



THE HORT REPORT

NEWSLETTER OF THE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY OF MARYLAND, INC. | MAY 2018



GARDEN PASSIONS:

Sweeping Vistas and Intimate Spaces in Baltimore County

Here it comes again, the splendid annual garden tour of the Horticultural Society of Maryland.

This year's tour, the 27th annual, will be held Sunday, June 3, 2018, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The tour takes place rain or shine, so bring an umbrella if the skies look threatening and be sure to wear comfortable shoes.

According to the organizers, the tour will offer "spectacular views of the northern Maryland countryside and inspired plantings" at five of the area's finest gardens.

"These extraordinary landscapes have been designed and maintained by serious horticulturists, each with a distinctive sensibility," the garden tour committee said. "Included are serene Asian gardens in a park-like setting, charming farms with colorful flower beds and historic farm buildings, the bucolic haven of a plant lover, as well as a stunning contemporary garden with native grasses in the New American style."

HSM members are admitted free with a current membership card.

Non-member tickets cost \$35 if purchased by June 2, either online (www.mdhorticulture.org) or at these locations: Kingsdene Nurseries, Monkton; The Perennial Farm, Glen Arm; Green Fields Nursery, Baltimore; Clark's Ace Hardware, Ellicott City; and Graul's Markets in Annapolis, Cape St. Claire, Ruxton, Mays Chapel and Hereford.

On the day of the tour, non-member tickets will cost \$40 and will be available at the first garden, 13901 Mantua Mill Road, Reisterstown, MD 21136.

Detailed descriptions of the gardens are available in the tour booklet that accompanies this newsletter.

COMING HSM EVENTS

LECTURE SERIES

TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2018

7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

JOSEPH TYCHONIEVICH

Rock Gardening: Reimagining a Classic Style

Tychonievich will discuss the timeless beauty of rock gardens, the basic principles for creating them and suggest plants to get you started. Book signing.

ANNUAL TOOL DRIVE

TUESDAY, MAY 8, 2018

6:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.

Bring donations of garden tools, new or used, to the Vollmer Center before the May lecture. Tools go to "tool libraries" for loan to community garden groups. Donations of seeds and plants also accepted.

27TH ANNUAL GARDEN TOUR

SUNDAY, JUNE 3, 2018

10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Rain or shine.

Gardens of northern Baltimore County. See details on page 1.

DELAWARE BOTANIC GARDENS

VOLUNTEER TRIP

FRIDAY, JUNE 22, 2018

8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Be a part of the making of this much-anticipated new botanic garden near Dagsboro. See page 8 for details.

2018 ITALIAN GARDEN TRIP

SEPTEMBER 8 through 20, 2018

Co-sponsored by HSM and Federated Garden Clubs of Maryland. Details: HSM web site or contact Claire Jones, jonesb1@comcast.net, 443-927-6285

SMITHSONIAN GARDEN TOUR

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2018

Washington, D.C.

Let Janet Draper, horticulturist for the Smithsonian's Ripley Garden, be your guide for a tour of the Ripley, Rose and Haupt gardens. Limited to 20 people. Registration details to come.

For more information, visit www.mdhorticulture.org

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 to lectures. Guests of members also receive free admission.

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 Plant Forum: Nancy Blois, Paula Campos, Catherine Cook, Jennifer Forrence, Michael O'Rourke, Nancy Raskin, Pat Sherman, Mary Jo Sherrod, Paula Simon and Donna Watts

For the PPA/HSM Winter Seminar: Janet Draper, Mary Jo Sherrod, coordinators; Sally Barker, Catherine Cook, Jennifer Forrence, Crystal Patterson, Nancy Raskin, Pat Sherman, Paula Simon and Donna Watts

For the Maryland Home and Garden Show: Peter Bieneman, Catherine Cook, Pat Sherman, judging; and Nancy Raskin, award presentation

For the Fergus Garrett Special Event: Helene Clapperton, Jennifer Forrence, Karen Offutt and Mary Jo Sherrod, planning committee; Catherine Cook, Brent Figlestahler, Michael O'Rourke, Anne Pomykala, Nancy Raskin, Pat Sherman, Paula Simon, Bob Thompson, Marilyn Vantosh and Donna Watts

