

SEASONS



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SEASONS

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Mellany Armstrong
Communications Coordinator/Editor

INFORMATION
(215) 247-5777
morrisarboretum.org

VISITOR ENTRANCE
100 East Northwestern Avenue between Germantown and Stenton Avenues in the Chestnut Hill section of Philadelphia

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A Note from the Executive Director

BILL CULLINA, The F. Otto Haas Executive Director

As I begin what will be my fourth year at the Arboretum, I am so pleased to see how much we have accomplished during that time.

First and foremost, we drafted and began to implement a five-year strategic plan with priorities that include planning, organizational excellence, brand and identity, diversity and inclusion, and environmental sustainability. Despite COVID restrictions that had so many staff working remotely for almost a year and a half, we were able to implement many impactful initiatives at the Arboretum in support of this plan. These included significant departmental reorganizations in horticulture, education, plant science, visitor experience and marketing, codifying customer services standards and staff expectations, restructuring the intern program, and increasing wages for everyone to a minimum of \$15 an hour. And while we said goodbye to several wonderful longtime staff members, we welcomed fantastic new staff, promoted existing talented staff to new positions, and converted nearly all temporary staff to regular part-time employees who are now eligible for University benefits. Offices were also reorganized and renovated so that managers are now located with their staff rather than dispersed across the grounds.

In the garden, there are also many changes to highlight. The Step Fountain was completely restored along with its adjacent colorful new gardens; a deer enclosure was installed around the majority of Compton and its more formal gardens; and we completed a project in the Rose Garden that included new stone walls and garden beds across the lower section near the Summer House. In addition, a new Fernery heating system was installed, and the Arboretum's gas-powered tools and vehicles are being replaced with electric versions in support of the University's Climate Action Plan.

From a strategic and fundraising standpoint, the most exciting project we are working on now is developing a transformative, 20-year Master Plan with noted landscape architectural firm Reed Hildebrand. To better inform this plan, in-depth audience research was conducted last fall by the marketing firm RK&A. We have just completed the first phase of a multiphase diversity, equity and inclusion plan spearheaded by consultants at The ROZ Group. And, to top it all off, we successfully closed the \$36 million *Ever Green* campaign last June!

Looking ahead to this fiscal year, we are beginning a complete website rebuild and logo redesign that will launch at the beginning of next year. In October, we will be replacing the turf in the center axis paths of the Rose Garden with bluestone for greater accessibility and easier maintenance. We will also be advancing our important plant research with the purchase of a new modular botany lab and the hiring of a geneticist/plant breeder later in the fiscal year.

I am grateful for your commitment to this wonderful organization.

With thanks,

Willie Cullina



BEAUTY ELEVATED A New Look for the Rose Garden



BY MELLANY ARMSTRONG, Communications Coordinator

For nearly 90 years, the Rose Garden has been a beautiful destination for our visitors to take in the magnificent display of blossoms and plants. Starting next spring, it will be accessible to even more people.

The Rose Garden will be closed in October so that the turf along the main perpendicular walkways can be replaced with bluestone pavers, permeable hardscaping that will make it easier for visitors of all ages who use canes, crutches or wheelchairs to view the blooms.

The bluestone will also allow for easier maintenance of the walkway areas.

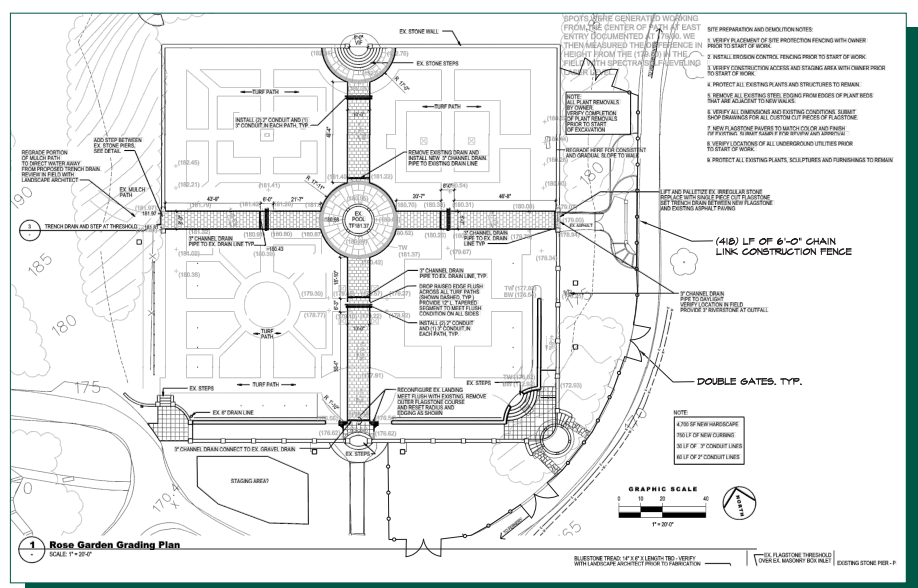
“The Rose Garden was designed to be used by two people, John and Lydia Morris,” said Vince Marrocco, director of horticulture. “It was never designed to withstand the wear and tear of the number of visitors we get these days.”

Marrocco said the new pavers will help limit the closing of parts of the garden for turf maintenance in the late weeks of summer.

The project is threefold, Marrocco said. In addition to installing the hardscaping, the fountain in the center of the garden will be repaired, and irrigation conduits will be inserted under the new pavers. The Arboretum has raised more than 90 percent of the funds needed for the entire project.

The popular wedding spot will be reopened to Arboretum visitors by the end of April or beginning of May. Look for updates about the Rose Garden permeable paving project at morrisarboretum.org.

Installation
of bluestone
pavers will
allow full
access to this
treasured space



Landscape architect ThinkGreen LLC's rendering of the Rose Garden bluestone paver project, which will begin in October 2022. Top photo by Alex Correia-Sareyka

NEW LIFE FOR OLD Cemeteries

*Refuge and Recreation
Among the Headstones*

BY MELLANY ARMSTRONG
Communications Coordinator

Paul and Orysia Bezpalko Hernandez walking among the headstones at The Woodlands cemetery on their wedding day in May 2022. Photo by Nina Lily Photography.

