

seasons

HORTICULTURE NEWSLETTER

PHOTO COURTESY JO ELLEN MEYERS SHARP

'Mariesii' double file viburnum (*V. plicatum tomentosum*)

Greeting from Jonathan Wright

Welcome Spring



Spring has arrived at the IMA and as with every new season comes renewed energy and excitement for things to come. This is my first spring here in Indy, having arrived here in late February. I have spent my first weeks here learning as much as I can about the gardens, their history, and getting to know the talented staff and dedicated volunteers, members and supporters who give so much to this amazing place.

Since my arrival an amazing show of orchids in the Madeline F. Elder Greenhouse has given way to a lovely and colorful display of potted spring bulbs, and the grounds have awakened with a progression of blooms. Literally thousands of blooming geophytes provide an ever-changing carpet of color. Snowdrops (*Galanthus* spp.), Siberian squill (*Scilla siberica*) and daffodils (*Narcissus* spp.) have given way to summer snowflakes (*Leucojum* spp.) and tulips (*Tulipa* spp.). More than 23,000 new bulbs were planted last fall by our horticulturists and a team of hard working volunteers.

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Bonsai classes in Greenhouse

Based on popular demand, two Bonsai 101 classes will be taking place at the Madeline F. Elder Greenhouse on two Saturdays, June 18 and July 16. Taught by Indianapolis bonsai expert Paul Weishaar, this beginners' class will outline the basics and principles of the ancient art of bonsai. Participants will receive their own Brazilian rain tree, traditional bonsai container, instructions and assistance with shaping and potting their specimen. All supplies will be provided for this popular, hands-on class.

Pre-registration is required and class is limited to eight adults. Fee: \$75 for members, \$95 nonmembers. For details: imamuseum.org/class/bonsai-101

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The Horticulture Society Overlook is awash in the perfume of the Korean spice viburnum (*Viburnum carlesii*) and the Rapp Family Ravine Garden is bursting with color. Hundreds of newly transplanted vegetable seedlings are growing in the Tanners Orchard. Early spring tulips in the Dickinson Four Season Garden will soon give way to playful, ornamental onions (*Allium* spp.).

In the Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park: 100 Acres, carpets of rue anemone (*Thalictrum thalictroides*), *Trillium*, Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*) and bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) are reclaiming areas recently cleared of invasive honeysuckle (*Lonicera* spp.) and winter creeper (*Euonymus fortunei*). This is a reassuring sign that hard work can pay off!

Despite a few late cold spells, the saucer magnolia (*Magnolia x soulangeana*) at the Miller House and Garden in Columbus, treated guests to an incredible display of bloom. A profusion of tulips adds the same jewel-tone colors to the landscape as designer Alexander Girard's color-ful textiles do inside the iconic house.

As gardeners we are always looking forward. Our team is already working hard on plans an even more exuberant spring for 2017, dreaming up new ideas for the holidays and looking farther ahead, as we embark on an institution-wide master planning process in the not to distant future. In the short term, we are busy preparing to plant for this summer.

I look forward to watching the year in the garden unfold and to working with you as we continue to grow and enhance this magnificent campus we all love. As we all know, there is always something changing and new things to see. I hope to see you out in the garden soon.

Jonathan Wright

Ruth Lilly Deputy Director of Horticulture and Natural Resources

Path to Nature

**BY CHANDLER BRYANT, ART & NATURE PARK
GROUNDS COORDINATOR**

An 80-foot diameter labyrinth will be installed at the Virginia B. Fairbanks Art & Nature Park in May. The labyrinth, located in the meadow of the park, will be constructed using native plants.

Walking pathways will be bordered by native grasses, including switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) and little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), while the paths themselves will be manicured turf.

The IMA wants to inspire visitors to have a more engaging, natural and cultural experience in the park. There are many cultural uses for labyrinths dating back to the early Greek mythology. However, there is no clearly defined intention of use for our labyrinth.

