QUEENS BOTANICAL GARDEN

Rose Gala

TUESDAY, JUNE 13, 2017
Honoring Rovena Schirling for her longstanding support and outstanding commitment to Queens Botanical Garden
Dear Friend,

On behalf of the Rose Gala Planning Committee and Board of Trustees, welcome to QBG’s Rose Gala 2017! We are thrilled that you’ve joined us to honor a very dear friend of the Garden—Rovena Schirling.

Rovena has long been involved with QBG in many capacities—first as Rose Gala Co-Chair, then as Board Member, and later as Board Chair. She currently serves as a member of our Advisory Council and is Co-Chair of our Capital Campaign. Together, Rovena and her husband Robert Schirling have been dedicated supporters of Queens Botanical Garden since 2000 when Bob began serving on the Board. After his two terms ended in 2006, Rovena made being part of QBG a family tradition by joining the Rose Gala committee in 2010! We are so glad that she did. Their sons are QBG-proud too! Tonight you will enjoy The Rough Dozen acapella troupe, led by Alex Schirling. The group has performed at the Garden many times to the delight of our visitors. Daniel Schirling has shared his culinary skills and knowledge of beer at public events over the years. This fall, Andrew Schirling will marry his sweetheart Heather here, but not to be left out, Heather has donated two of her vibrant paintings to tonight’s raffle! With Rovena, it is always a family affair. In fact, you may recognize the classical trio that plays at Rose Gala – featuring Rovena’s sister Loretta on flute.

We are delighted to honor Rovena and her commitment to Queens Botanical Garden. As Co-Chair, along with Saul Kupferberg, of our Capital Campaign, Room to Grow, Rovena is a true trailblazer, leading the way as we plan a brand new Education Center for the coming years.

Staff and Board alike are truly in awe of her generosity of spirit, down-to-earth nature, and fantastic sense of humor. We know you will join us in raising a glass to salute her great work. Stay tuned! You will hear more about the Education Center with its Kids Culture Garden very soon!

Your being here tonight means so much to us because it means you value all that we do—and for that we thank you! We hope to see you back at the Garden soon and often.

Enjoy the evening!

Pauline Huang  
Chair, Board of Trustees  
Chair, Rose Gala Committee

Susan Lacerte  
Executive Director
Rovena Schirling has worked at various Wall Street firms, primarily in Eurobond trading and as a floor clerk on the NYSE and more recently, devotes her time to her family and philanthropic work. She has been a member of the National Board of Directors of the Tourette Association (formerly the Tourette Syndrome Association) since 2004 and has served as Chairman of the Board since 2015.

Ms. Schirling served on the Board of Trustees of Queens Botanical Garden from 2010 to 2016; as Vice Chair in 2012 and 2013 and as Board Chair from 2014 through 2016. She is currently Co-chair of the Garden’s Education Center Capital Campaign: Room to Grow. Her husband, Robert, had served on the QBG Board as treasurer for six years.

Ms. Schirling and her husband are the proud parents of three wonderful sons: Andrew, a high school science teacher, with soon-to-be wife, Heather; Daniel, a bottling manager and brewer; and Alex, an opera singer, musical director and film associate producer. Rovena hales from Queens, speaks fluent Lithuanian and is a sucker for old, decrepit dogs.
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Special thanks to our ex officio representatives:
Alexandra Rosa, Jennifer Walden-Weprin, Matthew Gewolb,
Leonard Jacobs, and Marechal Brown.
June 13, 2017

Queens Botanical Garden
43-50 Main Street
Flushing, NY 11355

Dear Friends:

It is a pleasure to send greetings to everyone gathered for the Queens Botanical Garden’s Rose Gala 2017.

Queens Botanical Garden has worked for decades to conserve and perpetuate the natural beauty of New York City for grateful residents and visitors alike. Since 1939, the Botanical Garden has provided an urban oasis dedicated to offering unique cultural experiences through its year-round activities, exhibitions, and educational programs for all ages. The efforts and support of those present this evening make it possible for the Garden to continue growing and enriching the largest and most diverse borough of the City of New York.

Tonight, you come together to pay tribute to those whose generosity of spirit furthers the mission of this beautiful garden to inspire and educate. You pay tribute to a distinguished Guest of Honor, and I join in congratulating former Board Chair Rovena Schirling for her longstanding commitment to the Garden. Over the course of many years, Rovena has contributed significantly to the work of Queens Botanical Garden, which is of great benefit and importance to the surrounding neighborhoods.