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

For the Sponsorship Program: Sally Barker

For the Program Committee: Paula Simon, chair; Nancy Blois, Helene Clapperton, Muffin Dell and Mary Jo Sherrod

For Hospitality (Lectures and Garrett seminar): 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; Carla Hackley, Facebook manager; Nancy Raskin, event coordinator; John Fitzpatrick, December mailing

For the January 2018 issue of THE HORT REPORT: Joel Cohen and John Fitzpatrick, proofreaders; Paula Simon and Darlene Wells, photographs. In addition, the Society thanks Tony Ewin and Sharin Ingleby of the Hardy Plant Society North East Group (England) for permission to use excerpts from an article about Fergus Garrett.

Thank you, Helene Clapperton

Helene Clapperton, the Horticultural Society's longtime treasurer and one of the most influential people in the organization's almost-half-century history, has retired.

As treasurer and board member, Helene was instrumental in the success of our fundraisers, lectures, workshops, the annual garden tour and winter seminar. Helene created and managed our web site from its inception.

"Helene has been the backbone and anchor of the Hort Society ever since I joined," said Leigh Barnes, a former president. "She has filled so many slots, always staying in the background, never taking credit but always keeping the gears in motion. She has a wonderful sense of humor and never let any challenge be treated as a big deal."

"The Hort Society would not be the strong organization that it is today without her incredible service," Barnes said. "Her Maine accent and ready laugh are indelibly a part of what 'the Hort' means to me."

Cotinus coggygia

Common Smoke Tree, Smokebush

By Harry Merritt

Last September, as my wife Susan and I were on the verge of a major renovation of our house—a project that would consume many months and require us to move out, store most of our belongings and transplant a vast amount of flora—Susan decided that what we really needed was ... a Smoke Tree.

A Smoke Tree? Not only had I never heard of a Smoke Tree, I was baffled by the timing. Nevertheless, within days a small, cute *Cotinus coggygia* 'Purpureus,' or Purple Smoke Tree, arrived, planted by an earnest young man from Green Fields Nursery.

"Cute" seldom applies to trees or shrubs, but a Smoke Tree—a deciduous shrub that can grow to tree size, 10 feet or more up and out—is cute, thanks to the fluffy puffs of "smoke" it wears in summer. A Missouri Botanical Garden guide says this "striking display" occurs when "the billowy hairs (attached to elongated stalks on the spent flower clusters) ... turn a smoky pink to purplish pink, ... thus covering the tree with fluffy, hazy, smoke-like puffs."

In autumn, the Smoke Tree's foliage turns bright orange, yellow, red or burgundy. Once its leaves are gone in winter, the Smoke Tree reveals an interesting, multi-stemmed shape, though the bark looks a little drab to me. Come early summer, it has tiny, yellowish flowers before the "smoke" appears.

Native to southern Europe, east to the Himalayas and China, the Smoke Tree—also known as Smokebush, Venetian Sumac and Wig Tree—can now be found in the Mid-Atlantic, Northeast and midwestern United States. It is considered hardy in USDA Zones 5 to 8.

Smoke Trees are not that fussy, welcoming full sun and moderate watering. They tolerate a variety of well-drained soils. They are considered drought resistant and low maintenance. They are a good choice as a standalone shrub—ours is planted amid many species of ferns and Hosta, near several Azaleas—or in a border.



Clockwise from left: this elegant shrub stands out like no other with its characteristic "smoke." Seen at eye-level, delicate detail in the haze; and rich red fall leaf color adds more drama at the end of the season.

The literature indicates the Smoke Tree has few insect problems but is susceptible to Powdery Mildew and Verticillium Wilt. John T. Fitzpatrick, in his *Landscape Plant Identification Manual*, notes that "a broken twig releases a white sap and an unpleasant odor." I do not intend to test this.

PLANT FACTS: *Cotinus coggygia*

Common Names: Common Smoke Tree, Smokebush

Hardiness: USDA Zones 5 to 8

Family: Anacardiaceae

Size: 10 to 15 feet tall. Spread, about the same unless you prune.

Culture: Well-drained soil. Full sun.