Typically, a labyrinth differs from a maze in that it only has one entrance, one path to the center and one path out. It represents a journey to the center of our self and back out into the world. The labyrinth will allow our visitors to immerse themselves in nature. The labyrinth will give guests the opportunity to block out distractions and follow the path to become one with nature and self. ●

IMA Horticultural Society's officers and directors appointed to serve from June 1, 2015 to May 31, 2017:

President

Greg Shaner

Vice Presidents

Kevin Foy, Ann Hathaway

Secretary

Kathleen Hull

Treasurer

Rosie Steinmetz

Directors

Janet Belden
Jamie Gibbs
Jason Griffin
Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp
Dawn Stelts

Committee chairmen and chairwomen:

Book Discussion Group
Oren Cooley

Communications
Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp

A Garden Affair (auction and dinner)
Kevin Foy
Ann Hathaway

Historian
Helen Dickinson

Hospitality
Brenda Stewart-Rudolph

Library
Cindy Monnier,
Edie Enright

Membership
Dawn Stelts

Travel
Ann Hathaway
Patty Wilkins

Volunteers
Janet Belden

Focus on Volunteers

Estelle Huston Guides the Way

BY KATHLEEN HULL, HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY SECRETARY

Our Hort Soc volunteer Estelle Huston is Beaumont, Texas, born and bred. She even worked for Ross Perot's data company before computers were readily available for everyone. Estelle first came to Indiana to attend the University of Notre Dame. There she met her husband-to-be and returned to Indiana later to marry him and raise her family in Indianapolis.

As the chairwoman of the IMA Garden Guides Council, Estelle helps IMA Director of Horticulture Chad Franer by recruiting new guides and organizing the monthly training sessions. She also lines up guides for various public and group tours, and keeps track of how many visitors take advantage of the personal attention the guides provide in the gardens and park. Estelle also vol-



unteers as a computer assistant for Chris Morehead, manager of IMA Volunteer Services, and she does the data entry for the Horticultural Society's biennial fundraiser, *A Garden Affair*.

Estelle is grateful to Hort Soc Past President David Gorden for getting her involved at the IMA. Her favorite part of the garden guide program is "being outside, being with people, and watching the gardens grow and change." Her favorite garden area is the bed on the south end of the Lilly House lawn, where ephemeral bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*) and the lush spring foliage of lycoris are replaced later in the year by ostrich ferns (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*) and the naked lady's pink flowers (*Lycoris squamigera*). ●

A Garden Affair set for June 12

Tickets to the Horticultural Society's biennial fundraiser June 12, are available at the IMA website (imamuseum.org/garden-affair-2016). Invitations have also been mailed to members' homes.

The evening will be filled with fine dining and socializing, and provide opportunities to bid on unique and specialty auction items. While listening to live music, enjoy a buffet reception made up of a culinary array of passed and staged hors d'oeuvres, including local fruits and vegetables, international cheeses, sumptuous finger foods and a meat carving station. There will also be assorted pastries, coffee and teas. Complimentary wine and beer is included.

The silent auction will have a variety of hard-to-find plants, as well as distinctive and sought after items to enhance your home, garden and lives, many of them one of a kind. There will also be an interactive raffle.



PHOTO COURTESY IMA

Funds raised from the A Garden Affair's silent auction support the gardens and grounds at the Indianapolis Museum of Art.

Mark M. Holeman, Inc., is the premier sponsor for the event. Other sponsors include: Bartlett Tree Experts, Custom Touch Irrigation, Davey Tree, Jamie Gibbs and Associates, Mosquito Shield, Tiffany Lawn and Landscape, Treeo, Vine and Branch, and Yats. ●

Library Establishes Travel Section

BY CINDY MONNIER, LIBRARIAN

Browse the more than 200 books on travel garden destinations worldwide. This includes botanical gardens in the U.S. and abroad as well as gardens of Indiana, the Midwest, the United States, United Kingdom, France and Italy. Worth viewing for ideas, even if you do not make the trip (this year!)

