

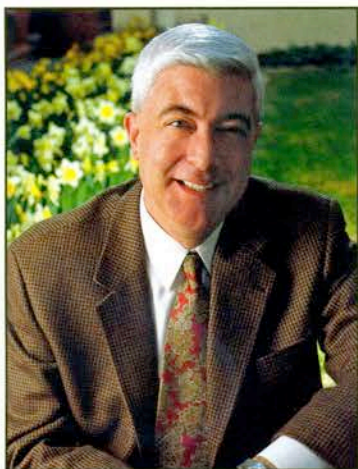
Seasons of growth

A PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS OF LAURITZEN GARDENS

FALL 2017



a letter from the Director



Spencer Crews

Without a doubt, the question I am asked most frequently is: "What's new at the garden?" I always appreciate answering with some of the latest exciting things that have happened. I know many of our members are not able to visit as often as they would like and so when they are finally able to make their way to the garden, they are surprised at what has occurred since their last visit. I thought in this issue of *Seasons of Growth*, I would share with you some of the headlines from 2017.

Giant Titan Arum Blooms: In late May, the garden experienced its first successful blooming of the giant titan arum. The garden joined an elite group of botanical institutions nationwide that have successfully flowered this giant of the plant

community. Thousands of guests enjoyed observing the plant's unbelievable flower which grew to an amazing height of 82 inches. It grew as much as four inches per evening during the week it was on display. The garden experienced its all-time record attendance on Sunday, May 28, when it welcomed 12,036 for the day and evening.

Cactus and Succulent Display: Through October 1, visitors will be able to enjoy the inaugural display of the garden's cactus and succulent collection. Normally housed in areas not open to the public, this exhibit showcases these rarely seen specimens. See this dramatic and first-of-its-kind exhibit in the Cindy and Mogens Bay Gallery.

Spectacular Sculpture Installed in the Festival Garden: Since the original design of the visitor and education center, a special location was reserved for the placement of a permanent work of art. A generous gift from longtime garden supporters, Karen and Howard Kennedy, allowed us to realize the vision of a beautiful sculpture in that garden spot. The piece, entitled *Bird Bowl*, is composed of overlapping bronze silhouettes of birds in flight. It was created in 1996 by Omaha artist, Catherine Ferguson. Its beautiful form inspired by the beauty found in nature makes the perfect statement for the garden.

New Garden Connection: For all of the guests who enjoy walking the many pathways located throughout the garden's 100-acre site, a new one has recently opened. What was once used as a haul road for the landfill site back in the late 1970's has been repurposed to a much more appealing use. A new hard surface pathway provides another connection between the Garden in the Glen and the Arboretum and Oberman Bird Sanctuary. Additionally, a shady, secluded seating area has also been created for our guests where they can truly escape from it all.

Permanent Site for Lithuanian Wood Sculpture Garden: A new garden feature will be a treat for those who take the time to seek it out. Located in a woodland area at the north end of the arboretum, construction activities are beginning to take place for Saulės Takas, or Path of the Sun. A new paved entry pathway has been installed and will soon be accompanied by the installation of a beautifully carved gate at the garden's entrance. In October, a delegation of Lithuanians led by the Lithuanian Ambassador to the United States, will visit the new garden under construction, which, when finished, will become the first of its kind in the United States.

Sixteen years after its opening, Lauritzen Gardens continues to grow. Just like in your own garden, things are always changing and evolving at Omaha's public garden. We invite you to enjoy the ever-changing environment and programming schedule that connects our community to nature. ■

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HOURS:

Daily 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.

Open until 8 p.m. on Monday and Tuesday evenings from mid-May through mid-September.

ADMISSION: Adults: \$10 + tax Children 6-12: \$5 + tax
No fee for members and children under 6 years of age.



NEW GARDEN USES PLANTS TO EXPOSE INVISIBLE THREAT

Jim Locklear, director of conservation

Ozone (O₃), like oxygen (O₂), is an invisible gas. Depending on where it occurs in the atmosphere, ozone can be a good thing or a bad thing. “Good” ozone occurs naturally in the stratosphere high above the Earth and protects all living things (including us!) from the sun’s harmful ultraviolet rays. “Bad” ozone is found in the lowest level of the atmosphere and is formed when emissions from vehicles and industrial processes react chemically in the presence of sunlight. Ground-level ozone makes up most of the air pollution we call “smog” and causes respiratory problems, being especially harmful to children, the elderly, and people with lung conditions.

Ground-level ozone can also harm plants, damaging leaf tissues and making plants less productive and more susceptible to pests and disease. Ozone injury typically appears as “stippling”—areas of discolored spots on the surface of leaves. Certain plants are more sensitive to ozone damage than others and have been recognized as ozone “bio-indicator” plants.