When friends learned that Erin Downing and Steph Cabezas wanted to be married last May at The Woodlands cemetery in Philadelphia, the couple had some explaining to do.

“We definitely had a few raised eyebrows,” said Cabezas. “A lot of people were curious and wanted to know why we chose the venue, and when we explained our reasons, they agreed it was very ‘us.’ The idea of honoring those who we love and miss seemed to really resonate with people as well.”

These types of events at cemeteries are becoming more common, with funerary grounds hosting everything from weddings and craft fairs to 5K races and antique car shows all year long. But cemeteries and historic burial grounds are playing bigger roles now in topics such as climate change and even cultural relations.

PRESERVING SPACE

Last fall, Morris Arboretum hosted a two-day online conference, “New Life for Old Cemeteries: Connecting Communities and Open Space,” that was geared toward preserving and caring for cemeteries and highlighting their importance to the ecological, economic, and social sustainability of communities today. Conference co-sponsors included The Woodlands,

Historic Eden Cemetery, Laurel Hill, and Arch Street Meeting House Preservation Trust.

Bill Cullina, F. Otto Haas executive director of Morris Arboretum, opened the conference by saying historic cemeteries represent a large portion of open space in many cities, including Philadelphia and surrounding regions.

“Cemeteries have increasingly become places of refuge, recreation, peace and connection,” said Cullina. “Caring for these living collections of canopy trees and shrubs, as well as the resting places of our departed, has never been more important.”

Conference participant Jessica Baumert, executive director of The Woodlands, a 54-acre cemetery in West Philadelphia, said the pandemic highlighted the need for green space.

“We saw an enormous uptick in our daily visitors and many were folks who hadn’t stepped foot in our gates before,” she said. “These new visitors have now become regular visitors to our space. This seems to be a trend across the country. Cemeteries are definitely having a moment.”



Steph Cabezas (left) and Erin Downing at The Woodlands on their wedding day in May 2022. Photo by Paloma Alicea (@palomaalicea).

HISTORY, CULTURE, ECONOMY

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, cemeteries were considered places to gather and socialize before the development of public parks, botanic gardens and arboreta. As the country became more industrialized, the verdant space of cemeteries became even more valuable as places of respite. Laurel Hill was designed as a park when it opened in 1836, becoming one of the first rural cemeteries in the nation.

“We usually don’t think about cemeteries in the same breath as we do public parks or urban plazas,” said Nancy Goldenberg, president and CEO of Laurel Hill, said during the conference. “Yet when you really think about it, cemeteries occupy a lot of space.” There are 824 cemeteries in our region, totaling almost 9,000 acres. “Specifically, since COVID, cemeteries



Left to right: Laurel Hill's Market of the Macabre (photo courtesy of Laurel Hill); Paul and Orysia Bezpalko Hernandez at The Woodlands (photo by Nina Lily Photography); Laurel Hill's RIP 5K (photo courtesy of Laurel Hill).

are simultaneously filling the role of museum, library, arboretum, nature sanctuary, and venue for active and passive recreation.”

As historic cemeteries run out of space, they need to raise money in other ways. Laurel Hill brands itself as a cultural and educational attraction, featuring walking tours of trees as well as an annual antique car and hearse show that features funeral service vehicles.

In addition to the historical significance of Philadelphia's cemeteries where prominent members of the city's past are buried, advocates say they are culturally important, too. Presenter Monica Rhodes, former director of resource management at the National Park Foundation and 2022 Harvard Loeb Fellow, studied preservation efforts at Historic Eden Cemetery, a historic African-American cemetery located in Collingdale, PA, founded in 1902.

“These commemorative spaces like Eden are extremely important to understanding what these sites and places mean in the 21st century,” she

said. “These cultural landscapes serve as a direct connection and a direct linkage to how we can help answer some of the questions that we are facing today around histories that are, honestly, left out of many textbooks and conversations. So these landscapes oftentimes are what we have left over and what Eden Cemetery is prominently preserving.”

Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx, NY, partners with the International Masonry Institute to train young people to restore, repair and maintain the headstones and monuments in a program called the Bridge to Crafts Career Program. The interns, ages 18 to 24, work with preservation professionals and skilled craftspeople, and they also learn resume development, interviewing skills, financial management, and get job placement assistance.

TREES AND OPEN SPACES

Trees and gardens are prime attractions in cemeteries. Some contain champion trees, which are the largest specimens of their species, as well as rare types of trees.

“Cemeteries have big, old amazing trees and great open space resources,” said Bryan Thompson-Nowak, director of education at Morris Arboretum. “Old cemeteries have fallen into disrepair. If we don't preserve them, we could lose those trees. We need to advocate for cemeteries to get better funding, and for foundations to see cemeteries as open space worthy of preservation.”

For Orysia Bezpalko Hernandez and Paul Hernandez, there was no other space for their wedding than The Woodlands. They had their first unofficial date at the cemetery, Paul proposed there, and their engagement party was held there.

“The Woodlands is so much more than a cemetery—it's such a blessing to have this incredible historic green space in our community, and we feel so honored to have part of our story intertwined so deeply with its enduring legacy,” said Orysia.

Learn much more fascinating information about Philadelphia's cemeteries by watching [part one](#) and [part two](#) of the conference.

HEADING WEST

The Search for Virginia Mallow

BOTANICAL SCIENTIST CINDY SKEMA TAKES AN EPIC CAMPING TRIP TO STUDY A RARE PLANT

This past summer, Dr. Cindy Skema packed up her family and drove hundreds of miles to try to find the rare Virginia mallow.

Skema, botanical scientist at Morris Arboretum, spent July and August tent-camping her way through Ontario, Canada, and five U.S. states in a search for *Ripariosida hermaphrodita*, a member of the cotton family (Malvaceae). It's a globally vulnerable species that is threatened or wiped out throughout most of its range in the eastern half of North America. She's tracking the plant to see where it still occurs and to collect specimens for study.