With warmest regards and best wishes for an enjoyable evening.

Sincerely,

ANDREW M. CUOMO

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June 13, 2017

Queens Botanical Garden
43-50 Main Street
Flushing, NY 11355

Dear Queens Botanical Garden:

I am delighted to extend my heartfelt greetings to all gathered at Queens Botanical Garden’s Rose Gala 2017!

Queens Botanical Garden (QBG) is an urban oasis that exists to be the place where people, plants, and cultures converge and are celebrated through inspiring gardens, innovative educational programs, and demonstrations of environmental stewardship. Serving nearly a quarter of a million people annually, QBG offers visitors the opportunity to enjoy beautiful botanical displays, experience a variety of entertaining programs expressing cultural diversity, and learn lessons of environmental sustainability. During the school year, tens of thousands of elementary and middle school students visit the Garden to attend environmental workshops and can also learn about the environment through workshops brought to their schools. All in all, the majority of visitors of Queens Botanical Garden come to relax and enjoy the reflective tranquility of nature. This year’s Rose Gala 2017 is a hallmark event in the community and provides the unique opportunity to celebrate the essential contributions Queens Botanical Garden has made to our community and environment.

Moreover, I am thrilled to congratulate this year’s special honoree, Ms. Rovena Schirling, former Board Chair of Queens Botanical Garden, for her generous and exemplary service to the community. I commend Queens Botanical Garden for highlighting such invaluable work and duly thank the entire QBG staff and membership for another year of invaluable impact in Queens and throughout New York City.

Please accept my best wishes for a wonderful gala and much future success!

Sincerely,

Grace Meng
Member of Congress
June 13, 2017

Dear Friends:

It is a great pleasure to welcome everyone to the Queens Botanical Garden’s Rose Gala 2017.

The many parks, gardens, and natural public spaces found across all five boroughs are essential to the vitality and unity of our neighborhoods, serving all New Yorkers and forming the solid foundation of our strong and just city. As an urban oasis in Flushing established during the World’s Fair in 1939, the Queens Botanical Garden has long been a favorite of our residents, and it has offered visitors wonderful opportunities to learn more about horticulture and flora from around the world. From its environmental stewardship efforts to its wide variety of concerts, workshops, and public events, QBG has ensured its gardens will continue to bring people together for recreation and relaxation. I am proud to applaud the Garden’s staff and supporters that have introduced new generations to the beauty of nature and have helped us work towards a greener and more sustainable future.

On behalf of the City of New York, congratulations to this year’s honoree, Roivena Schirling, for her unwavering commitment to the QBG and service as Board Chair. Please accept my best wishes for a wonderful gala and continued success.

Sincerely,

Bill de Blasio
Mayor
June 13, 2017

Pauline Huang
Chair, Board of Trustees
Queens Botanical Garden
43-50 Main Street
Flushing, NY 11369

Dear Ms. Huang:

Greetings to you and all the friends and supporters of the Queens Botanical Garden on the occasion of your 2017 Rose Gala.

Tonight's event is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate the Queens Botanical Garden for being an urban oasis that gives all of us a chance to experience nature's splendor in a picturesque and conveniently located setting. Queens Botanical Garden's inspiring gardens, innovative educational programs and demonstrations of environmental stewardship provide wonderful experiences to the more than 210,000 people who visit Queens Botanical Garden each year.

Tonight’s Rose Gala is also an excellent opportunity to pay tribute to Rovena Schirling, the former Chair of the Queens Botanical Garden’s Board of Trustees, who is being honored this evening for her service. I therefore offer our most sincere congratulations to Ms. Schirling on behalf of the 2.3 million residents of Queens, “The World’s Borough.”

I wish the Queens Botanical Garden continued success in efforts to provide us with a sanctuary where the beauty and magnificence of plant life is celebrated and preserved. I also hope all in attendance at tonight’s Rose Gala have an enjoyable evening and I wish you all continued success in all your endeavors.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Melinda Katz
President
Borough of Queens
June 13, 2017

Dear Friends:

Greetings to everyone gathered here tonight at the Queens Botanical Garden’s Annual Rose Gala!

The arts and culture are a vital part of what makes New York the greatest city in the world. They draw millions of visitors to our city each year while enticing others to make a home and pursue their creative work here. They also bring enormous value and meaning to our lives and connect us more strongly as a city.

