**A Letter from Susan**

Dear Friend,

Just like Janus, the Roman god who looks forward and backward, I have been recounting the past year and considering the next. As I contemplate, I am moved by the good work we do here at QBG. Our team is a dedicated group of educators, horticulturists, environmentalists, composters, maintainers, and administrators—garden lovers all.

The Garden itself has never looked better and we are poised to reveal multiple renovation projects in the spring that we hope will delight you as much as we have enjoyed making the transformation happen in the Gardens on Parade section and the Wedding Garden.

As I prepare for the New Year, I think of all the ways in which I am fortunate. Working at Queens Botanical Garden has allowed me to live my dream of working with plants and people. I love what I do! As always, we hope that the Garden brings you joy when you visit and solace when you need it.

See you around the Garden!

Susan

P.S. The Garden never sleeps! Do visit during the winter. We have programs for Lunar New Year, Valentine’s Day, and "Cocktail & Craft" workshops (21+ please!). So much to do and so much to enjoy here in our oasis in Flushing.

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**IN MEMORY OF**

**Sakura Suzuki**

Our friend and colleague Sakura Suzuki passed away in September. A Master Composter, Sakura started work at Queens Botanical Garden in the fall of 2014 just as the scope of the Compost Project was expanded to include the collection and processing of local residential food waste. Full of bright spirit and determination, Sakura and her colleague Aleks Jagiello spearheaded the initiative with aplomb (and great humor!).

Everyone who knew Sakura will attest to her kind and gentle spirit. She was exceptionally caring about others and about her work. Her passion for composting, dedication, and intelligence were essential to establishing a network of food scrap drop-off sites in Central Queens to make processing compost at Queens Botanical Garden possible.

Sakura means “flowering cherry tree” or “cherry blossoms” in Japanese. In spring, please remember our dear Sakura as the cherries bloom, dotting the Cherry Circle and Arboretum with pink splendor.

We will miss her bright, sweet smile and delightful presence.

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**KIDS GARDEN PROGRAMS**

**Registration Opens**

Friday, January 18

**Spring:**
Children's Garden & Garden Buds

**Summer:**
Children's Garden & Junior Naturalists

5% OFF with code **EARLYBIRD** by 2/18
Family-Level and Above Members enjoy 10% OFF!

Register for our popular kids garden programs starting Friday, January 18. Come spring and summer, watch your children grown with the Garden!

- **Garden Buds** | ages 2 to 3
- **Children’s Garden Sponsored by HSBC** | Pre-K through 5th grade
- **Junior Naturalists** | 6th through 9th grade

Learn more: queensbotanical.org/kidsprograms

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"This was our son’s first group experience and I can’t say enough about how well structured it is. We both had a wonderful time and I was so impressed with the content, kindness, and creativity in the class... We can’t wait to do more!"

— Emily John, parent of Garden Buds participant
How many activities on your fall bucket list can you check off at Queens Botanical Garden?

Autumn was in full effect at the Garden with our biggest lineup of public events yet! Harvest Fest & Pumpkin Patch, weekend Pumpkin Patch, and Halloween at the Garden thrilled hundreds of families and thousands of visitors.

Harvest Fest & Pumpkin Patch

On Sunday, October 14, for the eighth year in a row, Harvest Fest & Pumpkin Patch was filled with themed crafts, a petting zoo, inflatables, beehive demonstrations at the Bee Garden, dried floral arranging, wreath making, farm visits, and more.

"This is a great community event. Gets better and better," comments Shikha Dalal on Facebook. And better, it was this year, as festival goers experienced free, full access to the Pumpkin Patch (previously an add-on to festival pricing). They posed with pumpkins and took all the fall family photos they wanted at beautiful seasonal vignettes. (For more details on what went on in the Patch, continue reading the next page!)

Children and their parents were entertained by puppet and magic shows at the Sprout Stage with performances like the fun "The Cardboard Explosion!" and sweet "Little Red Hen." The Beer & Wine Garden on the Terrace served up brews and trivia, and featured catchy jazz, swing, and blues music by The Blue Vipers of Brooklyn. Just steps from here, individuals of all ages gathered and joined in on a delightful procession of two-step, Charleston, salsa, square dancing, and more at Demonstration Plaza, where they were also captivated by a costumed leopard and cat in a fire performance as they (the cat and leopard) swung and twirled batons and rings set ablaze!

Meanwhile, enthusiastic drumming emanated from a percussions circle in Meadow.

Feel-good energy radiated from festivalgoers—from smiling children who rattled hand-made corn shakers, to drumming by tots who banged on upcycled buckets to their hearts' content, to swaying strangers who grooved together to quirky covers of familiar tunes.

If you missed it, we hope you’ll join us next year to feel the fun!