"My interest in this plant began when I was completing a post-doctoral fellowship studying plant sex evolution in its relatives, sister genera native to New Zealand and Australia," she said. "Virginia mallow is interesting for the fact of this geographic disjunction alone—it's the only member of this lineage that occurs in North America." Beyond that, Skema says, as the earliest diverging lineage in this evolutionary group, Virginia mallow's floral development could hold clues about the evolution of separate sexes—an uncommon trait in flowering plants—in its relatives.

If you've never seen Virginia mallow before, you might mistake the uncommon perennial herb for a marijuana plant. Virginia mallow has a palmately lobed leaf shape with a toothy edge. "There is a superficial resemblance (to a marijuana plant)," said Skema.

Skema says the plant is a conundrum in that it has weedy characteristics but is rare. Virginia mallow prefers high sun exposure and can tolerate disturbance, such as flooding and tornadoes, fire, mowing and spraying, and tree falls. However, it can be choked out by invasive species. Oddly, Virginia mallow is a biofuel crop in parts of Eastern Europe, where it is not native, because of its ability to grow up to 12 feet in a single season. Anglo-American botanist John Bartram knew about the plant and had it in his garden in Philadelphia. Skema has her own specimens growing in a greenhouse at the Arboretum.

This camping trip was her second such journey to study this plant. In July 2021, she traveled throughout Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania to discover that where once there were 60 known sites, there are now only 14. This time, she started in Ontario, headed west to Michigan, wound her way south to Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, and West Virginia, camping in state parks situated near stretches of rivers where Virginia mallow is known to be more common. She keeps the sites secret to protect the plant's location.

"I am thrilled that I finally got to see *Ripariosida hermaphrodita* in great abundance," Skema said. "That sight was well worth the marathon of camping and long hours of driving it took to get the field work done."



Cindy Skema
with some very
tall *Ripariosida
hermaphrodita*.

Connecting Families and Neighborhoods Through Nature at Morris Arboretum

A new pilot program aims to give more kids a positive experience in nature

BY MELLANY ARMSTRONG, Communications Coordinator

Jude Thachet closes her eyes and lifts up her arms, like branches of a tree. Her hands are balled into fists. A group of antsy school kids who are visiting Morris Arboretum mimic her. Thachet tells them to close their eyes and to listen, and for each sound that they hear, to put up a finger, turning the exercise into a game.

“Some kids didn’t have enough fingers,” she said. “But, you know, they listened.”

Thachet is Morris Arboretum’s new school outreach coordinator and leads the inaugural Environmental Sciences Program. Her position, funded through a generous gift from a donor, is designed to foster better connections between the local Northwest Philadelphia community and the education resources available at the Arboretum. Thachet’s job is to engage third graders from area elementary schools using the Arboretum’s plentiful natural areas.

“Our goal with this new role was to have the ability to identify and address roadblocks schools have in participating in our programs,” said Bryan Thompson-Nowak, director of education at the Arboretum.

“Jude has been able to simplify the registration process as well as develop pre- and post-trip materials to ensure visits fulfill academic standards. We’re already seeing the positive results of these efforts and can’t wait to see the program grow.”

Beginning this fall, students from participating schools will visit Morris three times during a school year for one-hour guided tours. The tour topics—like wetlands and watersheds, plant anatomy and biome interdependence—fulfill state academic standards for science and environmentalism. Students will prepare for the visits at their schools by doing related activities ahead of time, such as using online tools to locate the watersheds around their schools and homes. Tour lengths and frequency can be tailored to fit a school’s needs. The program covers the cost of bus transportation to and from the Arboretum, as well as admission for the children and all attending support people.



Jude Thachet (right) with Green Woods Charter School staff. The school is one of the first participants in the new Environmental Sciences Program. Below right: Thachet leads a discussion in Morris Arboretum’s wetland.

“Our goal with this new role was to have the ability to identify and address roadblocks schools have in participating in our programs.”

BRYAN THOMPSON-NOWAK
Director of Education at the Arboretum

SCIENCE!

W.D. Kelley School Principal Dr. Crystal Edwards is thrilled that her 30 third graders will have science lessons away from the concrete of their Brewerytown neighborhood, adding that children learn from what they have access to.

“When it comes to science and really getting your hands dirty and being outside in the elements, that’s important,” she said, noting that the exposure can foster interest in medicine and science. “I’m excited for them.”

The students will become scientists and researchers while at the Arboretum, doing things like scooping water from a pond and using magnifying glasses to see what’s in it, and then drawing what they find in their science journals.

“They’ll be doing project-based learning, rather than lecture-based, which is just developmentally way more impactful when you’re 8 or 9 years old,” Thachet said. “And I’m hoping it reaches the kids who often don’t get reached, because they’re the ones who need to be more active or need to be more hands-on or need a little more freedom than you get sitting at a desk quietly.”

The program also includes counselor-in-training and internship opportunities for high school students to help them develop leadership skills.

Thachet, who has a background in teaching students from preschool- to college-age, said the outdoor classroom experience isn’t just about learning the whys of science.

“Some kids don’t get a chance to experience nature in a fun way and are afraid, or think of the outside as dirty,” she said. “It’s a way to give kids a positive experience in nature.” And that is significant, she said.

“There’s something about the immensity of the world, the beauty of it, the stillness,” she said. “I don’t know what it is, but it is powerful for people and that alone is education on top of all the academic stuff we’re trying to do. We’re also trying to build wholesome people and promote well-being.”



PENNSYLVANIA EDUCATIONAL IMPROVEMENT TAX CREDIT PROGRAM

The Morris Arboretum is an approved Educational Improvement Organization (EIO) through the Pennsylvania Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC) program, which offers approved businesses a powerful way to help strengthen the community they serve while earning valuable tax credits.

EITC contributions to the Morris Arboretum support free educational visits for Title I school groups through the Partners in Education Program (PINE) and the Environmental Sciences Program (ESP.) During the 2021-22 school year, EITC contributions helped over 1,500 students visit the Arboretum and receive standards-based lessons in an immersive natural environment.

THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES FOR THEIR SUPPORT:

Steven Goldberg
Consulting Inc.