Everyday concentrations of surface ozone are rising around the world, threatening natural vegetation, food crops, and human health and prompting calls for greater public awareness of this environmental hazard. Lauritzen Gardens is joining this outreach effort through the creation of an ozone garden. This new exhibit, located in the conservation discovery garden, is planted with ozone bio-indicator species like snap beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris*) that will visualize the impact of an otherwise invisible pollutant.

This unique exhibit is part of a network of ozone gardens being developed across the Midwest in partnership with the Center for Environmental Sciences at Saint Louis University. Dr. Jack Fishman, director of the Center and professor of meteorology at Saint Louis University, initiated the Ozone Gardens Project through a grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Dr. Fishman began studying ground-level ozone for NASA in 1977 and has been warning about its impacts since the 1980s.

The exhibit will also include an ozone monitor so visitors can view current ozone concentrations. Data from the monitor will be transmitted to the Global Ozone Project. ■



LITHUANIAN WOOD CARVING DEMONSTRATION

Mia Jenkins, director of marketing

In celebration of Omaha's Sister City of Šiauliai, Lithuania, Lauritzen Gardens will host a third live demonstration of Lithuanian wood sculpture carving from September 27 through October 15. Aurimas Šimkus, from Kurtuvėnai, Lithuania, will return to the garden to create a series of three carvings that depict characters from an ancient Lithuanian folk tale, Jūratė and Kastytis, as part of the Saulės Takas project. The legend is said to explain why pieces of amber come ashore after a storm on the Baltic Sea.

The carving will take place from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily, just to the northeast of the lower festival garden in the old tram turnaround. Each day the sculptor will be demonstrating his creative wood-carving craft outdoors, in public view. On select days, guests can participate in an interactive question/answer session, with the assistance of a Lithuanian/English language interpreter. At other times, docents may be on site, but please note that the carver does not speak English fluently.

The long-term vision of the Omaha Friends of Šiauliai (a programming committee of the Omaha Sister Cities Association) is to create a trail of Lithuanian folk wood sculptures at Lauritzen Gardens, called Saulės Takas (Path of the Sun), with a variety of pieces crafted by a diverse group of folk artists and wood carvers from Lithuania. This trail, which is located in the northeast corner of the arboretum, is the first of its kind in North America and is a reflection of the unique culture and history of Omaha's sister city of Šiauliai, Lithuania. Nearly ten pieces have been carved to date, with an additional three pieces being added this fall and plans for many other sculptures in the future.

Lithuanian tree carving is an ancient and prevalent part of the culture of the Baltic States and is an art form for which this part of the world has become well-known. These wood sculptures symbolize the gift of Lithuanian culture to the people of Omaha, as Omaha celebrates its continued sister city relationship, as well as its active Lithuanian community. ■



CACTUS AND SUCCULENT SHOW

ON DISPLAY THROUGH OCTOBER 1

Enjoy seeing a wide variety of cacti and succulents in all shapes, sizes, colors, and textures from the diverse collection at Lauritzen Gardens - on display in the Cindy and Mogens Bay Gallery of the conservatory through October 1.



Lauritzen Gardens Antique & Garden Show

SEPTEMBER 15 THROUGH 17 | 10 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

The Lauritzen Gardens Antique & Garden Show is entering its 14th year of bringing renowned experts in antiques, gardening, design and art to Omaha. 2017 is sure to be another breathtaking year with magnificent antiques and inspiring speakers. Visit omahaantiqueshow.org for a complete schedule of events.

Lithuanian Wood Sculpture Carving

SEPTEMBER 27 THROUGH OCTOBER 15 | 10 A.M. TO 3 P.M.

In celebration of Omaha's Sister City of Šiauliai, Lithuania, Lauritzen Gardens will host a third live demonstration of Lithuanian wood sculpture carving this fall. Aurimas Šimkus will return to the garden to create a series of three carvings that depict characters from an ancient Lithuanian folk tale, Jūratė and Kastytis, as part of the Saulės Takas project. The legend is said to explain why pieces of amber come ashore after a storm on the Baltic Sea.



Leashes at Lauritzen

OCTOBER 2 | 5 TO 8 P.M.

The garden has gone to the dogs! Bring your canine friends to walk the grounds and enjoy the great outdoors together. This is an informal, fun way to enjoy and explore our 100 acres and miles of trails with the family and the family dog. Don't miss this tail wagging good time!



Japanese Ambience Festival

OCTOBER 7 AND 8 | 9 A.M. TO 5 P.M.

For an entire weekend, the garden grounds are alive with merriment as guests celebrate the joys of autumn and experience the Japanese culture first-hand. The Omaha Sister Cities Association hosts fun activities such as Japanese calligraphy, koinobori, origami, chop sticks, traditional Japanese games, food tastings and more. Performances will include martial arts demonstrations, taiko drumming and traditional Japanese music and dance. Standard garden admission rates apply. Members are admitted free.