A special newsletter for friends of Queens Botanical Garden
VOL 24 ISSUE 2

SAVE THE DATE
Taiwan: A World of Orchids
AUGUST 17-19

WHAT TO DO & SEE

Hibiscus “Lord Baltimore”
Hibiscus flowers thrive in tropical regions, and apparently, right here in Queens, too! Unlike tropical hibiscus, hardy hibiscus, as its name indicates, can survive freezing temperatures, and are found in USDA Planting Zones 4 to 8. The hardy hibiscus, also known as “Lord Baltimore” (pictured), was hybridized by Robert Darby in 1955 by crossing four native and wild hibiscus species, found growing between Louisiana and New Jersey. “Lord Baltimore” is a large herbaceous perennial that dies back to the ground every winter. During its blooming season between July and September, it can produce 250 flowers—this is one busy plant! While there can be multiple blooms on the same plant, each dinner-plate sized (10” diameter) flower bloom lasts only one day.

Darby also created the cultivar hibiscus “Lady Baltimore,” which has smaller, pink flowers. Both cultivars can be found in the Four Seasons Border at Queens Botanical Garden.

When enjoying hibiscuses you may notice that pollinators also love these flowers—hummingbirds can be spotted sipping their nectar in the early evening.

See these flowers (and possibly some hummingbirds) during Summer Extended Hours every Thursday in July and August, 6 to 8pm! Learn more queensbotanical.org/summerevenings

Enjoy a stunning display of orchids and a weekend filled with art and culture, in partnership with the Taipei Economic & Cultural Office in New York (TECONY).

Members enjoy Orchid Evening on Friday, August 17, 6 to 8pm, when guests view the exhibition after hours, without the crowds!

Note: free hours are suspended on Sunday. Festival parking rates apply.

A Letter from Susan

Dear Friend,

“Oh the summer night, has a smile of light, and she sits on a sapphire throne…”

At our annual Rose Gala, held on June 14, we honored Maria A. Grasso, Chief Operating Officer at Flushing Bank. While we did not proffer her a sapphire throne, we did share with her all the best that QBG has to offer—an abundance of roses, friendship, and community. (See pages 2 and 3 for party photos.)

In this delightfully breezy season, we propose the same to you! With our new Extended Summer Evenings, the Garden stays open from 8 am to 8 pm so that you can revel in the joyous light of the golden hour every Thursday in July and August. It’s just one more reason to be a Member—and we hope you’ll spread the word.

See you around the Garden,

Susan

P.S. If you’ve visited recently, you probably noticed survey-takers talking with visitors. Maybe you’ve spoken with them? If not, we do want to hear from you. Look for survey-takers on weekends and weekdays.

*Bryan Procter, poet (1787-1874)
On Thursday, June 14, 2018, Queens Botanical Garden honored Maria A. Grasso, Chief Operating Officer, Flushing Bank, for her commitment to Queens and the Flushing community. Flushing Bank was the Lead Sponsor of Rose Gala 2018. The Gala raised over $154,000 to benefit the Garden in sustaining colorful flowers, innovative programs, and environmental education workshops for over 35,000 schoolchildren and almost 225,000 people served by the Garden last year.

“I’m very excited to be honored—it’s something that’s very special to me,” Mrs. Grasso said. “Flushing Bank has been in the community for 90 years. We’re an integral part of the community and we like to give back, and Queens Botanical Garden is a great place.”

Guests were joined by Queens Borough President Melinda Katz, Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, Assembly Members Ron Kim and David Weprin, Council Member Peter Koo, and NYC Department of Cultural Affairs Commissioner Tom Finkelpearl.

Borough President Katz, Assembly Member Weprin, and Council Member Koo brought proclamations to recognize and thank Mrs. Grasso for her dedication to the Flushing community, the people of Queens and all of New York City.

“The City Proclamation is the highest honor an individual can receive!” said Council Member Koo of the distinction awarded to Mrs. Grasso, and the proclamation was signed by all Queens Council members.

Borough President Adams took the opportunity to speak on diversity in Queens, a message resonating with the Garden’s proud mantra of being the place “where people, plants, and cultures meet.” “A garden like this is a great equalizer,” Mr. Adams said. “It doesn’t matter what your economic level is, what language you speak, what block you live on. It forces us to leave our comfort zone and not only crosspollinate the flowers, but also crosspollinate our cultures in places like Queens and Brooklyn.”