Duff Supply Company

For information about supporting the Morris Arboretum with a tax-deductible gift through the EITC program, please contact Leslie Crane, Associate Director, Corporate and Foundation Relations, at lcrane@upenn.edu.



The Lasting Impact of an English Garden

BY ERIN CONLEY, Rosarian

Erin Conley in the Italian
Garden at Malverleys



Morris Arboretum Rosarian Erin Conley traveled to England this summer to study at Malverleys, a private country estate, made possible by the Paul W. Meyer and Debra L. Rodgers Study-Travel Endowment. She writes about her experience below.

Having never been to England, I only had what I'd seen in pop culture to set my expectations, and in many ways, they were met: double-decker buses skillfully navigating the roads on the left side; red telephone boxes, some of which have been repurposed to house defibrillators or free libraries; ample availability of “cream tea,” which is delectable tea and scones; scenic, rolling countryside filled with verdant trees and open fields; and more extraordinary gardens than I will ever have time to visit.

This summer, I had the incredible opportunity to be a guest gardener at Malverleys, a private estate and country home in the rural English landscape, just an hour's car or train ride west of London. Surrounding the main house, the English flower gardens cover about 10 acres of the 200-acre estate, with the rest supporting majestic specimen trees, reasonable amounts of turf, a dense forest, and picturesque pastures for the sheep, cows, and deer.

Head gardener Mat Reese designed and installed the gardens after the property was purchased about 12 years ago. The gardens are comprised of garden “rooms,” each divided by 10-foot-tall yew hedging. Enclosed in these rooms are gardens such as the Hot Garden, Cool Garden, White Garden, Exotic Garden, Italian Garden, Stumpery, Kitchen Garden, and finally the Double Border, which runs the length of half a football field along the back of the main house.

AS I WRITE THIS, I'VE JUST COMPLETED MY FIFTH WEEK HERE, AND HAVE TAKEN SOME TIME TO REFLECT ON WHAT I'VE LEARNED SO FAR:

First, gardening is very much an art form, with the plants as the paint against nature's canvas of yew hedging, the clear blue sky, or a house or building. The gardens at Malverleys are composed of three layers that form the masterpiece: the shrubs that are sturdy and steadfast throughout the season; the perennials that provide the glitz and the glamour, each taking their turn to stand in the spotlight; and the self-sowers, who go about their business while helping the composition be less influenced by the gardener's hand.

Second, it's the subtle edits, the small strokes of paint, that elevate the garden. As just one example, allowing a self-sower, *Epilobium angustifolium* (rosebay willowherb), to flower in the back of the border might add just the right amount of height exactly where it's needed, but the removal of another self-sower, *Oenothera biennis* (common evening primrose) at the front of the border might just take away a slight distraction to an otherwise striking combination of textures and colors.

And third, as much as a garden is about the plants that compose it, the feeling you get when experiencing the garden is what leaves the lasting impact. At Malverleys, each garden is on its own level, leading the visitor to move up or down several steps at the entrance to each “room.”

The vistas, the sounds of the fountains, the height of the plants and their movement at a small breath of wind—all contribute to the feeling of the garden and one's experience in the space.

A Tale of Two Bittersweets

Check the flowers to determine which species is which

BY TIMOTHY A. BLOCK, PhD
The John J. Willaman Chair of Botany
and Director of Plant Science

Photos by Tim Block. Plant illustrations by Anna Anisko and used with permission of University of Pennsylvania Press.



Of the roughly 30 species of the genus *Celastrus*, only two grow in our region. One is our native American bittersweet (*Celastrus scandens*) and the other is Oriental bittersweet, introduced to North America around 1860, apparently as an ornamental and for erosion control. The two species of bittersweet share much of the same habitat types. Both can be found most often along woods edges, fencerows, roadsides, young woodlands, or similar places with high light availability and something to support their vine-like growth. Neither species is tolerant of dense shade.

Bittersweets are lianas, that is, woody plants that are rooted in the ground and climb to reach greater light. Bittersweet most often utilizes trees, utility poles, fence posts, or even buildings for support. Historically, American bittersweet was considered a nuisance species by foresters due to the damage caused to young trees as the plant twined its way around the young trunks of valuable timber trees. Today, Oriental bittersweet has assumed the role of “bad guy” in the forest product industry in our region.

The bittersweets flower through May and June and are dioecious species, having male and female flowers on separate plants. Both species are insect-pollinated. Several examples of natural

hybridization between the species have been observed in nature. Hybrid individuals appear to be even more vigorous and aggressive than Oriental bittersweet, possibly contributing to the decline in American bittersweet through competition for habitat space. The fruits of bittersweet are capsules that split open in the fall to reveal three seeds, each covered by a fleshy red aril that is very attractive to birds.

How can you tell these two species apart? The leaves of both species are quite variable in size and shape, often leading to confusion in identification. The only completely reliable way to tell these two species apart is by examining the location of the flowers and fruits on the plant. The inflorescences of American bittersweet are strictly terminal, only occurring at the tips of the branches, while the inflorescences of Oriental bittersweet are axillary, possibly occurring wherever a leaf is attached to the stem. The outer covering of the ripe fruits of American bittersweet are bright orange while those of Oriental bittersweet are mustard-yellow.

The relative difficulty of identifying bittersweet species and the increasing occurrence of hybrids has led to occasional sale of Oriental bittersweet as the native species. Remember to check for the location on the plant of the flowers and fruits!





Moonlight & Roses

A SPECTACULAR EVENING AMONG THE ROSES

Moonlight & Roses took place on Friday, June 3, with more than 400 guests in attendance. This year we honored the late Sally Gendler (1960-2020) and the Urban Health Lab of the University of Pennsylvania. The evening began with cocktails in the stunning Rose Garden, followed by dinner and dancing in the clear-top tent. This year's event raised \$270,500, with all net proceeds supporting the Arboretum's operations. Thank you to everyone who attended and sponsored the event, especially Rose and Platinum sponsors Penn Medicine and Independence Blue Cross.



