



# THE HORT REPORT

NEWSLETTER OF THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF MARYLAND, INC. | SEPTEMBER 2016

## A Vollmer Garden Update

By Peter Bieneman



Every garden undergoes change, and the Vollmer Center Entrance Garden—a well-designed, well-planted and well-maintained public green space—is no exception.

Last spring, as the garden entered its third year, four *Daphne odora* 'Aureomarginata' and three *Daphne x transatlantica* 'Summer Ice,' a hybrid of *Daphne caucasica* and *Daphne collina*, were planted as replacements for lost shrubs.

In addition, 120 *Rubus pentalobus* (syn. *R. calycinoides*), or Creeping Raspberry, a hardy, prostrate evergreen groundcover with bronze or purple winter foliage and white spring blooms, were installed to replace *Paxistima canbyi* in the front beds.

Blue & Green LLC, owned by the garden's designer, John T. Fitzpatrick, Ph.D., donated replacement plants for the pink-flowered *Phlox subulata* that were located beneath the standard *Viburnum prunifolium*. The pale lavender-blue cultivar 'Emerald Blue' was installed there last spring to align with the original plan.

An *Elliottia racemosa*, or Georgia Plume, was donated from her garden by Jean Silber and installed last year. *Lilium canadense*, or Canada Lily, will be added this fall, as well as more of other bulbs in the garden.

The garden, fully funded by HSM and dedicated on Sept. 9, 2014, provides a welcomed, and welcoming, entrance to the Vollmer Center. The garden was originally planted with well over 2,000 horticulturally distinctive trees, shrubs,

*Continued on page 8*

### LECTURE SERIES

Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 13, 7:30 p.m.

#### JOSEPH TYCHONIEVICH

*Plant Breeding for the Home Gardener*

Horticulturist and author Joseph Tychonievich will discuss the ins and outs of breeding your own plants and inspire us to create that perfect new tomato or zinnia, custom-made for you and your garden. Book sale and signing follows.

Tuesday, OCTOBER 11, 7:30 p.m.

#### BRUCE CRAWFORD

*A Designer's Love Affair with Trees*

Bruce Crawford, director of Rutgers Gardens and an adjunct professor of landscape architecture at Rutgers University, will discuss the many ways that trees contribute to the well-being of our communities and will provide tips on how trees can best be maintained for future generations to enjoy.

Tuesday, NOVEMBER 8, 7:30 p.m.

#### ANDREA WULF

*Founding Gardeners*

This beautifully illustrated talk by historian Andrea Wulf looks at the lives of the Founding Fathers and how their attitudes toward plants, gardens, nature and agriculture shaped the American nation. Book sale and signing follows.

Tuesday, DECEMBER 13, 7:30 p.m.

#### WILLIAM THOMAS

*The Art of Gardening at Chanticleer*

Join Chanticleer's executive director and head gardener William Thomas for a visual tour and behind-the-scenes look at what *The Washington Post* calls "one of the most interesting and edgy public gardens in America." Book sale and signing follows.

For more information, visit  
[www.mdhorticulture.org](http://www.mdhorticulture.org)

## COMING HSM EVENTS

### ANNUAL PLANT & SEED SWAP

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2016

Starts 6:30 p.m. and ends at 7:15 p.m.

For members and their guests. This is the “one for one” swap before the September lecture. Take your plants and seed packets—marked with botanical name—to the front of the Vollmer Center, then look for plants to add to your garden.



### OEHME, VAN SWEDEN EXHIBIT

JANUARY 7 - MARCH 26, 2017

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday

The exhibit, “The New American Garden: The Landscape Architecture of Oehme, van Sweden,” will be at the Vollmer Center.

### JANUARY PLANT FORUM

SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 2017

1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

For HSM members only.  
Free but you must register in advance.

### PERENNIAL PLANT ASSOCIATION & HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF MARYLAND SEMINAR

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2017

8:45 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Sheppard Pratt Conference Center  
Towson, Maryland  
Please join us for the annual winter seminar. Details to follow.

