries, or whatever catches your imagination. Why not decorate one for a special friend or relative as a thoughtful gift?

There will be a **LIMITED supply** of these one-of-a-kind pieces! To be sure you get the boxwood pieces you want for the holidays, **Pre-Order** them now. Here's how:

- Use the order form in this newsletter link ([CLICK HERE](#))
- Pick up a form in person at the Visitors Center on the FOBG bulletin board
- Place your order at the FOBG annual meeting on November 4

As a special thank-you for supporting Brookside by the purchase of FOBG holiday greens, a discount of \$2.00 will be taken off each piece on all orders received by November 11, 2012.

This season FOBG offers the following boxwood pieces:

- 18" boxwood wreath - \$30
- 12" boxwood tree - \$25
- 1 candle boxwood centerpiece - \$18

The greens sale is one example of the many ways FOBG helps fund the ongoing projects that sustain Brookside Gardens. We donate all the proceeds from the sale to Brookside. Please participate and help make the 2012 holiday greens sale a generous gift from FOBG to Brookside Gardens.



**FINAL REMINDER!!!  
YOUR F.O.B.G. MEMBERSHIP  
WILL EXPIRE IF YOU DON'T RENEW BY OCTOBER 31!!**

Use the renewal form you received in the mail, or print one using this newsletter link ([CLICK HERE](#)) .

Be sure to mail back your completed form with your check right away, as we plan to send out the new membership cards the last week of the month. Don't let yours expire!

FOBG members get 10% discount at the Marylandica gift shops, discounted fees on many Brookside classes, discounts at many retail garden centers in our area, 10% discount on a subscription to Washington Gardener magazine, and the satisfaction of knowing that FOBG dollars help support Brookside Gardens' programs and plantings.



# TRIPPING THE LIGHT FANTASTIC

*Michael Salapka*

Brookside Gardens is well known for the Garden of Lights winter fantasy, but other gardens have been exploring light shows at other times of year.



My wife Pat and I often visit Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania to see the wonderful displays of flowers, fireworks, and fountains. Every so often, Longwood presents unexpected surprises, such as the exhibit of tree houses that became so popular as to have become a permanent attraction of the gardens. When we visited this year in mid-September, a fanciful and incredible display of lights was lying in wait to capture our imaginations.

The work, "Light: Installations by Bruce Munro," was a masterwork of ingenuity and craftsmanship that transformed the otherwise attractive natural beauty of Longwood Gardens into a



man-made feast for the eye. The weather the day we visited was as close to perfect as it gets. A clear, cool night resonated with the low murmur of visitors in awe of the exhibit and the sound of thousands of crickets in a chorus of appreciation for the welcome glow. And what a glow it was! Myriad lights fed by fiber optic cables turned colors from white to green to red to blue to a mix of different shades. The effect was mesmerizing. As one walked deeper into the forest, you began to notice that the landscape was being transformed into something unfamiliar, yet enticing. The lights on stalks seemed to multiply beyond comprehen-

sion. How many lights were there? Hundreds? Thousands? It didn't matter. The shimmering light-fall beckoned you on, deep into the woods. Kids were enthralled. Parents were overwhelmed. Couples shared close moments in the reflections of the ever-changing cascade of color.

And when you returned to the gardens, there was more to see. In the meadow a short walk away was another, quite different display. Standing there were 69 structures greater than the height of a person, all made of recycled plastic bottles. Changing colors and a sound system playing classical music allowed you to move among them and experience a complete immersion in art.



Oh, there was more! The small lake boasted a field of light, reflecting its image in the water. The effect of the changing colors was that of a wind softly blowing through the radiant flowers. Near the small lake, a serpentine trail like blue lava cascaded from the top of a slight incline to the path below. Unlike lava, though, the effect was cooling and serene.



Lest I forget, there was one installation best viewed in daylight...the "Waterlilies" on the large lake. Large discs made from recycled CDs, evoking the Victoria waterlilies found growing at Longwood Gardens, separated the sun's rays into individual notes of color and reflection.

The installation ended on September 29, but its effect lingers well beyond the last flicker.

*Michael Salapka is a retired U. S. Treasury official, who has had the opportunity to travel the world. He enjoys visiting gardens and occasionally writing about some of his more unusual travel experiences. A graduate of Rutgers University and New York University, Mike and his wife Pat reside in Rockville, Maryland, where he grows orchids.*

# WHERE YOUR FOBG DOLLARS GO:

## Focus on Plantings

*Louis Paley*

As members, your dues to FOBG are the backbone of support for many programs as well as plantings at Brookside Gardens. Here are the initiatives that you helped support in the past fiscal year:

- Spring and fall lecture series
- Children's Day
- Seasonal staffing
- Summer concert series
- Green Matters symposium
- Permanent plants for gardens

With regard to the permanent plants, thanks to FOBG, all of this spring's and summer's permanent plants (trees, shrubs, and ground covers) were bought with donated funds, as Brookside only has a plant budget sufficient to cover spring bulbs. This is important because without FOBG donations, the only other permanent plants would have to come from the Parks' Pope Farm nursery, because they are free. For the most part, Brookside already has what they stock, and they don't grow the more unusual items like dwarf conifers.

Since March, Brookside has spent about \$18,800 dollars on plantings. Here are some specifics on FOBG-funded plantings:

- 20 specimen witch hazels to bring new and rare cultivars, now planted throughout the gardens. They are available from only one source in the country in size (4'-6' B&B plants), which saved years of growing to size from the more easily found potted material.
- 2 specimen southern magnolias, 10' and 16'. The first is a new cold-hardy compact cultivar for the Winter Garden; the other replaced the declining one at the Reflection Terrace in the Gude Garden.
- 9 specimen dwarf conifers and one specimen Japanese maple, to plant around the conservatory and the new children's outdoor classroom ("patio" area).
- 2500 pots of variegated sweetflag for groundcover near the conservatory and Visitors' Center
- A specimen weeping cherry for the Children's Garden, and a specimen weeping hornbeam to replace the one in the Gude Garden that died.
- 30 miscellaneous landscape plants to plug holes throughout: lawn trees, shrubs, and trees for the Children's Garden (the most visible site).
- 200 plants not yet delivered for the Children's Garden and a renovation of the viburnum garden. Most notable is a new tall sweetbox, just introduced from Canada, that will be used as groundcover in the Gude Island, Children's, and Trial Gardens.
- Funding to move 5, 24'-tall London plane trees from the Parks' nursery, which were too big for Parks' equipment. These are in the Aquatic Garden as a grove between the entrance road and Anderson Island. They already look like they've been there for five years!

**FOBG MEMBERS ANNUAL MEETING**  
**Sunday, November 4, at 1:00pm**  
**in the Visitors' Center**  
**News 🍁 Updates 🍁 Door Prizes 🍁 Music**  
**See you there!!**



**Suggestions? Ideas? Let us know!**

**Friends of Brookside Gardens Inc. Board of Directors**

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