REFERENCES:

Missouri Botanical Garden, missouribotanicalgarden.org

John T. Fitzpatrick, Ph.D., *Landscape Plant Identification Manual*

Edward F. Gilman and Dennis G. Watson, *Cotinus coggygia* 'Purpurea,' Fact Sheet ST-205, University of Florida, hort.ifas.ufl.edu

Finegardening.com

Harry Merritt is editor of The Hort Report.

PHOTOS: Michael Dosmann, Kyle Port



BABIKOW: American Growers Since 1875

By Harry Merritt

If there's a name in this part of Maryland that could be called synonymous with plants—perennials, annuals, grasses and ferns—it is Babikow.

The name belongs to a nursery that grew out of a family farm established on 24 acres in southeastern Baltimore County in the 1870s, soon after the Babikows arrived from Germany. Today's Babikow Greenhouses—known to many as simply “Babikow” or “Babikow Since 1875”—is one of the major wholesalers of high-quality plants on the East Coast. It is still owned by the family, and is run by Tim Babikow, a great-great-grandson of founder William Babikow (1857-1923).

On a sun-drenched afternoon in late February, I spent an hour talking with Babikows representing three generations: Tim, his father Donald and their cousin Paul, a former company president whose father was William and Sophia Babikow's youngest son. All have been instrumental in enhancing the family legacy, from building greenhouses—there are now 60, some of them visible from Perry Hall Boulevard—to making shrewd judgments about industry trends that have helped the business to flourish.

“Our expansion is because we discovered a market,” said Paul Babikow, who led the company into the modern era. “... I think we made some good decisions. We have become really specialized with native plants.”

The natives range from *Allium cernuum*, common name Nodding Onion, and *Aquilegia canadensis* (Columbine) to *Muhlenbergia capillaris* (Pink Muhly Grass) to *Zizia aurea* (Golden Alexander). There are plants for shade, such as *Bergenia cordifolia* (Bergenia) and *Epimedium* x

versicolor ‘Sulphureum,’ (Barren Wort), and plants for sun, such as *Hibiscus* ‘Lord Baltimore’ and *Monarda didyma* ‘Jacob Kline,’ a Bee Balm cultivar.

There are still annuals for sale, in keeping with a practice that stretches back decades: Begonias, Cannas, Zinnias and many more. Pansies, too, in 34 varieties, as well as many grasses and groundcovers.

“We want to sell a garden-worthy plant,” said Tim Babikow. “Whatever we can do to make it grow for [the customers]: that's the key.”

The first Babikows in Maryland, according to Census records, included William, his parents Julius and Lucy, natives of Bavaria, and four sisters. Their farm was off Bel Air Road, where they raised Jersey cows, pigs and chickens and grew a wide array of vegetables, from cabbage and spinach to sweet corn and onions, as well as tomatoes and flowers such as Chrysanthemums, Carnations and Lilies.

William and his father sold their produce from three-decker wagons at Belair Market in Baltimore, and eventually William's many children joined in. “Oh, my little business is a family affair entirely,” William told an interviewer for Philadelphia's *The Country Gentleman* in 1913. “Five boys, four girls and myself.”

William, the article said, was “not a typical trucker, for he is a florist as well and equally good in both lines. But what is more to the point, he is a forehanded farmer with a skull full of efficient brains.” The article noted that the family made \$10,000 a year, equivalent to seven figures today.



PHOTO: Martina Carter

Cut flowers and potted plants became a focus after William Babikow noticed that he made more money selling them, Paul Babikow said. "That was the start of the [flower] business," he said.

Over the years, Babikow supplied flowers to supermarket chains such as Giant Foods and Safeway and to Frank's Nursery & Crafts stores and various garden centers. Babikow even sold direct to the public for about a decade, operating two Garden Barn retail greenhouses, then disbanded them. "We had our taste of retail, and we didn't like it," said Paul.

Paul Babikow, now in his 70s, started in the business around 1970 and was its president during a time of considerable growth and change. "For me, working at Babikow was a golden opportunity," he said.

Working closely with Paul was his younger cousin Donald, who juggled many responsibilities. "We built most of the structures ourselves," Donald said. "When we started there were maybe 18 greenhouses. We're now up to 60."

A turning point came in the early 1970s when Babikow, at the suggestion of one of its landscape customers, entered the second annual Mid-Atlantic Trade Show, or MANTS, in Baltimore. "It was one of the smartest things we ever did," Paul Babikow said. "It gave us exposure."