1. Dancing after dinner under the clear-top tent. 2. Shirley Tyson, Dr. Cassandra Graves. 3. Moonlight & Roses Honorary Chair Lee Laden, Senior Associate Director of Development Alison Thornton. 4. Family of the late Sally Gendler. 5. Moonlight & Roses Chair Melissa Greiner with husband Walt Greiner. 6. Urban Health Lab at Penn Medicine team with Executive Director Bill Cullina. Photos by Eddy Marengo.



SAVE THE DATE
Moonlight & Roses

June 2, 2023

MORRIS ARBORETUM MILESTONES

Emilie “Kayo” Rivinus Brégy

BY KARMIN FAIZ, Marketing Intern

As Morris Arboretum approaches 90 years as a public garden, we highlight members like Emilie Rivinus Brégy, who truly has been a lifelong supporter. She celebrated turning 102 years of age in August.

Also known as Kayo, Brégy is a Philadelphia-based artist specializing in landscapes, abstracts, and portraiture. In fact, she has painted multiple formal portraits of the Arboretum’s directors and many other pieces using the grounds as inspiration.

Brégy grew up in Chestnut Hill, just blocks from the Arboretum. She remembers coming with her family as a child, and the start of her family’s involvement with the Arboretum that has now been passed on generationally. Brégy’s mother, Marion Rivinus, supported the Arboretum by being a longtime member, volunteer and donor, and she founded the women’s committee that helped support fundraising for the Arboretum. The Rose Garden was then dedicated in her name in 1947. Now Brégy, her daughters and grandchildren are members and donors.

Brégy formed close relationships with executive directors Paul W. Meyer and Bill Cullina. She used her talents to give back to the Arboretum by painting formal portraits



of the directors. Brégy is proud of all the additions, like educational and fun courses created under the directors over the past decades. “Educating people about plant life is so helpful for the environment,” she said. After her years of devotion to the Arboretum, she now has two dedication markers within the Arboretum, a stone and a bench. Brégy laughed, saying that she was ecstatic about the first honor, but she found her name was spelled wrong when she went to see it. It was then fixed, but she said it made the event more memorable.

She wishes nothing but the best for the Arboretum’s future, claiming it is one of the finest places in all of Philadelphia. Brégy loves seeing all of the progress Morris Arboretum has made and the changes throughout the seasons.

“Every time I walk, I find something new,” she said. Even at her age, she still enjoys her walks in the garden a couple of times a month. She loves that the Arboretum consistently brings her joy and relaxation, and she enjoys remembering walks in the Rose Garden with her mother. Now she creates new memories by taking her grandchildren and great-grandchildren to see the Garden Railway.





Memorable Morris Moments

SUMMER WAS FULL OF FUN AT MORRIS ARBORETUM!

▲ Bloomin' Bubbles ►

Lots of folks had fun playing with the new Bloomin' Bubbles display in the Azalea Meadow, especially some young costumed gnomes and fairies on opening day June 7! Children and adults ran through a magical flurry of bubbles every Tuesday from June through August.



◀ Summer of Swings ►

The new seasonal exhibition *Summer of Swings* was a big hit with people of all ages. Morris Arboretum members enjoyed a special preview on a cool evening in June, trying out the 10 swings placed strategically across our 92 acres. Our garden educators also helped guests use the swings to perform some cool pendulum-type physics experiments that Galileo first conducted in 1602.



◀ Garden Railway ▲

Morris Arboretum's Garden Railway presented the perfect "staycation" this year, with the theme *America's Roadside Attractions*. Scores of train lovers took in the miniature replicas of some of this country's most iconic roadside attractions, including Lucy the Elephant, Randy's Donuts, the Jolly Green Giant, and the World's Oldest Largest Pecan. Be sure to check out our Holiday Garden Railway and HGR: Nighttime Express beginning November 25!



BRUCE MORRELL

Conductor of Joy

BY CYNTHIA SCHEMMER, Digital Marketing Coordinator

Winner of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Garden Railway Society's 2022 President's Award

Earlier this year Bruce Morrell, train master of the Garden Railway, received the 2022 President's Award from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Garden Railway Society. With over 15 years of dedication to miniature trains at the Arboretum, and the immeasurable joy he's brought to thousands of visitors, this award further proves what we've always known: Morrell is the Arboretum's official "Conductor of Joy."

Morrell's interest in miniature railways dates back to his childhood when, at five years old, he received a wind-up toy train for Christmas. "It stopped working, so I went around the house looking for tools and took it all apart on the living room floor," he said. "I've been playing with trains ever since." From then on, Morrell had a miniature railway set up every holiday season, and eventually talked his parents into letting him keep them up all year long in the basement, beginning his lifelong passion.

Fast forward to 2007 when, after having volunteered with the Garden Railway for several years, Morrell was hired as the Arboretum's train master. Every Saturday he would bring his



grandson, Josh Faia, to the Arboretum not only to experience the Garden Railway, but to work on it as well. "It was the most exciting part of the week," says Faia. "The tracks used to be brass, so we'd have to scrub each one by hand multiple times per day." From there, Faia began collecting trains, beginning with Morrell setting up a simple track loop and an Amtrak train in the Faia family's basement.

In 2020, Faia was hired as the assistant train master, working with Morrell on the Garden Railway. Cars from their own collections can often be found on the tracks. Morrell's Pennsylvania GG1, a powerful steam engine that weighs about 75 pounds and one of his all-time favorites, can be seen during long stretches of time in between special Garden Railway events. Faia has a few cars from his personal collection on the tracks the day we speak, including two trailer cars.

Morrell and Faia both agree that the most challenging part of the Garden Railway is keeping things running smoothly through seasonal shifts:

spring rain, summer heat, fall leaves, and winter snow all affect train mobility, and prime growing seasons result in plants taking over the tracks. Other times, the answer isn't so clear. "Sometimes a train keeps coming off the track for seemingly no reason, and you have to come at it from different angles," says Faia.