Guests sipped cocktails, including a signature drink designed for the occasion called “Flushing Blue,” took selfies at the beautiful Moon Gate, which was fashioned into a “step-and-repeat” made of handcrafted paper roses and Flushing Bank parasols; and enjoyed a delicious meal on the Terrace at sunset. The evening culminated with announcements of winners who took part in the raffle in support of the Garden. They took home snazzy prizes like a Louis Vuitton purse, an iPad Mini, a $1,000 gift card to shop at the American Manhasset, premier seating at Mets and Yankees games, tennis court time at Arthur Ashe Stadium, paintings by Heather Schirling, a restaurant gift certificate for Resorts World Casino, and more.

QBG thanks its Rose Gala Committee, led by Board Member Bianca Ng, Board Chair Pauline Huang, and fellow trustees Lucy Hossain, Debra Lodge, Edie Meyer, Judy Ng, and Michelle Stoddart for all their efforts toward making the Rose Gala a success.

Many thanks to Rose Gala Sponsors and In-Kind Supportors (listed on Page 7.)
April Weekend Tributes to Tulips, Trees, Nature

A lesson on patience from Mother Nature! Due to the unseasonably cold weather the weeks leading up to the weekend of Saturday, April 21 and Sunday, April 22, the Garden did not boast as many blooms as expected during TULIP TIME! While clusters of bursting tulips adorned various locations throughout the Garden, most tulips weren’t quite ready, huddling and keeping warm in their cocooning buds!

On the other hand, the fashionably late bloomers made the following weekend extra colorful for Arbor Fest, at which point spring finally came and stayed! Below are some of our favorite highlights of both weekends, full of happy gatherings and enjoyment of nature by little ones and adults alike.

**TULIP TIME!**

Emily Asher’s Garden Party kicked off our Music in the Garden series, dazzling 250+ people on our Terrace with red-hot jazz.

Guests enjoyed creating fun digital takeaways at the gif station thanks to Ollie Social. Adults sipped on delectable “mint tulip” drinks.

Watercolor artist Chemin Hsiao led a sold-out workshop on spring bulb flowers, in which participants painted tulips in the Rose Garden.

Little budding flowers themselves, children pranced around the Garden wearing colorful tulip crowns they made at the Activity Table!

**Arbor Fest**

At the Sprout Stage sponsored by TD Bank, PaperHeart Puppets told charming stories performed with characters and scenery made entirely out of cardboard.

Rhythmic drumming by children, parents, and grandparents resonated from interactive percussion sessions in the Meadow throughout the day.

The Beer and Wine Garden sponsored by Resorts World was a popular spot to grab a swig and take part in some fun Queens and music trivia!

After making wild flower seed balls, visitors got to launch them into our Meadow, where they will take root and sprout for years to come.

As a tribute to trees, QBG Staff demonstrated how to plant trees in our Arboretum.
Oh, how far we've come, how much we've grown! On Thursday, June 21, the NYC Compost Project Hosted by Queens Botanical Garden (QBG) launched the one-acre Farm and Compost Site at the Garden. The launch included a press conference, refreshments harvested from the Farm, and a tour. Representatives from NYC Compost Project/NYC Department of Sanitation (DSNY), the Garden, and partnering Flushing Meadows Corona Park explained how the Farm and Compost Site demonstrates the closed loop of recycling residential food waste to making compost, enrich soils, and ultimately growing food. They also encouraged the general public to get involved by touring the Farm during open hours, volunteering, recycling food waste, attending workshops, and more.

Current Compost Project Manager, Elsa Higby, was joined by her predecessors, Patty Kleinberg, and Marguerite Manela, Senior Manager, Community Composting & Compost Distribution, NYC Department of Sanitation, in sharing remarks on how compost efforts at the Garden dating back nearly 25 years have grown and play a role in sustaining a healthy ecosystem in Queens.

"Compost is a strategic and important part of recycling food scraps and anything that was once alive," said Elsa Higby. "Compostables are food for composting bacteria, the resulting compost is food for plants and plants are food for people. Every living thing in the food web eats."

Also present to share remarks were QBG Executive Director Susan Lacerte, who shared, "I've been composting my entire life and I am overjoyed to see this city-wide effort grow and take root. Our organics are too valuable to ship out. On the QBG Farm, through this partnership with DSNY, people may see the whole cycle of plant to food, food to compost, compost back to soil, and soil to more delicious, delectable vegetables, fruits, and herbs! We want to keep the 'good dirt' where we can use it!"

Flushing Meadows Corona Park (FMCP) Deputy Administrator Latisha T. Williams, who helped spearhead a partnership in which FMCP provides leaves collected from the Park to the Garden to be composted from October through December for the past three years. The partnership was "eye-opening" for her staff of horticulturists and environmentalists. "We have the resources to create this and use it. And it came from our Park. And that's something to be really proud of," said Ms. Williams.

