A Letter from Susan

Dear Friend,

Happy New Year! This time of year, it’s natural to look back and exciting to look ahead. For those of you who know me, I am someone who loves history—dates, facts, and especially numbers! But looking forward appeals to the eternal optimist in me. At QBG, the glass is truly half-full! We have been blessed with bounty this past year…Our educational programs have soared, reaching 35,000 children to teach them about the environment. Our professional development programs for teachers have blossomed and we’ve trained 8,250 school teachers so they, too, can share the wonders of science and nature with their students. The Compost Project staff harvested 7,959 pounds of produce and shared 2,545 pounds of produce with emergency food relief, so that those in need can reap the benefits of what we’ve grown here at this patch of urban farm. Thanks to so many of you, 2,158 volunteers raked, mulched, planted bulbs, and weeded in the Garden. WOW!

January used to be a quiet time for reflection but now we are brimming with activities and programs, just waiting for you to join us. And that’s really why we do what we do—it’s for you, our dear friends, who we welcome to the Garden in all seasons, whether in fair or dramatic weather, our garden is YOUR garden. And as always, we are here for you.

Wishing you a wonderful year filled with health, happiness, and many visits to QBG.

Susan Lacerte
Executive Director

Bountiful Berries for the Birdies!

Berries are an important food source for our feathered residents all year round, but particularly important in the wintertime when food becomes scarce. Attention photographers: Set up near these plants to capture fantastic shots of birds in their winter habitat!

Right now, birds are enjoying the bounty from the evergreen shrub, Cotoneaster salicifolius. This shrub’s bright red berries are eaten the moment they ripen. Cotoneaster has a whimsical swoop shape and is growing along the Magnolia Path behind the Annual Garden.

Next is Skimmia japonica, native to Japan and China. Find this tall shrub growing along the Children’s Garden. Only the female plants yield berries, and as they ripen they pop out of a casing.

Christmas favorite, Ilex opaca, commonly known as American holly, whose berries are usually left until late winter when there is little else to eat, can be found growing alongside the Bee Garden.

Also last to be eaten by birds during winter are berries of Juniperus sabina or savin juniper (pictured above). The greyish green berries are not very tasty, but are a final food source if winter is long and harsh. The plant also serves as shelter and nesting site for birds such as robins, waxwings, and thrashers! Find it along the perimeter of the west side of the Wedding Garden.

REGISTRATION FOR 2018 SPRING & SUMMER KIDS PROGRAMS OPENS JANUARY 19

There’s a fun, educational garden program for every child at Queens Botanical Garden, ages 2 through 14! Registration opens Friday, January 19.* For Summer Children’s Garden registration, book by February 19 with promotional code EARLYBIRD and receive a 5% OFF discount! And remember, Family-Level Members and above enjoy 10% OFF discount for all kids programs.

Visit queensbotanical.org/kidsprograms

*Registration for Forest Explorers opens February 3.
For the seventh year, Queens Botanical Garden hosted Harvest Fest & Pumpkin Patch on Sunday, October 15, 2017. The event featured live music, bounce houses, petting zoo, face painting, tours, demonstrations of henna art and pumpkin carving, magic and puppet shows, craft and food vendors, beer and wine tent, the ever-popular Pumpkin Patch, and more.

“We want to encourage people to get outdoors and see what nature is all about, so many of the offerings throughout the day touch upon that,” said Regina Minerva, QBG Visitor Services Manager. In addition to the expected seasonal fare, the Garden’s Farm and Compost team offered tours of the Farm, and gave away free compost. There was fun had by all! And the post-event feedback from the public was overwhelmingly positive, confirming that the Garden’s goal to make family-friendly events fun and accessible for all is successful.

Thank you to lead sponsor NewYork-Presbyterian Queens, and sponsors New York City Council, Amerasia Bank, Flushing Bank, New York Life, and Sunrun!

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“It was awesome. So glad we made it! Last year was great! My son had a blast.”
— Roasanna Waters, Harvest Fest Attendee

“Great day for families. Thank you for making it possible!”
— Nancy Polanco Almonte, Harvest Fest Attendee

“Thank you so much for this beautiful and fun event! We had a blast!”
— Es Ya, Harvest Fest Attendee

The Garden helped hundreds of families and visitors get into the holiday spirit at Christmas in the Garden, which returned to QBG on Sunday, December 3, 2017. The day was filled with live musical performances by The Rough Dozen acapella group, photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus, a tree lighting, holiday crafts, and a Swag and Wreath Workshop.

Attendees were also encouraged to take advantage of blowout sales at the QBG Shop for their holiday shopping, as well as donate their gently used coats for the New York Cares coat drive.