More and more, Babikow shifted its efforts to the landscape industry and large garden centers. That meant, in Paul's words, "no more Poinsettias, no more Easter lilies" for the grocery stores. Over the years Babikow has had close business relationships with Valley View Farms, Merrifield in Virginia, American Native Plants and Kurt Bluemel, to name just a few.

Continued on page 6

EXCERPT FROM 2005
BABIKOW CATALOGUE:

*One can cultivate a feeling
for plants by carefully
observing them, growing
them, reading about them,
and particularly by choosing
the company of persons who
know and love them.*

L. H. Bailey, *Home Grounds:
Their Planning and Planting, 1918*



ABOVE: Donald, Tim and Paul Babikow lead the company as it continues to thrive.
BELOW: Will (Tim's great-grandfather), Harry, Oliver and Wes Babikow, the second generation of growers.



An aerial view, looking south, shows many of Babikow's greenhouses and plant beds. At left, Babikow Road, once a quiet country lane, runs alongside a large housing development. Perry Hall Boulevard is at right

BABIKOW GREENHOUSES | Wholesale to the trade.
7838 Babikow Road, Baltimore, MD 21237
410-391-4200 | 800-835-7617
Babikow.com

Continued from page 6

Babikow also has a longstanding arrangement with eMerge, a nonprofit service for adults with disabilities. The agency operates a wholesale greenhouse and flower farm in Perry Hall. Babikow provides flats of tiny plants to eMerge for its clients to care for, then buys back the resulting plants to sell to clients.

The Babikows do not claim to have succeeded by themselves. They have warm praise for their employees, citing them as a crucial factor in the success of their business. "We have some really, really solid employees," said Paul Babikow. "The best," said Tim. "Numerous people have worked here 30 to 40 years," said Donald, including a salesman who was with the nursery for more than 50 years.

Babikow has enjoyed plenty of recognition from the landscape industry, including the Perennial Plant Association Grower Award in 2008, and members of the family have held leadership roles in various horticultural organizations. Eight decades ago, for

example, Harry Babikow, a son of William, was the state director of a Mid-Atlantic association of florists. Tim Babikow is a board member of the American Landscape Institute, a horticulture training program devised by Andreas Grothe, a former Babikow protégé, with the Community College of Baltimore County. "It's been working out great," Tim Babikow said of the institute.

Tim represents the fifth generation of Babikows in the family business. This begs the question: Will there be a Generation 6?

Tim has two sons, Nathan, 13, and Reece, 9, both of whom "show interest" in the nursery and occasionally help on weekends, he said.

"The opportunity will be here as long as I'm here," said Tim Babikow. "I feel honored to continue the legacy."

PHOTOS: Courtesy of Babikow Greenhouses

2018 Home & Garden Show Winner

For the second year in a row, International Landscaping & Design has won the Horticultural Society of Maryland's award for "the most effective and practical use of plants" at the spring Home & Garden Show.

ILD, based in Baltimore and Centreville, was recognized for a display featuring, among much other flora, *Pieris japonica* 'Dorothy Wyckoff,' or Japanese Andromeda, *Hydrangea quercifolia* (Oakleaf Hydrangea) and *Pulmonaria longifolia* 'Diana Clare,' a Lungwort with silvered leaves and, in spring, violet-blue flowers.

"We chose this display because it properly showed plants used in realistic locations," said Peter Bieneman, who judged the competition along with Catherine Cook and Pat Sherman. "A homeowner could use the combinations successfully on their own yard."

Ashley Kidner, an ILD partner, said in an email that the firm used "a lot of natives (with wildlife/pollinator value) and exotic pollinator plants, as usual" in its design.



Left: *Pieris japonica* 'Dorothy Wyckoff,' with *Helleborus x hybridus* 'Pink Lady,' also known as Lenten Rose. Right: *Dryopteris erythrosora*, Autumn Fern, with *Sedum* 'Blue Spruce,' common name Stonecrop.