### ANNUAL GARDEN TOUR

SUNDAY, JUNE 4, 2017

The 2017 tour will feature gardens of Annapolis.

For more information, visit  
[www.mdhorticulture.org](http://www.mdhorticulture.org)

## HSM Honor Roll

We thank the following volunteers (members as well as non-members) who have supported the Society's programs in recent months.

**For the Tool Drive:** Lenel Srochi-Meyerhoff, Jamison Douglas (Community Greening Resource Network coordinator, Parks & People Foundation), Peter Bieneman and Pat Sherman

**For the Garden Tour Committee:** Nancy Raskin, chair; Ann Betten, Nancy Blois, Anne Gossett, Nancy Grabowski, Donna Imhoff, Tanya Jones and Crystal Patterson

**For the Garden Tour and Preview Party:** Nancy Backert, Ann Betten, Nancy Blois, Max and Carol Bloom, Glenn Carey, Helene Clapperton, John Fisher, Sally Foley, Jennifer Forrence, Nancy Grabowski, Donna Imhoff, Nancy Johnston, Colleen Lamont, Nancy MicKey, Nancy Raskin, Doug Reichlin, Gretchen Sarkin, Pat Sherman, Mary Jo Sherrod, Megan Shook, Paula Simon (photography), Nell Strachan, Barbara Sutton, Amy Urdang, Salli Ward, Jacqui Weinstock, Dorothy Wells, Cynthia Wilber, Rose Wolford and Byrd Wood

**For the Vollmer Birthday Party:** Helene Clapperton, Karen Offutt and Mary Jo Sherrod

**For the Sponsorship Program:** Sally Barker

**For the Lecture Series Committee:** Paula Simon, Mary Jo Sherrod, coordinators; Nancy Blois, Helene Clapperton, Muffin Evander, Karen Offutt and Carol Oppenheimer

**For Meetings Hospitality:** Nancy Blois, Jennifer Forrence, Pat Sherman and Donna Watts

**For the Plant Raffle:** Nancy MicKey

**For the Communications Team:** Pat Cieslak, telephone messages; Helene Clapperton, webmaster; Aaron Haslinger, web consultant; Carla Hackley, Facebook manager; Nancy Raskin, event coordinator; and John Fitzpatrick, May mailing

**For the May 2016 issue of THE HORT REPORT:** John Fitzpatrick, contributor; Ann Betten, David Mizejewski, Stephany Stockton, Paula Simon and Pamela C. Whitenack (Hershey Community Archives), photographs; Joel Cohen and John Fitzpatrick, proofreaders

### About the HSM Lecture Series

As you may have noticed, our membership is growing—and we believe that our spring and fall lectures series are a big reason why. We are pleased to bring first-class horticultural speakers from near and far to our Maryland venue.

Lectures are held in the Vollmer Center auditorium at Cylburn Arboretum, 4915 Greenspring Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21209. Members are required to show a current membership card for admission free of charge. Guests of members also receive free admission. Admission for non-members is \$10 at the door.

Come early to check out our plant raffle or other pre-lecture “happenings” and stay for light refreshments after the lecture.

As winter approaches, remember to check the HSM website for cancellations in the event of severe weather.

# *Ceanothus americanus*, New Jersey Tea

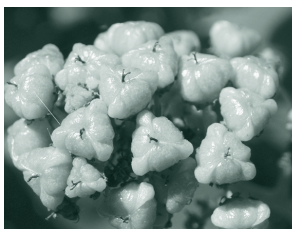
By John T. Fitzpatrick, Ph.D.

Many garden situations require a shrub of less than four feet in height—such as at the foreground of a shrub border, underplanting taller woody plants that have bare stems, below a home’s windows, or as an unsharped hedge that stops foot traffic without blocking views. Of the relatively small number of species suitable for these purposes, New Jersey Tea stands out as one of the most adaptable to environmental conditions. It performs well in full sun or shade, sites that are dry or moist (as long as drainage is good), a wide soil pH range and USDA hardiness zones 3 to 8.