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Where Children, Nature, and Education Meet

Serving over 225,000 visitors and more than 35,000 schoolchildren annually, the Garden is not only an important open green space with bucolic, inspiring gardens, but it also serves as the primary source of botanical education for children and adults in the area.

During the 2016-17 school year QBG welcomed 800 classes onsite to participate in QBG’s Environmental Education Workshops. The Garden’s certified LEED® Platinum Visitor & Administration Building and surrounding gardens become living laboratories for workshops and lessons in botany, ecology, horticulture, and history. Through a New York City Council initiative, Cultural After School Adventures (CASA), QBG brings programming to hundreds of children in their schools.

We are so excited to announce that 2018 registration for our kids programs opens on Friday, January 19! Registration is for Children’s Garden and our three newest children’s programs for Queens’s young nature lovers: Garden Buds for ages 2 to 3, Forest Explorers for ages 2 to 6 (registration opens February 3), and Junior Naturalists ages 11 to 14. All three programs were designed to meet demands for more nature and gardening programs for children.

**Forest Explorers | ages 2 to 6**
Rooted in the traditions of the Forest School model, this drop-off program nurtures self-confidence and determination while deepening children’s connection to the Earth. Through sensory-based learning in our natural environment, children uncover nature’s treasures, create meaningful community, and form enduring relationships.*

*Registration for Forest Explorers opens February 3.

**Junior Naturalists | 6th through 9th grade**
This summer program is specifically designed for youth who want to take a deeper look into the inner workings of the Garden and the natural world. Participants will tend to their own garden plots, complete scientific experiments and investigations, and take a more in-depth look at the surrounding ecosystems.

**Children’s Garden Sponsored by HSBC Pre-K through 5th grade**
Children’s Garden offers urban children the chance to learn about gardening through organic methods—planting, caring for, harvesting, and eating vegetables, and tending to flowers and herbs.

REGISTER TODAY: queensbotanical.org/kidsprograms
Register by February 19 with promotional code EARLYBIRD and enjoy 5% OFF Summer Children’s Garden. And remember, Family-Level and Above Members enjoy 10% OFF!

**Garden Buds | ages 2 to 3**
Tailored to our youngest gardeners, Garden Buds lets children and parents explore the wonder of nature through hands-on work and play in the garden, tasting garden produce, and creating botanical crafts.

“I’m thrilled...[my son] comes home SOOOO HAPPY, tells me everything about planting. We are reading gardening books and growing things at home to give him a sense of responsibility...I’m elated as a mom.”
— Cecilia Motwani, Parent of a Children’s Garden participant

SAVE THE DATE! Children’s Garden Open House is Saturday, March 24, 2018, 1 to 4pm
Come to our FREE annual Open House and get your hands dirty with planting activities and garden crafts. Learn about all the outstanding garden and nature programs we have for children ages 2 to 14. Registration is required: cgopenhouse2018.eventbrite.com
Compost by the Numbers: NYC Compost Project Hosted by QBG

• QBG Farm & Compost finished its 2017 volunteer season at the end of October. In calendar year 2017, there were 73 volunteer opportunities with 611 volunteers and 1,777 hours of donated service. These volunteer activities included processing food scraps, turning compost piles, sifting finished compost, planting seeds, harvesting produce, and of course, weeding!

• The team pilot-launched the QBG Food Scrap Drop-Off that provides a year-round option for residents to responsibly dispose of their food scraps. You can see and use the collection bins located right in QBG’s Parking Garden. To participate, take the “Access Quiz” by visiting bit.ly/qbgcompostaccess

• The seasonal events were a huge success! Pumpkin Smash again featured the pumpkin trebuchet—built by the robotics team of the all-girls high school, The Mary Louis Academy. The leaves raked and collected at Leaf Crunch in Forest Park (pictured above) will be turned into compost at the Garden and donated to community gardens.

What’s up at QBG Farm:

• Harvest season is over, and here are the numbers for this past year:
  • Total harvested produce: 7,959 lbs.
  • Donated to emergency food relief: 2,545 lbs.
  • Food going towards Compost and QBG programming: 5,414 lbs.

• In addition to donating food to City Harvest, QBG Farm also started donating to a local synagogue, Kehillat Sephardim Synagogue.

IS QUEENS BOTANICAL GARDEN THERE FOR YOU?

• Are we your place for special “me time” (or “we time”)?
• Do you visit the Garden to relax and rejuvenate—almost like taking a mini vacation?
• Maybe you like to get your hands dirty volunteering, or taking a gardening or compost workshop?
• Perhaps you love the music we share, representing the many gorgeous cultures of the world?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions—or if you just love QBG—we ask you to support our annual fund.

Your gift, no matter the size, will make a difference and help sustain the Garden!