SPECIAL THANKS TO HARVEST FEST LEAD SPONSOR:

NewYork-Presbyterian Queens

GENEROUS SUPPORT PROVIDED BY:
New York City Council | Amerasia Bank | New York Life

Pumpkin Patch

This year, to meet a growing demand, QBG’s everpopular Pumpkin Patch was bigger than ever, open every weekend, including on Harvest Fest, in October and on Columbus Day. Families spent three-hour windows of time picking the perfect pumpkins and taking family photos in front of colorful, thematic vignettes. The Patch provided extra, unique flair: visitors also took photos with fascinating dressed up characters by Cirque-tacular.

On certain days, live music added to the ambiance. Once done, Patchgoers explored the Mail Maze, a family-friendly activities perfect for little ones! And after all this fall activity, man satisfied their appetite with seasonal food and beverage, such as cider, roasted corn, and more.

“Having a kid gives us an excuse to go to all these fun kids activities,” Hsiao-Ting (aka "shoutingchow") commented on Instagram. “This is actually my first time ever going to a pumpkin patch. First time for [my son], too. We had a lot of fun, and took lots of cute photos as well.”

Halloween at the Garden

Mario, NYPD, Superman, Batman, and a USPS mailbox were just some of the guests who got things moving at our Halloween dance party! Halloween at the Garden on Sunday, October 28 also had craft activities, face painting, a magic show, and a carnivorous plant display. Fun was had by all along the trick-or-treat trail, complete with six treat stations and cool photo opportunities with forfeited trees, skeletons, graves, and facehole vignettes to transform you into a garden bee or pumpkin.

Fall Season of Fun and Family—Patched with Pumpkins, Sweetened with Candy, and Lit with FIRE!
“Santa CAWS!” Ellie Detchkov gasped as she spotted and pointed at Old St. Nick. (She is just two and has trouble pronouncing her “l”s.)

Her mother had been showing Ellie Christmas and holiday movies featuring Santa Claus all month long with hopes that she would react with excitement, as opposed to fear—which was the result of the previous year’s holiday encounter at the Garden. ( Stranger danger can be a real nuisance.) Hopefully, countless witnessing Santa climb down chimneys and give presents to all the children of the world has convinced this little one that he’s not a bad guy.

It all culminated in the Meeting Room of QBG’s Visitor & Administration Building, which was transformed into Santa’s Workshop during QBG’s Christmas in the Garden event on Sunday, December 2. Families were lined up to take special family photos with Mr. and Mrs. Claus.

And yes—success! After approaching Santa cautiously and ultimately refusing to sit on his lap, Ellie settled in on her mother’s lap as the friendly QBG team of Santa’s helpers snapped their photos, sweet keepsakes of this momentous occasion!

Before leaving, Ellie granted Santa a fist bump and Mrs. Claus a high five—that’s tot for, “we’re cool.”

Elsewhere in the Garden, nearly six hundred guests gathered in the holiday spirit thanks to the festivities taking place that day: holiday crafts, a cappella performances by The Rough Dozen, a tree lighting ceremony, and blowout sales at the gift shop.

Earlier the same weekend, the Calpulli Mexican Dance Company brought excerpts of their show “Navidad: A Mexican-American Christmas” to QBG (pictured below). The music and dance show, which celebrates American and Mexican Christmas traditions, included interactive movement workshops and a discussion about the story led by performers.

Back by popular demand, QBG’s wreath making workshop was offered on three different days in December, so participants can bring their crafty pieces home to dress up a door, wall, or mantle. As we close out the holiday season, we look forward to 2019 and bringing you yet another year of great programs.

Happy holidays!

QBG THANKS CHRISTMAS IN THE GARDEN SPONSORS:
Blondie’s Treehouse, Inc.
Sterling National Bank
New York City Council

Seasonal Cheer, Celebrating Holiday Traditions from Far and Near
This fall, Queens Botanical Garden completed a beautification project in Broad Channel, Queens, with $30,000 in support from New York City Council Member Eric Ulrich. Bright blue planters were filled with ornamental grasses (like crimson fountaingrass, blue lyme grass, and blue lily turf) and hardy perennials (including Spanish bayonet, coral bells, marginal shield fern, and sedum) and annuals and vines (like moneywort and sweet potato vine) were placed along Cross Bay Boulevard, with a focus on the entrance into Broad Channel at 20th Road.

On Friday, September 4, 2018, Council Member Ulrich, QBG Executive Director Susan Lacerte, QBG Assistant Director Rebecca Wolf, and Broad Channel Civic Association President Dan Mundy, hosted a press conference at the intersection of Cross Bay Boulevard and 20th Road to announce all the work that was about to begin.

The large containers, which will be maintained by Civic Association members, make the median along the long stretch a welcoming sight for the thousands of commuters who drive along it on a daily basis.

"We love plants and we’re delighted to partner with Dan Mundy and the crew down here and to get to know more of this community," said Lacerte. "This planter (held by Mundy) is just symbolic of our growing relationship."