The most rewarding part of the Garden Railway, of course, is the excitement on children's faces and coming up with new wonders for them to see. They have a variety of to-scale characters hidden throughout the Garden Railway, including a bluegrass band (Faia will even hide his Bluetooth speaker nearby and play bluegrass music), the Seven Dwarfs, and Sesame Street characters holding instruments that can sometimes be found on a flat car that plays the Chicken Dance: "It goes back and forth, and kids chase it around doing the chicken dance," laughs Faia. "It's always fun down here," adds Morrell. "Kids enjoy it, parents enjoy it, and grandparents enjoy it too."



Drones in the Garden

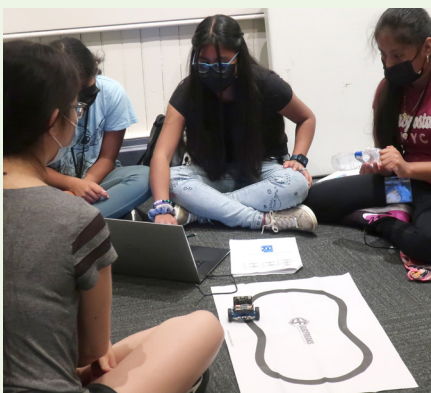
BY COLLEEN N. CANNON, Senior Associate Director, Strategic Writing Services, Development and Alumni Relations, University of Pennsylvania

Morris Arboretum and Penn Engineering may appear to be unlikely partners. But when the two joined forces to develop innovative summer programming, the result was serious science—and serious fun!

Since 2016, the Arboretum has worked with ACLAMO Family Center in Norristown, PA, to offer an annual summer science camp, Explorar!, for at-risk middle school students, mostly Spanish speakers. Explorar! gives young people the opportunity to learn science in an engaging, hands-on way while enjoying the Arboretum's grounds. This summer, the camp combined engineering with the usual biology and botany. For example, one project used sensors and drones to help students understand and measure tree growth—a lesson that also applies to agriculture. The students also made a field trip to Penn Engineering's campus to see drones and robots in action. They built tiny robots and programmed them to perform functions like following a track and avoiding objects.

The engineering programs for Explorar!, including the activities and experiments, were developed by Penn Engineering's Research Center for the Internet of Things for Precision Agriculture, which is funded by the National Science Foundation. The Center aims to ensure food, energy, and water security, in part by building a pipeline of diverse talent—like the young campers—to address these pressing challenges.

“This partnership is a truly remarkable achievement, and one that could only happen at Penn,” said Bryan Thompson-Nowak, director of education at Morris Arboretum. “Having the opportunity to introduce students to robots, remote sensors, and agriculture in an outdoor setting is something we never could have imagined previously. We’re ready to see where the students take these new skills and experiences and wouldn’t be surprised if we get a few new engineers in the future.”



“This partnership is a truly remarkable achievement, and one that could only happen at Penn.”

BRYAN THOMPSON-NOWAK, *Director of Education at the Arboretum*

ENRICH YOUR LIFE WITH OUR FALL classes

TUESDAY NIGHT NATURE A Virtual Speaker Series

Occurring on four consecutive Tuesday evenings starting November 8, this series brings expert voices from afar to the comfort of your home. Sign up for each of these live, online lectures separately or enroll in all four at a discounted price at morrisarb.org/classes.

EACH SESSION

Members: \$20

Non-members: \$25

SERIES PRICE

Members: \$60

Non-members: \$75



Nature's Best Hope

DOUG TALLAMY, *Professor of Entomology at the University of Delaware; Author, Bringing Nature Home (2007), The Living Landscape (2014), Nature's Best Hope (2020), and The Nature of Oaks (2021).*

Join us as Tallamy discusses how we can create landscapes that enhance local ecosystems rather than degrade them.

Tuesday, November 8 | 7:00–8:30 pm



Keeping Seeds and the Stories They Tell

AMIRAH MITCHELL, *Founder, Sistah Seeds*

Mitchell, a Philadelphia-based farmer, will talk about preserving the seeds from the plants that she grows.

Tuesday, November 15 | 7:00–8:30 pm



Using the Miyawaki Method to Rewild Our Communities

HANNAH LEWIS AND MAYA DUTTA, *Biodiversity for a Livable Climate*

Densely planted 'mini-forests' (the size of a tennis court) can grow quickly and be much more biodiverse than those planted by conventional methods. In this talk we will explore the science behind why mini-forests work and the myriad environmental benefits they convey.

Tuesday, November 22 | 7:00–8:30 pm



A Piet Oudolf Story

DEBORAH CHUD, *Garden Designer, Consultant, and Educator*

The class explores the historical context in which the Dutch garden designer Piet Oudolf emerged as a landscape designer and introduces his design principles, offering practical Oudolfian "dos & don'ts" for home gardeners at every level.

Tuesday, November 29 | 7:00–8:30 pm



Evening Wine and Cheese Wander

ERIN CONLEY

Rosarian, Morris Arboretum

TREVOR SCHULTE

*Azalea Meadow Horticulturist,
Morris Arboretum*

JEN MONICO

Compton Horticulturist, Morris Arboretum

Join us for an after-hours wander through the Garden at your leisure. Explore three different garden areas with staff horticulturists present for questions and discussion. Each stop will feature staff-favorite wines and cheese plates to enjoy as you wander and enjoy these remarkable locations. Sites will be open from 5:30–7:30 pm; guests can arrive when it is convenient for them.

Thursday, September 29
5:30–7:30 pm

Members: \$40
Non-members: \$45



Pumpkin Carving Party (Ages 8+)

AMANDA COBB

Advisory Board Member, Morris Arboretum

We will supply the pumpkin along with all the specialized equipment you need for carving, as well as patterns and ideas to help you make a spectacular pumpkin. This program is for adults and children (8+) as we'll be using sharp tools.

Saturday, October 22
10:30 am–12:30 pm

Members: \$25
Non-members: \$30



Oaks of the Mid-Atlantic

RICHARD CLARK

Tour Guide, Morris Arboretum

Every region of our planet where oaks are present has a unique profile of oaks that populate that area. In this class you will learn how to differentiate our local oaks as you tour the oak trees in the Arboretum's extensive collection.

