



It seems like yesterday that the Museum grounds were covered in snow. Then we got a heat wave that made all those perennials seem to leap from the ground. One of my favorite "early risers" is the *Helleborus* or Lenten Rose to the left and the sedum below.



Treat your garden as a piece of art. Join us in May for *Art in the Garden*. Penn State Master Gardeners will be teaching a variety of classes that will be sure to make your garden flourish. Learn the ins and outs of gardening and avoid those costly mistakes that some of us have made in the past. Class sizes are limited so sign up soon.

Art in the Garden Classes in the Arboretum by Penn State Master Gardeners

May 16 ~ DESIGN CONCEPTS

Learn how the application of design elements and principles can provide visual continuity throughout any garden.

May 23 ~ RIGHT PLANT, RIGHT PLACE

Join our experts as we walk the grounds to observe and discuss the successes (and failures) of plantings. Learn why the siting of plants with regard to soil, sun or shade, moisture and hardiness zone is critical to gardening success.

June 6 ~ FOLIAGE AND TEXTURE

How does textural diversity contribute to the visual quality of your garden? Join our presenters in the Arboretum to explore the textures, colors, and forms that combine to create an appealing landscape.

June 13 ~ A GARDEN FOR ALL SEASONS

Spring enchantment - Summer bounty - Fall color - Winter interest

All class times are 2 pm, Sunday afternoons. Each session includes a presentation of the topic and a stroll to appropriate areas of the Arboretum. Meet on the steps of the Reading Public Museum. Rain or Shine.

Cost: \$8 Museum Members/\$12 Non-Members per class or \$25 Museum Members/\$40 Non-Members for class package (all 4 classes). Space is limited. *Art in the Garden Registration Form*

Name(s) _____ Phone: _____

Street Address: _____ City, State, Zip _____

E-mail: _____ Museum Member? Please circle one: yes no

Name of Guest(s) _____ Is Guest a Member? Please circle one: yes no

May 16 ~ Design Concepts Number of Members (\$8): _____ Number of Non-Members (\$12): _____

May 23 ~ Right Plant, Right Place Number of Members (\$8): _____ Number of Non-Members (\$12): _____

June 6 ~ Foliage and Texture Number of Members (\$8): _____ Number of Non-Members (\$12): _____

June 13 ~ A Garden for All Seasons Number of Members (\$8): _____ Number of Non-Members (\$12): _____

or

Class Package ~ All 4 Classes Number of Members (\$25): _____ Number of Non-Members (\$40): _____

Total amount: \$ _____

Payment (please check one): I have enclosed a check payable to Reading Public Museum **or** Please charge my credit card
MasterCard/Visa/Discover Acct. # _____ Expiration Date: _____

Signature _____

Mail to: Department of Lifelong Learning, Reading Public Museum, 500 Museum Road, Reading, PA 19611-1425 Phone: 610-371-5850 ext. 230 or ext. 227

Coming to the Arboretum soon!

Sunflowers

Sunflowers

Sunflowers

Sunflowers



Remember the book "Secret Garden?" We

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Keep a look out for a new feature in the Arboretum this summer. In May The Daisy Troop we will be planting a sunflower tunnel as a children's feature. Between the rows of sunflowers they will plant vines that will climb the sunflower stalks to create a canopy for children to walk through. Cool!

Be sure to watch the fun grow this summer. Bring your little ones later in the season to enjoy this feature.

Bus trip

Looking for something beautiful to do on Thursday, May 20th? Come join us for a trip to Montclair, NJ. We will be visiting three gardens to enjoy the iris, azaleas, rhododendrons, and other spring favorites:

Presby Memorial Iris Gardens

Van Vleck House and Gardens

The Cross Estate Gardens

[Space still available, call Betty Sustello for details 610-678-5284](#)

Dedicated Benches and Trees *by Donna Weik*

Last year there were a total of five dedicated benches placed in various spots throughout the Arboretum. The final one of that group was placed in the late autumn. It was a gift from the Matthew Stitzel family and given in loving memory of a dearly loved uncle, Matthew J. Boland. Mr. Boland was a very forward-thinking and benevolent individual. His vision and generosity gave us the glorious spot in the western end of the Arboretum, known to all as Trudy's Garden. It was dedicated in memory of his beloved sister, and has been a place of beauty for years. Not only is it a visual delight but the lovely music created by the wind in the chimes suspended from the limbs of the garden's tall, tall trees are a delight to one's ears, too. Mr. Boland's bench is located just outside the eastern entrance to his sister's garden, on the north side of the path.