From its delicate flowers (top left) to its compact habit (above) and curious fruit (bottom left), *Ceanothus americanus*, or New Jersey Tea, is a treat for garden owners and visiting pollinators alike.

New Jersey Tea, *Ceanothus americanus*, occurs naturally throughout eastern North America, commonly on sandy or rocky soils either exposed or in open woodlands. The common name comes from its historic use in preparing a tea. In June, thousands of tiny white flowers emerge in several globose clusters at the end of each new shoot. The flowers attract many types of pollinators as well as hummingbirds that eat tiny insects on the flowers. Curious three-sided capsules develop and persist after the seeds are dispersed, providing some winter interest. Plants of New Jersey Tea produce new stems from the crown of the plant which helps to maintain a dense structure. Some years, the leaves turn yellow before dropping in autumn.



One of the distinctive features of the plant is the rootstock, which is pink, massive (reaching a diameter of up to 8 inches) and deep in the earth. It enables the plants to recover rapidly from fire or animal browsing. This feature is the source of a second common name, Redroot. New Jersey Tea is in the Buckthorn family but, like many species in the pea family, it fixes nitrogen, i.e., the roots extract nitrogen from the air in the soil through symbiosis with a bacterium. This enables the plants to thrive in nutrient-poor sites.

It appears that no cultivars of New Jersey Tea are in commerce. However, it has been used in breeding with *Ceanothus* species that are less winter-hardy. The most notable is the offspring of *C. americanus* x *C. coeruleus* (a deep blue Mexican species)—*Ceanothus* x *delilianus*. This hybrid produces blue flowers on new growth each summer. In

our region, smaller shoots are often killed in winter but, in any case, a hard pruning in late winter is advisable. The pale blue ‘Gloire de Versailles’ is the cultivar most often available. A species closely related to New Jersey Tea, *Ceanothus herbaceus*

(Inland Ceanothus, formerly called *C. ovatus*), occurs in the western part of the same range and somewhat farther west. It is very similar to New Jersey Tea except that its leaves are somewhat smaller, narrower and glossy.

New Jersey Tea is rarely subject to serious insect or disease damage, does not require pruning to be kept “in bounds” and does not require watering after the first growing season, when it is getting established. Because of production difficulties, it has not been widely available. Renewed public interest in recent years has resulted in improved nursery techniques and in greater availability in the trade. It is worth the search.

#### SOURCES:

Lazy S’s Farm ([www.lazyssfarm.com](http://www.lazyssfarm.com))

Prairie Nursery ([www.prairienursery.com](http://www.prairienursery.com)) 1-800-476-9453

Rare Find Nursery ([www.rarefindnursery.com](http://www.rarefindnursery.com)) 1-732-833-0613

*Dr. Fitzpatrick is an adjunct faculty member in the landscape architecture program at Morgan State University. He designed the Vollmer Center entrance garden, which includes Ceanothus americanus.*

# Bill Kuhl

## For the Love of Hollies

By Harry Merritt

On a hot, sticky morning in July, one of America's leading experts on Hollies is showing a visitor around his McLean Nurseries, a nine-acre wonderland in Parkville.

The expert is William N. Kuhl—most people call him Bill—and he seems to know, in a self-effacing kind of way, about all there is to know about the members of the genus *Ilex* we know and love, and some we've never heard of.

McLean Nurseries has been in business 70 years, more than 40 of them with Kuhl in charge. The nursery was founded in 1946 by Stewart McLean, "a nurseryman and plantsman who did it for the love," says Kuhl. "He introduced a lot of good Hollies, he was an early member of the Holly Society of America, and he was well respected in the trade."

Among Stewart McLean's introductions was *Ilex opaca* 'Miss Helen,' named for McLean's wife. His best known introduction, however, was *Ilex opaca* 'Satyr Hill,' named for the nursery's location, in 1970. "He was a little reluctant to introduce it because he thought it would outshine 'Miss Helen,'" Kuhl says. "The National Arboretum said to him, 'If you don't introduce it, we will.'" 'Satyr Hill,' the Holly Society's 2003 Holly of the Year, remains popular. "It's easy to grow, and it grows like a Holly is supposed to grow," Kuhl says.