Thursday, November 17
4:00–5:30 pm

Members: \$30
Non-members: \$35



Longtime Facilities Director Tom Wilson Retires

When you take care of a huge arboretum with a lot of buildings, you get to know quite a few people.

“Facilities is a department that deals with everybody, because it’s about everybody’s safety and security,” said Tom Wilson. “You know, make sure it’s clean. Not too hot, not too cold.” Now, the *Moses Feldman Family Director of Physical Facilities* has retired after 10 years on the job.

Wilson’s path to his position was not typical. He went into the Army as a medic when his first attempt at college as a nursing student didn’t work out. A boss talked him into earning a bachelor of arts in communications from Villanova University while he worked in building operations there. Wilson came to the Arboretum after managing the physical plant operation at Penn’s Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center for a decade. Along the way, he received a post-baccalaureate in business management and a human resource management certificate from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, as well as

a sustainability facilities professional credential from Villanova.

“I grew up in a row house in Drexel Hill (PA) and got a great education,” said Wilson, a graduate of Malvern Preparatory School. “Some people don’t get first chances. I am so fortunate that I’ve had third and fourth chances.”

IT’S TIME

Following years of fielding late-night emergency phone calls and making sure the Arboretum fountains are running, Wilson likes the idea of more family time and less time driving. He won’t miss the hour-long commute from his home in New Jersey.

He’s excited to serve as exalted ruler of the Marlton Elks Lodge 2514 (“It’s all about giving back to your community,” he said), and to ride his powder black 2000 Harley-Davidson Night Train. He won’t have to rush to

get to practice with the Warminster Men’s Hockey Club, where he has played center for the last 18 years.

Bill Cullina, executive director of the Arboretum, said Wilson will be missed.

“I am eternally grateful to Tom for his steadfast leadership through the pandemic, his project management on critical work such as the Step Fountain refurbishment, the Widener restoration and major physical plant upgrades to Gates Hall as well as his calm, day-to-day management of all things facilities,” Cullina said. “It is one of those truisms in physical facilities work that when you are doing your job well, nobody notices, but Tom, I notice!”

Wilson looks forward to having more time with his wife, Michele, his daughter, Jessica, and three grandsons.

A REMEMBRANCE

Ruth Pfeffer

BY SHARON MEEKER, Birding Instructor

WE LOST A VERY BRIGHT LIGHT IN THE WORLD WHEN RUTH PFEFFER PASSED AWAY IN MAY 2022.

Ruth, affectionately called “the bird lady,” created the birding program at Morris Arboretum along with Jan MacFarlan, former assistant director of continuing education. Beginning 20 years ago, Ruth held indoor and mostly outdoor classes in bird watching for people of all ages.

Teaching people about birds was Ruth’s passion. The Morris Arboretum wetland was a favored place and Ruth created the bird list for this part of the property. The classes through the Arboretum led people to many of our local green spaces.

Ruth also organized trips in the tri-state area annually, places like the Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge in Delaware, and Sandy Hook and Brigantine in New Jersey. The classes also went on two international trips, one to Costa Rica and one to Panama.

In her private business it was no different. Ruth taught programs for scouts, homeschoolers, and camps, and she led adults of all ages on trips to Chincoteague, VA; Cape May, NJ; and the Outer Banks of North Carolina. Most recently, she was giving lectures on climate change and its impact on birds and bird behavior. In spring, Ruth was walking the Dixon Meadow Preserve in Whitemarsh Township.

Enthusiastic always, Ruth was fun to be with, she enjoyed a good laugh and had no issue acting out the behavior of the spotted sandpiper to help you remember! Ruth impacted the lives of thousands of people by helping them to appreciate our birds and the natural habitats around them. She was my mentor and friend for a decade, and she taught me so much about local places and bird species. I know I am not alone in feeling this way.

We are continuing the classes and the legacy Ruth left at the Arboretum. There is a happy group of folks who come out to bird watch together. Feel free to join us—we will be remembering Ruth all through the seasons!



Meet the New Members and Officers of the Advisory Board of Managers

Sandra McLean

Sandra McLean has been a member of the Arboretum since 2006, had previously served nine years on the Advisory Board, and rotated off in 2021 as required. For over twenty years, McLean has been the executive director of The McLean Contributionship, a private family foundation established in 1951 for charitable, educational, and scientific purposes. McLean is a member of the Arboretum's Education Committee and has served as a Board member at The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University, as well as on the Board of Trustees of the Ewell Sale Stewart Library Committee. McLean is lifelong resident of the Philadelphia area, and currently resides in Devon, PA.



Elizabeth (Beth) Van Vleck

Beth Van Vleck is a longtime member of the Morris Arboretum and previously served on the Directors' Guild for a total of eight years before joining the Board. She was one of the founders of Urban Outfitters, a well-known lifestyle retailer. Van Vleck attended Virginia Tech's School of Architecture and has also completed coursework at Temple University toward a BS in horticulture. Van Vleck resides in Chestnut Hill and Deer Isle, ME, and is an avid birdwatcher in Cape May, NJ.



NEW BOARD OFFICERS NAMED



Elie-Antoine Atallah CHAIR

Elie Atallah has been a member of the Advisory Board of Managers since 2016. He is an active member of the Physical Facilities Committee and is very involved in the Arboretum's Master Planning Working Group. He also served as a co-chair of the Arboretum's *Ever Green* Capital Campaign and was a member of the Power of Penn Steering Committee. Atallah is founder and principal at SoMD Architects, and he and his family reside in Chestnut Hill.



Alexandra (Lexa) Edsall CO-VICE CHAIR

Since joining the Advisory Board, Lexa Edsall has been an active member of the Arboretum's Master Planning Working Group. Edsall has a deep career in politics and law, serving in the offices of the deputy attorney general and the solicitor general at the US Department of Justice; as an associate at Covington & Burling; as a judicial clerk to Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg; and as senior adviser to the general counsel at the US Department of the Treasury. Edsall earned her BA and law degree from Harvard University and has a master of city planning degree from the University of Pennsylvania. She and her family live in Chestnut Hill.