Do you have a special interest? We can research for you ahead of your arrival. Master Gardener volunteers are on duty to assist.

For recent book additions, please check the library website, <http://imahortsoc.org/library/>. The online database is available for anyone to search from a computer or smartphone at <http://opac.libraryworld.com/opac/home.php>. Type in HortSoc to log in. No password is needed.

SUMMER HOURS ANNOUNCED

The IMA Horticultural Library's summer hours begin June 5. From June through August, the library will be open 1 to 5 p.m., Thursdays, on a trial basis. The library may be open at other times by appointment. To arrange, please



PHOTO COURTESY CINDY MONNIER

Brenda Stewart-Rudolph researches an answer to a question about bulbs.

call Cindy Monnier, 317-460-7751, or email hslibrary@imamuseum.org, or leave a message at the library phone, 317-923-1331, ext. 429. ●

Bloomin' Bucks with Brent and Becky's Bulbs

Bloomin' Bucks with Brent and Becky's Bulbs is a progressive fundraising program designed to earn select non-profit organizations cash for every order received through the Brent and Becky's Bulbs website! When you select Indianapolis Museum of Art, you directly support the work to keep our gardens beautiful. On behalf of the IMA grounds and horticulture, thank you for your support!

- 1) Go to www.bloominbucks.com where you will scroll down and select the Indianapolis Museum of Art.
- 2) Hit Go.
- 3) You will go to a special REMINDER page. Read it and click YES to continue.
- 4) You will be taken to the Brent and Becky's Bulbs website where a portion of every dollar you spend goes to support the grounds and gardens at the IMA.
- 5) If you have questions, please call Brent and Becky's Bulbs, **877-661-2852**.

From Shambles to Rambles

BY CHAD FRANER, DIRECTOR OF HORTICULTURE

Picture a wooded hillside that has a meandering path between a historic canal and an estate. Cool in the heat of the summer and brilliant with blue scilla bulbs (*Scilla siberica*) in spring in the spring. This is an original pathway designed to connect the 1830s Indiana canal with the 1913 Landon estate and an ideal spot for a quiet stroll amongst the trees.

Historically these trails were called the Hillside Rambles, which were updated in 1998 with the Ravine Garden restoration. A problem has developed with the storm water drainage that originates from the Lilly house roof, driveway and terrace. The water drained down the hillside, causing significant erosion of the soil and path.

To solve the erosion problem, storm water is now piped down the hillside into a 35-foot gravel pit, which slowly releases the water evenly across the hillside and eliminates erosion. Erosion blankets and coir logs in areas of disturbance reduces the possibility of erosion before plants can take root and hold the slope.

The hillside had a significant amount of periwinkle (*Vinca minor*), which is considered an undesirable plant. The periwinkle will be replaced with Indiana native woodland perennials.

In conjunction with the drainage project, we had a boardwalk constructed that reconnects the rambles path to the back of the Rapp Family Ravine Garden. This slope



PHOTO COURTESY CHAD FRANER

A newly constructed boardwalk connects rambles path to Ravine Garden.

washed down the hill and into the canal after 14 inches of rain over one weekend in 2004. We temporarily fixed the slope with geotextile and plantings, but the path has continued to slide.

Understanding that we had an unstable slope, we used 4-foot steel supports that are screwed into the ground. This allows the top of the slope some movement but the boardwalk will remain in place. This is another part of the IMA campus for visitors to discover and hopefully find some inspiration. ●

IMA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Our mailing address is:
Indianapolis Museum of Art
4000 Michigan Road
Indianapolis, In 46208

Join the Horticultural Society of the IMA online:

<http://www.imamuseum.org/give-join/affiliate-memberships/horticultural-society>

Learn more about the Horticultural Society of the IMA.

<http://www.imahortsoc.org>



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