Go to queensbotanical.org/give2017
Winter Family Programs

Saturdays, January 13, 20, 27, February 3, 11am to 12pm • $10 per child
Registration required: winterfamilyatqbg.eventbrite.com

Winter is wonderful at QBG! Bring the whole family and experience winter’s splendor with indoor garden activities and an outdoor nature walk. Activities are geared for 4-10 year olds, but all are welcome to attend. Each Saturday will include indoor nature-themed hands-on activities, followed by a short nature walk around the Garden. Bundle up and dress for the weather! Sign up for single sessions or all four. Ticket includes one child. Please purchase separate tickets for each child. This is not a drop-off program.

January 13: Herbal Creations
January 20: Winter Trees
January 27: The World of Bugs
February 3: Tabletop Gardening

Evening Cocktail & Craft: Winter Terrariums

Wednesday, January 17, 6 to 8pm • $15 Members / $18 Not Yet Members
Registration required: winterterrariums.eventbrite.com

Build a tiny green world and bring some delight into your home this winter. All materials provided, including container, plants, and care sheet. Warm up while you work with a botanical cocktail.

Family Cooking Classes

Sundays, January 21 and February 18, 11am to 1pm • $12 family-level Member participant / $15 Not Yet Member
Registration required:
familycookingqbg1.eventbrite.com
familycookingqbg2.eventbrite.com

Join Allergic to Salad for a monthly farm-to-table cooking experience to introduce your family to all aspects of cooking. Enjoy a tasty treat you make for lunch at the end of each session. Appropriate for all ages—children to grandparents.

Winter Watercolor Workshop I & II

Saturdays, February 10 and 24, 2 to 4pm
$15 Members / $20 Not Yet Members
Registration required:
winterwatercolor1.eventbrite.com
winterwatercolor2.eventbrite.com

Learn the basic techniques of painting with watercolors with artist Chemin Hsiao. This class will feature an exclusive peek inside QBG’s working greenhouse and will use plants wintering there as inspiration. Participants are encouraged to register for Winter Watercolor Workshop II to further develop their technique and explore the unique qualities of winter light and landscape through watercolor painting.
As part of his ongoing effort to boost the quality of life in the community, Councilman Eric Ulrich funded a four month-long beautification project in Ozone Park’s Tudor Village through Queens Botanical Garden. Through the $60,000 initiative funded by Ulrich, Queens Botanical Garden placed nearly 740 plants along 133rd Avenue, between 82nd Street and 85th Street, by the end of October.

“I am thrilled to announce that my office has partnered with Queens Botanical Garden to beautify Tudor Village. For decades, the residents of 133rd Avenue have been putting their personal gardening touches along the stretch, but the upkeep has been a massive burden,” Councilman Ulrich said. “The funds I’ve allocated for this project will not only beautify the medians along 133rd Avenue, they will also cover maintenance costs.”

“On behalf of Queens Botanical Garden, I’d like to thank Councilman Ulrich for making this project a reality for the residents of Tudor Village,” said Patty Kleinberg, QBG Garden Educator. “One of the most important aspects of this project for me is the people and community input. We’re lucky to have a dedicated Councilman and civic association that communicates effectively. I needed to know what was important to the people in the new design and also respect the history of what was already out there.”

The species planted, including various heavenly bamboos (“firepower”), Japanese hollies, and coral bells, are drought and salt tolerant, provide four seasons of interest or stay evergreen, and stay within the boundaries of the median. A permeable weed block was installed for weed control, as well as a final topping of recycled rubber mulch.

Coming Spring 2018: The “People, Plants, Cultures” Photo Contest at QBG!

Celebrate spring and dip into summer by submitting your beautiful photos taken at Queens Botanical Garden from April 1 through June 30 for a chance to win one (1) year of FREE FAMILY-LEVEL MEMBERSHIP at the Garden ($85 value), plus six (6) festival admission tickets to HARVEST FEST on Sunday, October 14, 2018 (up to $72 value, transferable to family and friends). The winning photo pays homage to the Garden’s tagline, “where people, plants, and cultures meet.” The winning photographer—amateur or professional—will capture the spirit of the Garden, a place where all walks of life come together in nature, in bustling Flushing, Queens. *Think flora, fauna, families, fun!* Check our website in March for more information and instructions on how to submit your photos starting in April!
REGISTRATION FOR Spring & Summer Kids Programs OPENS JANUARY 19

Queens Botanical Garden News WINTER 2018
A special newsletter for friends of Queens Botanical Garden VOL 23 ISSUE 4

Thank you to our members, sponsors, and friends!

Queens Botanical Garden is located on property owned in full by the City of New York, and its operation is made possible in part by public funds provided through the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs and the NYC Council, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The Queens Borough President and Queens elected representatives in the City Council and State Legislature provide leadership funding. Corporations, foundations and individuals provide additional support.

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