That’s why the City Council and I have been such strong supporters of the many diverse cultural institutions that continue to provide the best in arts and culture that our city has to offer.

As they celebrate their annual gala tonight, I would like to thank the Queens Botanical Garden and its dedicated staff for the critically important work that they are doing to provide a place where visitors and their families can experience some of the many wonders and joys of nature right here in our city.

Congratulations as well to this year’s honoree.

I hope everyone has a wonderful time tonight. Enjoy!

Sincerely,

MELISSA MARK-VIVERITO
Speaker
June 13, 2017

Queens Botanical Garden
43-50 Main Street,
Flushing, NY 11355

It is a pleasure to extend greetings to all attending the Queens Botanical Garden’s Rose Gala 2017.

Originally created as an exhibit at the New York World’s Fair, the Queens Botanical Garden (QBG) has since grown over the last seventy-eight years to become a 39-acre urban oasis enjoyed by residents from across the five boroughs and beyond. QBG attracts more than 241,000 visitors annually, bringing community members of all ages together for beautiful botanical displays, educational programs, workshops, and events that celebrate the diversity of Queens. By showcasing biodiversity, the Garden promotes the importance of environmental preservation and sustainability. Events such as tonight’s Rose Gala highlight this organization’s great work.

Congratulations to tonight’s honoree, Rovena Schirling, and thank you to the Queens Botanical Garden for bringing us together tonight to celebrate community and service. Please accept my best wishes for continued success.

Sincerely,

Scott M. Stringer
New York City Comptroller
We are pleased to thank the following corporations and foundations for their major support of QBG’s botanical displays, programs, and operations:

- HSBC Bank USA, N.A.
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- 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

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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In addition to Bench and Tree Adoption, QBG offers a range of philanthropic opportunities that help support the Garden’s mission to be the place where people, plants, and cultures meet. These include bequests, naming Queens Botanical Garden as a beneficiary of an insurance policy or retirement plan, and donations of real estate.

Please contact Stephanie Ehrlich, Director of Development, at 718-886-3800, extension 330 or sehrlch@queensbotanical.org for more information.
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In warm and grateful appreciation for Rovena Schirling's outstanding service to the Queens Botanical Garden.

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Rovena Schirling wishes to express her gratitude to Queens Botanical Garden for the honor this evening and for the privilege of being able to serve the Garden’s mission to be an urban oasis and a vital educational institution in Queens.

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--Robert & Rovena Schirling and The Schirling Family
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Congratulations to this year’s honoree Rovena Schirling

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Queens Botanical Garden 2017 Rose Gala

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Queens Botanical Garden on
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Congratulations to
Rose Gala 2017 honoree
Rovena Schirling.

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Raymond D. Jasen
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Rose Gala

Honoree

Rovena Schirling
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Heather, Daniel,
Alex, and Harley
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June 13, 2017

Queens Botanical Garden
43-50 Main Street
Flushing, NY 11355

Dear Friends:

It is my great pleasure to offer my sincere greetings and congratulations to all of you as you join together today in celebration of the Queens Botanical Garden (QBG) 2017 Rose Gala. This important event in support of the QBG is vital to furthering the mission of this extraordinary urban resource – an oasis of greenery, blossoms and environmental education programming that unites people, plants and cultures right here in the heart of Queens.

The tremendous success of the Garden is in large part due to the skill, dedication and vision of its friends, supporters, staff and leadership. In this light, I join with the QBG in honoring the tireless Rovena Schirling, who joined the Board of Trustees in 2010 and served as Chair from 2014 through 2016. Today, she continues to serve as Chair of Room to Grow, the Garden’s Education Center Capital Campaign. Dedication to the QBG clearly runs in her family, given that Rovena’s husband, Robert, also served on the Board as treasurer for six years.

I am deeply appreciative of Rovena’s efforts on behalf of the Garden and in aid of other philanthropic pursuits close to her heart, including her 13 years of leadership working with the Tourette Association. The QBG is indeed fortunate to have her as an integral and deeply committed member of its team. We are all the better for Rovena’s involvement.

Please accept my very best wishes for a highly successful 2017 Rose Gala, and thank you for all of your contributions to the Queens Botanical Garden.