Today at McLean Nurseries, "we grow more than 100 cultivars of Holly, and a fair number of Winterberry (*Ilex verticillata*), Koehneanas and hybrids," Kuhl, 73, says. "I pick up a lot of species and cultivars and hybrids through the Holly Society," of which he is a staunch supporter.

"I like to grow a lot of the oddball ones that people don't know about," he adds.

Among others, McLean Nurseries introduced *Ilex aquifolium* 'Lewis,' a female English Holly "that does very well at Christmastime," Kuhl says, and was Holly of the Year in 2007; *Ilex x koehneana* 'Lassie,' Holly of the Year 2005; and

*Ilex opaca* 'Glen Ellen' and 'Baltimore Buzz.' There are also several Hollies named for the dogs that have been a cherished part of life at McLean, such as *Ilex opaca* 'Charming Cleopatra.' "We're kind of a dog nursery as well as a Holly nursery," says Miriam Miceli, Kuhl's longtime associate, gesturing toward a bulletin board crowded with photographs of dogs, mostly winsome Golden Retrievers.

"Sometimes I have Hollies that they can use in an arboretum," Kuhl says, rattling off the names of recipients of McLean hollies: the Norfolk Botanical Garden, Dawes Arboretum in Ohio, Cylburn Arboretum, the Elmore Holly Collection at the University of Tennessee Arboretum. "Bill is very generous with his plants," says Miriam.

"There are people out there who are plant collectors. We cater to them as well as the nurseries," Kuhl says. McLean also offers Boxwood and other plants suitable for bonsai, Hydrangea, Viburnum and perennials native to the region, welcomes tours by garden clubs and is host for the annual Free State Daylily Society Daylily Sale and Auction.



*Ilex opaca* 'Satyr Hill' remains a popular McLean Nurseries introduction.

*“I like to grow a lot of the oddball ones that people don’t know about.”*

Bill Kuhl stands beside an *Ilex cornuta x pernyi* ‘Hugger,’ a male hybrid.



Bill Kuhl grew up in Skaneateles, in the Finger Lakes region of upstate New York. “My uncle had a nursery,” he says. “My father worked for the nursery and at 13, I started working for the nursery.”

His father advised him to get a college education, so he attended the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse University, today known as the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry. He earned a degree in landscape architecture in 1966.

Soon after that, he arrived in Maryland to take a job with the state highway department. “At that time Maryland was hiring landscape architects to work on highways for Lady Bird Johnson’s Highway Beautification program,” Kuhl says. “I worked on roadsides, rest areas, plantings.”

That work was interrupted by two years in the Army. Soon after Kuhl returned from the service and resumed his Maryland job, Stewart McLean died. Kuhl, who boarded at the McLean home, began working at the nursery part time in 1971, helping Helen McLean, then bought the business from her.

Since then he has grown untold tens of thousands of Hollies, propagating them the traditional way in cold-frame boxes. “We take cuttings starting in late July into September and leave them in the cold frames all winter,” he says. Each box holds 1,500 cuttings.

Nature, though, includes deer, “which eat the new growth,” Kuhl says. “We don’t have to prune some of them.”

Holly is, of course, most closely associated with Christmas time, and that is when McLean Nurseries is at its busiest. Miriam Miceli oversees a crew of “elves” decorating Balsam Fir wreaths for the public and for churches. The Chesapeake Chapter of the Holly Society also decorates wreaths at McLean.

The work, says Miriam, “is extremely labor intensive. You don’t realize it, looking at the final product, but it’s all hand work.”

Growing and tending Hollies is “good, healthy work,” Kuhl says. “We take it seriously, but not too seriously.”

“We enjoy what we’re doing. We’re close to nature, close to plants.”



A specimen sample of *Ilex x koehneana* ‘Lassie,’ a female Holly, from Bill Kuhl’s presentation at the 2014 Plant Forum.