Vegetables grown on the Farm are shared with interns, volunteers, used in on-site programming, and donated to emergency food relief programs. Crops grown on the Farm include heirloom tomatoes, beans, turnips, and a variety of kales, lettuces, peppers, and radishes. Finished compost made at QBG is used on the Garden grounds, used for community greening events in public spaces, and distributed to community gardens and to residents of Queens.

How can you play a part? To learn more about upcoming volunteer opportunities, workshops, Farm Open Hours, nearest food scrap drop-off locations, and more, visit queensbotanical.org/farmandcompost.

Top to Bottom: NYC Compost Project Hosted by Queens Botanical Garden staff members: Andrew Olesh, Vanessa Ventola, Forest Abbott-Lum, Alexander Jagiello, Elsa Higby, Julie McGonney, and Marie Josette Seraphin

Compost staff tend to the Farm; all hands on deck at the Farm & Compost Site!
For the second year, NewYork-Presbyterian Queens presented TWIST & SPROUT! on Sunday, June 10 at Queens Botanical Garden. Nearly 2,000 visitors came to learn about healthy living—meeting medical experts for NYP Queens and getting their heart rates up at fun sports and recreational activities.

“GET ACTIVE” areas featured an obstacle course by NYP Queens’ Fit Kids, breakdancing, family fitness, ballroom dancing, double dutch, hula hooping, tennis lessons from NY Empire, and more. Other entertainment included a magic show, a puppet show, family singalong, and beatboxing.

Healthy eating was promoted through cooking demonstrations by Allergic to Salad, apple giveaways, tasty samples from MadeGood, and a nutrition station, one of ten stations at which participants could get their “Passports to Health” stamped. When all stations were marked, participants won a cool prize!

QBG thanks NewYork-Presbyterian Queens for their support and for bringing this wonderful free event to the Garden yet again!

See below for some of our favorite highlights:

Visitors were greeted by, and hung out with, medical experts from NewYork-Presbyterian Queens.

Nearly 400 guests completed Passports to Health, stamping their way to winning a cool prize as they learned about summer safety, nutrition, radiology, dental and orthopedic health, and more.

Get active! Kids enjoyed bounce houses, hula hoop, and double dutch, while visitors of all ages breakdanced, ballroom danced, learned to play tennis, and more!

Taking a photo with St. John’s University’s mascot Johnny Thunderbird and Mr. Met was a popular must-do!

A beautiful friendship! QBG Executive Director and Chairman of the Department of Pediatrics at NYP Queens Dr. Joseph J. Abularrage at the NYP Queens booth.

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QBG MEMBERS ENJOY SUMMER MORE!

Summer Extended Evenings
夏日延长时间 • Horarios de verano extendido

Every Thursday in July & August
QBG is extending its open hours until 8pm so you can enjoy twilight at the Garden. FREE for QBG Members.

Orchid Evening
蘭花晚會 • Tarde de orquídeas

Friday, August 17, 6 to 8pm
View Taiwan: A World of Orchids after hours, without the crowds! Cash bar and light snacks for sale. This is a FREE Members-only event. Last entrance at 7:30pm.

Member Appreciation Week
会员感谢周 • Semana de apreciación de los miembros

Tours—Sunday, 7/15 & Wednesday, 7/18, 1 to 2pm
Registration required: qbgmembertours.eventbrite.com
Beer on Us—Sunday, 7/15, 3 to 5pm
Wine on Us—Thursday, 7/19, 6 to 8pm
Coffee & Cookies—Friday, 7/20, 9:30 to 11:30am
For details visit queensbotanical.org/memberappreciation

Brunch on the Farm
早午餐在菜園 • Brunch en la granja

Saturday, September 15, 11am to 12:30pm
Say farewell to summer at this exclusive brunch held on the QBG Farm. Your light meal will include vegetables and herbs harvested from the Farm! Remarks by Executive Director and Farmer-led tour at 12:30pm. This is a Members-only event. Tickets go on sale at 10am, on Friday, June 22. Learn more: queensbotanical.org/memberbrunch
Celebrate birthdays with fun garden flare! Queens Botanical Garden is the perfect place to host your child’s upcoming birthday. The all-inclusive MariGOLD package includes a decorated party room, craft activity, appearance by QBG’s mascot Flora, invitations, food, beverages, cake, party favors, a birthday card, and assistance from our friendly staff to make it memorable!

Submit a request today: queensbotanical.org/birthdayparties