Also last year, three dedicated trees were planted in the Arboretum by generous donors. The specimens added to the Arboretum collection are: a *Prunus subhirtella* 'Pendula', common name Weeping Japanese Cherry, a *Davidia involucrata* 'Sonoma', common name Handkerchief or Dove, and an *Oxydendrum arboreum*, common name Sourwood. There have already been three inquiries about bench placements and two inquiries concerning tree plantings since February of this year. It looks like this spring season will be a typically busy one in the Arboretum.



As you can see we have now identified a number of trees that are “available for dedication.” The trees all have a red plaque and are easily spotted along the pathways.

Arboretum Assistants Update

Looking for something to do one evening this summer? Come join us on the second Thursday of the month to volunteer in the Arboretum. Bring your gloves, favorite hand tools and a water bottle, we will supply the rest! Spend the evening from 6-8 PM helping to beautify our award winning Arboretum. Teams will be assigned at 5:45 in the Arb Room (below the greenhouse) so we can get to work by 6PM. Come join us!



A group of Berks County Master Gardeners began a reevaluation of the identification of the trees and shrubs at the Reading Public Museum. This project will involve checking the identity of the plants against a previous master list, possibly redoing identity tags and verifying the GPS location of each plant,. The group began in March and will continue until all of the plants are completed. This project involves the Master Gardeners now, but hopefully an educational component can involve others in the future.

Around and About the Museum

The Bertrand Farr Iris Garden is coming along. Be sure to mark your calendars for the middle of May to enjoy the show. Come often because the show will be beautiful.

For those of you who enjoy walking on the grounds of the Arboretum, below is just one Wednesdays work performed by the volunteers. Just writing up the list of jobs is quite an accomplishment. Thank you to all our volunteers!

TEAM 1

AREA 4

- A. Trash containers (2) one east, one west of steps: weed, edge, cut back Liriope, mulch as needed
- B. Oakleaf Hydrangea and Yucca: edge, creating circle around each of these plants, weed and mulch
- C. Shade Hosta bed east of "Stream reclamation" sign: weed, edge, mulch, Plant-tone Hosta
- D. Zelkova allee (both sides of road) - weed, edge, fluff mulch, deadhead daffodils
- E. Install gator bag on newest weeping cherry tree which is between stream and the Zelkova allee. Have Rover fill with water from "Bob's Buggy".

Area 600MR-

1. Carefully rake PDS bank
2. Remove dead Heuchera foliage
3. Trim off dried grasses
4. Weed bed and planter MR side of building
5. Deadhead daffodils
6. Plant yellow pansies on both sides of cement steps at Mus. Rd./PDS corner

TEAM 2

AREA 7 and 4

A. Water Pansies in oval, rectangle planter at foot of steps and box planters at Atrium

B. EAST/WEST OF ATRIUM

1 Weeping cherry (near sculptures) - remove suckers; edge; mulch. (West only)

2. Around statuary - edge 6" away from base, remove grass in that area, and mulch

3. Screen

a. Edge; weed; fluff or add mulch as needed

b. BulbTone spring bulbs and daylilies; deadhead if done blooming

c. HollyTone azaleas and pieris; remove Bishop's Weed growing in area between these two plants - remember this plant grows with runners underground so just pulling it doesn't work

d. Bloodmeal at Astilbe

e. Cut Actinidia (Kiwi vineto 4', remove severed vines from screen) **ASK ABOUT THIS BEFORE DOING IT**

4. Alberta Spruce trees - square the beds around these trees, making each of the bed the same size (there are tape measures in Super's bag); edge; weed; fluff and add mulch as needed

5. Make bed at base of urns 15" wide; edge; work 3" compost into soil. (We may not have compost yet)

6. Euonymus at spotlights - fluff or add mulch as needed

C. Azalea bed at west corner of building - Hollytone Azaleas; BulbTone Tulips; edge and fluff mulch; add mulch if needed;