Wendy Foulke CO-VICE CHAIR

Wendy Foulke is a longtime member and avid volunteer on the Horticulture Committee. Prior to joining the Advisory Board, she served on the Directors' Guild, and participated in one of the Arboretum's travel programs to New Zealand. Foulke holds a degree in the history of art from Wheaton College and has worked with numerous art institutions in Philadelphia, and notably as Sotheby's director of the Mid-Atlantic region for over twenty years. Now retired, Foulke lives with her husband at their home neighboring the Arboretum.



SPOOKY GOOD FUN

A beloved Morris Arboretum fall tradition continues—bespoke scarecrows will once again haunt the gardens this October for the 15th annual Scarecrow Walk. The theme this year is “Spooky Scarecrows.”

See all of the spooktacular designs throughout the garden October 1–31. The most popular entry, as selected in online voting by our visitors, will win the top prize of \$250. Last year’s “Hero Crows” fan favorite was Miss Scarlyn Crow by Troop 71620. Join in the fun and watch for more information on our website this fall!



◀ Member Plant Giveaway Memories ▼

Morris Arboretum opened its barn doors in May for our annual tradition of giving free plants to members. It was three days of exploration of the Arboretum’s Bloomfield Farm, advice from our horticulture experts, and all-around outdoor fun. Premier members enjoyed first access to the plants, and were treated to snacks from a classic hot dog cart as they made their plant selections. Check back this spring for the date for this year’s Member Plant Giveaway, and if you’re not already a member, consider joining to receive this fun and unique benefit!





MORRIS ARBORETUM MEMBERSHIP

A Gift of All Seasons

Giving the gift of a Morris Arboretum membership as a holiday gift is an easy choice. Your recipients receive an entire year of unlimited garden admission, it is zero-waste, and it enhances wellness by getting your loved ones outdoors in a beautiful natural setting.

There are two easy ways to purchase a gift of membership:



Visit our website www.morrisarboretum.org to purchase anytime. Customizable gift certificates are available to download and present to your gift recipient while their membership is being processed.



Reach the membership office directly at 215-247-5777 ext. 205, Monday–Friday, 9 am–5 pm.

To ensure your gift membership materials are in-hand by December 24, orders must be placed by December 16.



Continuing a Tradition.

When John and Lydia Morris established their gardens 135 years ago, they imagined something extraordinary. Because of their devotion to beauty and knowledge, the Morris Arboretum has grown into a living laboratory for research, discovery, and learning.

Today thousands of friends share the Morris' dream and contribute to the Arboretum's continuing excellence with a planned gift. Bequests, trusts, charitable gift annuities, and retirement plan and life insurance designations can be great ways to support the future of the Arboretum, while meeting your financial and philanthropic goals.

To learn more, contact:

Alison E. Thornton
Sr. Associate Director of Development
215.247.5777, ext. 105
alisonth@upenn.edu
giving.upenn.edu/gift-planning



Morris Arboretum
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA
Official arboretum of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania



holiday

GARDEN RAILWAY

Nighttime Express

Make your holiday even more magical with a visit to the Holiday Garden Railway, as it is transformed for the season with thousands of twinkling lights! See the enchanting rail cars in a festive wonderland of lights and sounds, a marvelous experience for visitors of all ages. The Holiday Garden Railway will be open daily beginning November 25. There is no surcharge for this experience during the Arboretum's regular business hours.

How can the Holiday Garden Railway be even more spectacular? See it at night! With laser lights in the trees and sparkling lights along the railway, HGR: Nighttime Express is a must-see. **SAVE THE DATE:** Premier Member Nights are December 1 and 2!

HGR: Nighttime Express Dates (4:30–8:30 pm)

November 26, 27
December 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23
Premier Member Nights: December 1, 2

HGR: Nighttime Express Pricing

MEMBER ADULT: \$17
MEMBER YOUTH (3-17): \$10
MEMBER CHILD: \$0

ADULT: \$22
YOUTH (3-17): \$12
CHILD: \$0

TRIBUTE & MEMORIAL GIFTS

The Morris Arboretum is grateful to the following donors who made tribute and memorial gifts between February 1 and July 31, 2022.

In honor of Jean & Bob Adnopo

Carole R. Greenbaum & family

In memory of Lori L. Agazarian

Lee Laden

In memory of Louis J. Appell, Jr.

Anonymous

In memory of Joan Asprakis

Amy Goldman

In memory of Jolan Benner

Mary & Ralph Benner

In memory of James J. Collison

Katherine & Ron Roggenburk

In memory of Carol Corson

Lee Laden

In memory of Frances Harriet Dolfman

One Penn Management, LLC

In memory of Sally Gendler

Jean & Robert Adnopo

Martha & Mark Arnold

Susan Burkhardt

Alison & Cameron Burns

Carole R. Greenbaum & family

Cathy Judd-Stein & Jeff Stein

Anne & William Miller

Melineh & Mark Momjian

Wendy Peck & Sarah Forer

Sybil Vernon

In memory of Audrey Haimbach

Jennifer A. Smith

In memory of Ruth Harbison

Lee Laden

In memory of Howard Hill

Lee Laden

In memory of Richard Howarth

Lee Laden

In memory of Edgar Loy

The GPC – Jody, Liza, Rich,

Charlie, Jeff, & Karen

In honor of Paul W. Meyer

Elizabeth Ray McLean

In memory of John Rees

Susan Rees

In memory of Joan Regan

Anna & Eugene Kiernan

Jean L. Lawrence

Shirley M. Pinkerton

In memory of Pace Reich, Esq.

Harry S. Cherken, Jr., Esq.

In memory of Fran Rothman

Lee Myers

In memory of Marilyn Steeg

Pam Steeg

In memory of Shirley Tantillo

Tobs, Stephanie, Chris, and Patty Inacker

In memory of Glenn Turner's daughter

Victoria Fox

Photo by Diego Ceja

Morris Arboretum Shop

From informative botanical books, to locally crafted goods, to toys for curious young minds, the Morris Arboretum Shop strives to offer an assortment of items that will inform, engage, and inspire love and appreciation for the natural world around us.

MEMBERS GET
10%
OFF EVERYTHING!