Sincerely,

Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr.
NY Senator, 15th District

JPA:jkk
June 13, 2017

Queens Botanical Garden
43-50 Main Street
Flushing, NY 11355

Dear Friends:

I am writing to extend my congratulations to you and your distinguished honoree for the Queens Botanical Garden’s Rose Gala 2017: Rovena Schirling.

Ms. Schirling served on the Board of Trustees of the Queens Botanical Garden from 2010-2015, including as Vice Chair in 2012 and 2013, and Board Chair from 2014-2016. Ms. Schirling is currently Co-Chair of the Queens Botanical Garden’s Education Center Capital Campaign: Room to Grow, and her husband Robert has served on the Queens Botanical Garden Board as Treasurer for six years.

Ms. Schirling has also devoted her time to the Tourette Association, serving on its National Board of Director since 2004 and as Chair of the Board since 2015. Ms. Schirling’s outstanding demonstration of leadership has truly made her worthy of this honor. It is with sincere admiration that we all pause to reflect on Ms. Schirling’s outstanding contributions to the Queens Botanical Garden and her service to our community at large.

Congratulations again, and may you have a very enjoyable gala.

Sincerely,

Edward C. Braunstein
Member of Assembly
June 13, 2017

Queens Botanical Garden
43-50 Main Street
Flushing, NY 11354

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the Queens Botanical Garden’s 2017 Rose Gala. I hope you will join us tonight in honoring the dedication and accomplishments of Rovena Schirling, Former Board Chair of the Queens Botanical Garden.

Since its inception with the New York World’s Fair, the Queens Botanical Garden has remained an exemplary, environmental pillar of our community. It serves nearly a quarter of a million annual visitors, and has inspired countless New Yorkers with its inspiring programs, innovative displays, and unique botanical exhibitions. As an island of ecological tranquility within the larger metropolitan cityscapes of Queens, the Garden is truly an irreplaceable nexus for different people, cultures, and nature.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend Rovena Schirling for her years of service on behalf of her community. She has served on the Board of Trustees of the Queens Botanical Garden from 2010 to 2016, and is currently Co-chair of the Garden’s Education Center Capital Campaign: Room to Grow. Her work on behalf of the Garden and commitment to its continuing growth is worthy of the respect and admiration of all New Yorkers.

On behalf of the New York State Assembly, I offer my best wishes for a successful evening and even greater future successes.

Sincerely,

Ron Kim
Member of Assembly
District 40, Queens
June 13, 2017

Dear Friends:

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the Queens Botanical Garden’s Annual Rose Gala 2017.

The Queens Botanical Garden is an oasis where people and cultures are celebrated through their wonderful gardens, innovative educational programs and demonstrations of environmental stewardship. Rovena Schirling, this evening’s honoree, embodies the Queens Botanical Garden’s vision. After a successful career in finance, Ms. Schirling committed herself to philanthropic causes including the Tourette Association and the Queens Botanical Garden’s “Room to Grow” education campaign. Ms. Schirling’s life serves as a shining example of community service for us all. I offer my sincerest congratulations to Ms. Schirling for this well-deserved honor.

Tonight’s event is a fitting tribute to the Queens Botanical Garden’s tremendous impact on our community and I look forward to the continued success of this jewel of our Borough.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Aravella Simotas
New York State Assemblymember
36th District - Queens
June 13, 2017

Queens Botanical Garden
43-50 Main Street
Flushing, NY 11355

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I offer you my sincere congratulations on the occasion of your annual Rose Gala.

Ever since its beginning in the 1939 World’s Fair, the Queens Botanical Garden has been a constant source of education, relaxation, and wonder for the nearly quarter of a million visitors that it draws each year. In such a dense, urban setting such as New York, the Botanical Garden offers an invaluable service to the residents of the city. From its nature preserves and gardens, to the fantastic education it offers the many students that visit, the Queens Botanical Garden proves to be an undying source for good in our community.

Tonight, we are proud to honor Roven Schirling, member of the Board of Trustees of the Queens Botanical Garden from 2010 to 2016; Vice Chair from 2012 to 2013, Board Chair from 2014 through 2016, and current Co-chair of the Garden’s Education Center Capital Campaign: Room to Grow. Mrs. Schirling along with her husband, Robert, have been working with and contributing to the Queens Botanical Garden for years, and through their immeasurable commitment and philanthropic aid, both Mr. and Mrs. Schirling have earned the ceaseless respect and admiration of their entire community.

Once again, I give my heartfelt congratulations on your celebration tonight and wish you all the best!