Ulrich added, "We’re going to take good care them. I love green spaces and I think we need more of them..... It’s going to be a wonderful, wonderful welcoming addition to this community."
Susan’s Pick:
American Eden by Victoria Johnson


I thoroughly enjoyed American Eden, by Victoria Johnson. As a lover of plants, history and public gardens I found the tale of David Hosack, creator of the first botanical garden in the United States, to be a wonderful story, written in an easy style. As the Notes and Sources section indicate, Ms. Johnson, an academic, did an impressive amount of research about David Hosack, a physician who was passionate about plants. Dr. Hosack was insistent that his students understand how plants could be used to help heal and maintain health of people and society and also affirm the independence of a new nation.

This very energetic man collected plants from botanical luminaries all over the world and displayed them on the land which is now occupied by Rockefeller Center. Oh, the stories and layers of New York City! David Hosack was truly “ahead of his time” and also helped found other organizations, including the NY Historical Society, that help shape and define civic society. Ms. Johnson gives readers a new, down-to-earth view of many towering figures of American History—including Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton—as well as less known yet significant individuals in the botanical world including the Bartrams, Sir Joseph Banks, Humboldt. She also weaves in significant historical events—such as the famous duel between Hamilton and Burr—and helps one understand the monumental work work done by Carolus Linnaeus, just before David Hosack created the first botanical garden in the new land.

Up until reading American Eden I had thought of New York and horticulture largely through the Prince Family, which established the first commercial plant nursery in North America in the early 1700s. American Eden gave me a much wider view of the challenges of the time, when the US was forming, and still looking largely to Europe for knowledge, and the role that David Hosack played in building knowledge on this side of the ocean. This book is a must read for all interested in plants, public gardens, history, and New York.

—Susan Lacerte, QBG Executive Director

Queens Botanical Garden is currently reimagining parts of the Gardens on Parade section, including the former Backyard Garden. The Gardens on Parade area of QBG was originally modeled after the five-acre exhibit showcased at the 1939-1940 New York World’s Fair.

We’ve partnered with Scenic Designs, Inc., to renovate these gardens, with funding provided by New York State Assembly Members Jeffrion Aubry and Nily Rozic. Work is scheduled to be completed by the summer. Even before the fall landscaping season ended, Scenic Designs planted new trees, laid down sod, and prepared new bench pads. You can stop by for a glimpse of the work in progress!

Botanical garden consultant W. Gary Smith and landscape architect Harriet Grimm created plans to totally redo the gardens and integrate them conceptually. The new design will feature a circle of lawn split across both gardens, surrounded by elegant benches, paths, and plants. It will also incorporate the existing trees and shrubs in the Backyard Garden, which will be displayed more effectively in the new garden.

When work is done, you’ll see six new benches and a variety of ferns, perennials, shrubs, and trees. One of the trees will be a rare Franklin tree (Franklinia alatamaha), named after Benjamin Franklin and no longer found in the wild. Other highlights include witch hazel, Japanese painted ferns, and two cherry plum trees.

You’ll also notice that the planting beds have been raised—this is to keep plants’ roots dry even when it’s rainy. We’ve done this in other gardens as well, including the Rose Garden.

From the start, this has been an exciting process for QBG. Inspired by the design for the new gardens, our in-house horticultural staff are now also renovating the adjacent Perennial Garden, replicating the raised planting beds and grassy areas.

We hope you’ll come visit once the new gardens are completed. We’re excited to continue improving our collections and being the place where people, plants, and cultures meet!

ADOPT A BENCH

Bench adoption allows you to leave a lasting imprint at the Garden. For more information or to set an appointment, please contact Annette Fanara, Assistant Director of Development, at 718.886.3800, ext. 202, or afanara@queensbotanical.org

In fall 2018, Gary and Harriet presented design concepts to staff. Here they are with QBG Board Chair Pauline Huang, Executive Director Susan Lacerte, Daryih Wu, and Board Member Julia Ermish.

At a preview presentation of design concepts nearly a year ago, Susan and Pauline presented “Thank You” gifts to representatives from the offices of NYS Assembly Members Jeffrion Aubry and Nily Rozic, who have generously funded this project.

Pardon our appearance—Improvements are coming! Construction in progress in the former Backyard Garden, facing north.

Construction in progress in the former Backyard Garden, facing south.
We are pleased to thank the following corporations and foundations for their support of QBG’s botanical displays, programs, and operations:

- HSBC Bank USA, N.A.
- NewYorkPresbyterian Queens
- Consolidated Edison Company of New York, Inc.
- Flushing Bank
- The Kupferberg Foundation
- Lily Auchincloss Foundation
- Ridenour Endowment Fund
- Dr. Robert C. & Tina Sohn Foundation
- The Frank J. Antun Foundation
- TD Charitable Foundation
- Resorts World Casino

We extend our gratitude to the following elected officials and government bodies:

- New York City Council
- New York City Department of Cultural Affairs
- New York City Department of Sanitation
- New York State Assembly
- New York State Senate
- New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
- Queens Borough President Melinda Katz
- Queens Delegation of the New York City Council
- Queens Delegation of the New York State Assembly