D. At front of Atrium -

1. Trees in the planters and pots: Hollytone; clean; use some compost to make them look neat

E. Hamamelis bed (east side of Atrium)

1. Groom and BulbTone daylilies,

2. Clean bed, edge, mulch as needed

Area 8

A. Iron gate

1. Cut Dusty Miller back to new growth

2. Cut Actinidia (Kiwi vine) back to 4' - clear vines from gate (Check before doing this)

3. Remove Euonymus that is growing through the Azalea

4. Rake and weed (there should be a lot of Phlox 'David' coming up; don't mistake it for a weed)

5. Edge and mulch

6. Remove the labels from the Deutzia 'Magicien' (remember to look for these to bloom - they're a wonderful rich pink)

TEAM 3

Area 6

A. Install Gator bag at newly planted Sourwood tree in front of sculpture. G-bag should be in cabinet in tool shed. Have Rover fill bag with water from "Bob's Buggy"

B. Wildflower garden

1. Lower side - Cut off dried stems/ rake out debris

2. Upper side - Rake leaves

3. Deadhead daffs

C. Hosta - clean last seasons foliage and stems from plants; clean area; weed, fluff or add mulch as needed

Area 5

A. Iris - clean area as needed; fertilize Iris with BulbTone

B. Rhododendron - fertilize with Hollytone per instructions on bag

C. Rock garden

1. Trim Liriope, cut stems of Sedum 'Autumn Joy'

2. Rake, especially along lower edge; weed; cut off dried stems

3. Rake upper edge

D. Amsonia/Brown-eye Susan beds

1. Remove dried stems, leaves

2. Rake; weed; edge;

3. Deadhead daffs

E. Shrub bank

1. Deadhead Hydrangea

2. Weed; fluff or add mulch

3. Arrange bricks attractively that retain soil. If not needed, remove and stack outside Arb room

TEAM 4

Area 3

A. Large "triangle"

1. Carefully cut off last year's foliage from Helleborus (Take note of all the seedlings at base of plant but don't remove; we'll do that as a separate project.)

2. The Itea has sent out a lot of new growth which needs to be severed at the below-ground level. Remove sprouts carefully and transplant to an area to be decided

3. Clean the area between the Sedum at the edge of the bed and the Geranium 'Rozanne'; leaf debris

4. Deadhead the Hydrangea as needed

5. Weed; fluff or add mulch

6. Clean edges of bed at the street and on the path

B. Small triangle

1. Sweep paths to sign so people realize it's okay to walk there

2. Hollytone the two (2) Deutzia. The one is blooming nicely; the other seems to get walked on.

3. Plant-tone Hosta

C. Bridge beds (north and south)

1. Rake both sides

2. Weed, etc

3. Deadhead

Area 1

A. Stone planter

1. Clean out stone planter; groom plants as needed (the planter is gorgeous, lots of spring bulbs blooming; why not get there early enough to walk down and enjoy the fruits of last fall's labors!) **Add Pansies to planter**

B. Hornbeam allee behind planter - deadhead daffodils; weed; fluff mulch (it could still be plenty wet underfoot there; consider what footwear you might want to wear)

C. Fertilize Astilbe in Stewartia bed with bloodmeal; weed; edge; fluff or add mulch

Area 2

A. **Plant pansies** (which are stored in cage) in Arborvitae strip at Arb Room. We'll explain the plan on Wed.

- B. Middle bridge (south side)
 - 1. Cut grasses
- C. Near stone/mulch piles
 - 1. Cut grasses
- D. New tree peony bed at north side of Planetarium
 - 1. Weed (at each end are Amsonia that are still dormant or just starting to grow; don't pull), edge, fluff or add mulch
 - 2. Bulbstone tulips and tree peonies
- E. Planetarium beds
 - 1. Cut Karl Foerster grass, chrysanthemum
 - 2. Bulbstone tulips
 - 3. Cut chrysanthemum
 - 4. Deadhead daffs and tulips
 - 5. Hollytone Azalea in NE planter
 - 6. Trim Lamium growing in planters to back of Planetarium
- F. Snowdrop bed: Bulbstone bulbs; cut back Dusty Miller; edge; weed; fluff or add mulch
- G. Bulbstone Iris on bank at PDS
- H. Hollytone the two Ilex 'Skypencil' at the tool shed. They took a beating this winter and can use some help...
 - 1. Weed, edge and mulch at the Wetlands sign near the Arb room
- J. .Cut off grasses in garden behind garage

Got time, got talent?

Do you like to write? We need a replacement for the Arboretum Committee to take the minutes of the meetings and write the Newsletter. Come and enjoy the camaraderie and be up to the minute on breaking news. We also need someone to operate the engraving machine that creates those beautiful identification plaques you see in the arboretum.

Thought for the day

Life is not about waiting for the storm to pass: it is about learning to garden in the rain.

Keep on troweling, Jeffrey