Sincerely,

David I. Weprin
Member of Assembly
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Saluting the Queens Botanical Garden for their special contribution to our community.

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Best Wishes to
Queens Botanical Garden on its Rose Gala 2017

Congratulations to Honoree
Rovena Schirling
Former Board Chair and Long-time Friend
For her commitment to the Garden and its continued growth.

Veronica Tsang
Board Chairperson
Most Holy Redeemer Catholic Academy – St. Michael’s
www.mhrca-nyc.org
Dear Friends,

I give my greetings to all in attendance at this year’s Queens Botanical Garden’s Annual Rose Gala.

This is a joyous occasion in which we honor the Queens Botanical Garden’s inspiring educational programs, environmental demonstrations, sustainability lessons, and botanical displays. I am proud to support the Queens Botanical Gardens and its important mission to celebrate horticulture within our urban landscape. Its programming is essential to residents and visitors within the borough of Queens as it creates a space where individuals could incline in the peace and solace which nature inherently provides.

It is with great joy that I join the QBG in commemorating its accomplished history and to offer a special recognition to QBG’s long-time friend, Rovena Schirling, for her unwavering support of the organization. As a member serving on QBG’s Board of Trustees, Rovena has devoted her time and efforts to growing the organization so that its impact continues to touch the lives of many.

QBG is a landmark institution and I am honored to celebrate its successes during this year’s Rose Gala. Congratulations again to the Queens Botanical Garden and Rovena Schirling on this important day.

Sincerely,

Costa Constantinides
Council Member
22nd District
June 13, 2017

Dear Friends,

My warmest greetings to all in attendance at Queens Botanical Garden’s Rose Gala 2017. I am honored to recognize the achievements of QBG, which has been providing our community with inspiring gardens and innovative educational programs since its official opening in 1948. It serves as an urban oasis and its beautiful botanical displays, entertaining programs, and culturally diverse offerings are enjoyed by more than 240,000 visitors each year.

This year’s honoree, Rovena Schirling, is being celebrated for her significant contributions to the cultural landscape of Queens and beyond. Through her service on the Board of Trustees and ultimately service as Board Chair, Ms. Schirling has been a champion for Queens Botanical Garden for many years and continues to support its development.

Best wishes to Executive Director Susan Lacerte, Board Chair Pauline Huang, and the entire Board of Directors and staff on your accomplishments and wishing you much success in your future endeavors. To everyone participating in tonight’s event, thank you and have a wonderful time.

Very truly yours,

Karen Koslowitz
Council Member
29th District
Hello Friends,

As Council Member of New York City’s 31st district, which covers Rosedale, Laurelton, Springfield Gardens and the Rockaways, it’s an honor to send greetings and congratulations to Rovenia Schirling, Co-chair of Queens Botanical Garden’s Education Center Capital Campaign: Room to Grow.

Since 2010, Philanthropist Rovenia Schirling has been a devoted and active member of the Queens Botanical Garden. Queens Botanical Garden is an urban oasis where people, plants and cultures are celebrated through inspiring gardens, innovative educational programs, and demonstrations of environmental stewardship. Ms. Schirling has served on the Board of Trustees, as Vice Chair from 2012 to 2013, and as Board Chair from 2014 through 2016. I can truly say Ms. Schirling is a dedicated servant of the community.

I would like to thank Rovenia Schirling for the positive work you are doing on behalf of the community.

Sincerely,

Donovan Richards
Council Member, District 31
June 13th, 2017

Queens Botanical Garden
43-50 Main Street
Flushing, NY 11355

Dear Friends:

I applaud the Queens Botanical Garden for their service and commitment to our community. I would like to recognize their hard work on holding their “QBG Rose Gala 2017” and wish them success on their event.

Since its inception in 1939 the QBG has served our community as a successful organization, helping individuals and families with its comprehensive social and educational programs. Following the footsteps of the New York World’s Fair, QBG has tirelessly worked to establish itself as a reputable cultural conduit, providing cultural diversity through its beautiful botanical garden and variety of entertaining and educational programs.

I commend the hardworking staff and representatives from QBG for their distinguished efforts. Through their efforts, I am confident that QBG will continue directing the community in a positive way.

I look forward to closely working with every member of QBG and on behalf of the New York City Council, I would like to express my deepest gratitude and personal wish for the Queens Botanical Garden.

Very Truly Yours,

Hon. Paul A. Vallone

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