Harry Merritt is editor of THE HORT REPORT.

## 2016 Garden Tour Snapshots



IN CLOCKWISE ORDER FROM TOP LEFT:

- Sally & Tom O'Brien, owners of garden #1
- Megan Shook & Nancy Blois, volunteers
- Susan Fancher & Joe Ruzicka, owners of garden #5, with Kenna Forsyth, owner of garden #3
- Stanley Gabor, with daughter Elizabeth, owner of garden #6
- Anne Gossett, volunteer
- Rosemary Maas & Gibson Porter, sponsors

## 100th Birthday Party for Pauline Vollmer



Dozens of friends visited Pauline Vollmer on July 5th to celebrate her 100th birthday. For 70 years Pauline has been a leading figure in the horticultural community. Her inspiration and contributions over a lifetime culminated in the building of the Vollmer Center at Cylburn Arboretum.

Guests enjoyed cake and a stroll through her garden, which was designed by Wolfgang Oehme. The event's co-hosts were the Horticultural Society of Maryland, Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland, Cylburn Arboretum Association, and the City of Baltimore, Horticulture Division.



# HSM in the Community

The Society's fifth annual tool drive, in May, collected donations to help support community garden groups. HSM board member Lenel Srochi-Meyerhoff and Jamison Douglas, Community Greening Resource Network coordinator for the Parks & People Foundation, coordinated the event, with help from Peter Bieneman and Pat Sherman.

Charlotte A. L'Esperance, a Master of Landscape Architecture student at Morgan State University, was the 2016 summer intern at Cylburn Arboretum. The internship program is co-sponsored by the Horticultural Society of Maryland, the Cylburn Arboretum Association and the Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland, each of which contributed \$2,500.



PHOTO: Pat Sherman

Thirty-three Baltimore City Master Gardener interns were given a complimentary HSM membership through the end of the membership year.

The Sidney Silber Scholarship was presented to Yilin Zou, allowing her to attend the 2016 Winter Seminar sponsored by HSM and the Perennial Plant Association. She received a bachelor's degree in landscape management and sustainability studies from the University of Maryland College Park in May.

Urban Designs Inc. of Reistertown received the society's 2016 award for the Display Garden Demonstrating the Most Effective and Practical Use of Plants. HSM President Nancy Raskin presented the award at the spring Maryland Home and Garden Show at the State Fairgrounds in Timonium. The judges were Peter Bieneman, Pat Sherman and Paula Simon. The garden also satisfied the year's theme, 'Art in the Garden.' Rosy-hued Hellebores establish the foreground for a decorative cement sphere, with vertical Red Twig Dogwood branches and rounded shrubs giving definition to the garden's artistic background space.



PHOTO: Paula A. Simon

The Horticultural Society of Maryland has awarded \$5,000 for Little Leaves, a science-based learning program for Baltimore City second graders at the Howard Peters Rawlings Conservatory.

Little Leaves was developed by the Friends of the Rawlings Conservatory (formerly the Baltimore Conservatory Association) for children from the Druid Hill Park area and Mondawmin, Gwynns Falls and other neighborhoods surrounding the Rawlings Conservatory.

The program, according to the FRC's Alice Hubbard, allows the children to develop science-based knowledge and skills by "immersing [them] in three diverse worlds—Mediterranean, Tropical and Desert—right in their own neighborhoods." Little Leaves is intended to support and supplement the Maryland State Science Standards and the Baltimore City School curriculum for the second grade.

Children complete Little Leaves with a better understanding of plants and what plants need to survive in different habitats, as well as how to use their senses to observe natural phenomena and how to illustrate their observations through drawing.

The HSM grant will support the expansion of Little Leaves to more neighborhood schools for up to 16 schools during the 2016-2017 academic year. Several HSM members are working to develop the program.

The students, teachers and parents in these photographs are from Edgecombe Circle Elementary School.



PHOTOS: Courtesy of the Friends of the Rawlings Conservatory

# A Vollmer Garden Update

Continued from page 1

perennials and bulbs to provide a balance of evergreen and deciduous material. These carefully chosen plants have given the entrance a strong horticultural presence and provide a dynamic landscape for all visitors to enjoy.

“I am pleased with the rapid growth and maturing of the planting after only two full years,” said Fitzpatrick, a former HSM president. “I wish that the special bamboo in the back would hurry up and start to reach its full size. HSM has been great at providing professional care for the garden. I’m so pleased to have brought uncommon plants to the attention of Cylburn Arboretum visitors.”

The HSM has committed to maintaining the garden in order to ensure its proper perpetual care. Jackson Lehman, a recent graduate of the Morgan State Landscape Architecture Program and a Cylburn Arboretum Association Gardener, has taken over the primary care. Peter Bieneman, HSM board member, is the garden manager. Fitzpatrick has been available for consultation.



New groundcover *Rubus pentalobus*, or Creeping Raspberry, will have white blossoms in the spring.

Through the efforts of the Cylburn Arboretum Association, the plants in the garden have been labeled with new accession tags and accession numbers. As Fitzpatrick points out, “the display labels were really necessary!” They allow for easy identification of unique specimens. The woody plants are now included in the comprehensive GIS map of the grounds.

PHOTO: Paula A. Simon

## Welcome New Members!

Donna Anderson	Patricia Ghingher	Ellen Menendez	Joe Ruzicka
Sarah Atherton	Ruth Goldstein	Michael Moore	Gretchen Sarkin
Leise Ballou	Joshua Gruber	Donna Muehleisen	Charles Saunders
Lois Berk	Molly Guenzer	Jay & Michele Naish	Kathy Shearin
Sue Bloodgood	Marta Harrison	Sally & Tom O'Brien	Doris Shiffman
Gayle Boote	Suzanne Henneman	Barbara Parsons	Dean Smouse
Deborah Bors	Elizabeth Hopkins	Steven Potter	– Urban Gardens Inc.
Barbara & Ed Brody	Hiawatha Howard	Terri Kolman Potter	Jennifer Townsend
Christine Corbitt	Raissa Kirk	Pikesville Garden Club	Debbie Trevathan
Suzi Cordish	Deborah Kleiner	Matthew Reed	Patricia Webster
Maureen D'Angelo	Jaye Kutson	Debbie & Doug	Richard Wilke
Susan Fancher	Eleanor & Peter	Reichlin	Betsy Yeomans
Kenna Forsyth	Landauer	Jeannette Rickman	Pat Yevics
Honora Freeman	Debra Levay	Richard Roth	



### OFFICERS

Nancy Raskin, *President*  
Catherine Cook, *Vice President for Membership*  
Helene Clapperton, *Treasurer*  
Bill Yonkers, *Secretary*

### BOARD MEMBERS

Peter Bieneman  
Jennifer Forrence  
Pat Sherman  
Mary Jo Sherrod  
Paula Adelsberger Simon  
Lenel Srochi-Meyerhoff  
Marilyn Vantosh

### HONORARY MEMBERS

Leigh Barnes  
Max Bloom  
Muffin Evander  
John T. Fitzpatrick, Ph.D.  
Pauline Vollmer  
Jean Worthley

### NEWSLETTER

Harry Merritt, *Editor*  
Paula A. Simon, *Designer*

### VOLLMER CENTER GARDEN

Peter Bieneman, *Manager*  
Jackson Lehman, *Gardener*

### MEMBERSHIP

For information about membership or to join, visit the society's website: [www.mdhorticulture.org](http://www.mdhorticulture.org) or telephone Catherine Cook at 410-821-5561.

### Benefits of Membership

Newsletters and membership directory; admission to the spring and fall lectures and the annual garden tour; and discounts on workshops, trips and special events.

### © THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF MARYLAND, INC.

#### Mailing address:

P.O. Box 4213  
Lutherville, MD 21093-4214

Telephone: 410-821-5561

[www.mdhorticulture.org](http://www.mdhorticulture.org)

The Horticultural Society of Maryland, Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) educational organization.