PHOTOS: Courtesy of International Landscaping & Design

The January Plant Forum

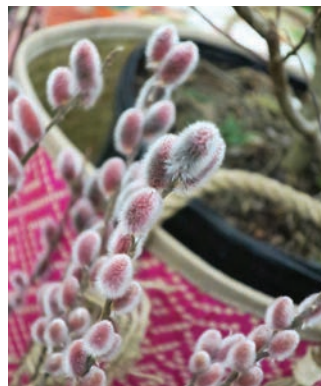


Left: This year's presenters from left to right: John T. Fitzpatrick, Ph.D., Michael Rosendale and Marianne Willburn. **Right:** Attendees of this members-only event mingle and munch on delicious snacks during the breaks. Special thanks to our presenters and volunteers for this fun January gathering of plant lovers!

2018 Perennially Inspired!



Top: left, presenter Rebecca McMackin and Emily Carter; middle, Catherine Umphrey and David Leaverton; right, presenter Melanie Ruckle with Susan Randall. **Middle:** left, volunteers Catherine Cook, Crystal Patterson and Donna Watts; right, presenter Kelly Norris with Jennifer Forence. **Bottom, signs of spring:** left, *Hamamelis* 'Barmstadt Gold'; right, pink pussy willow, *Salix gracilistyla* 'Mt. Aso'.



PHOTOS: Paula A. Simon

Meet Lauren Makowiecki



A student in the American Landscape Institute program with the Community College of Baltimore County was the 2018 winner of the Horticultural Society's Sidney Silber Scholarship.

She is Lauren Makowiecki—last name pronounced "Mack-o-wicky"—from Joppa in Harford County. She has worked at American Native Plants in Middle River since June 2017, and before that worked at Maryland Aquatic Nurseries in Jarrettsville.

The Silber Scholarship, named for a late Society member and benefactor, pays for a horticulture student to attend the annual Winter Seminar sponsored by the Perennial Plant Association and the Society.

"It's amazing that you can come here and learn about all these different things," Lauren said during a break in the seminar at Sheppard Pratt Conference Center.

Lauren said her strongest interest is wetlands restoration. "I would love to work on restoration projects," she said, "from selecting the plants to being involved with everything."

ALI, developed by Andreas Grothe of New World Plants and CCBC with support from many Maryland nurseries, pays 80 percent of the tuition for landscape industry workers to take courses in CCBC's Sustainable Horticulture program.

Above: left, Lauren Makowiecki, scholarship recipient; right, Nancy Raskin, HSM president

An Outing in Delaware

Are you looking for an opportunity to be part of one of the most exciting projects in Mid-Atlantic horticulture?

If so, the Horticultural Society of Maryland has just the thing: a bus trip on June 22, 2018 for volunteers to spend the day working at the Delaware Botanic Gardens at Pepper Creek. Volunteers will help plant 26,000 grass plants in DBG's Piet Oudolf Meadow Garden, under construction in Dagsboro.

"We have a variety of tasks that are involved in the total planting process," said Gregg Tepper, DBG's director of horticulture, "including moving the pots over to the site, arranging them, planting them, retrieving empty pots, stacking empty pots, watering and other sundry duties."

Tepper and Janet Point, DBG's volunteer coordinator, will lead a tour of the garden and discuss plans. The garden is scheduled to open in the summer of 2019.

The bus will leave at 8 a.m. from the Meadowood Regional Park parking lot, 10650 Falls Road. The bus will return at 7 p.m. Box lunches will be provided with a variety of sandwich options. The cost per person is \$25, with proceeds to benefit DBG.

The trip is co-sponsored by the Mason-Dixon Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society. Signup details will follow at the HSM web site, mdhorticulture.org.



DELAWARE
BOTANIC
GARDENS
AT PEPPER CREEK



Top: A 2016 team of volunteers planting the Piet Oudolf Meadow Garden.

Bottom: Aerial photo of a section of the Meadow garden, showing the work in progress.

PHOTOS: Ray Bojarski



OFFICERS

Nancy Raskin, *President*
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Catherine Cook, *Vice President for Membership*
Helene Clapperton, *Treasurer Emerita*
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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 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.

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

Want to help HSM grow?

The Horticultural Society of Maryland welcomes the volunteer help of its members for its lecture programs, workshops and tours. If you are interested, please email the committee chairs. See our website or the membership directory for a list of committee email addresses.

THE HORT REPORT could also use your help: suggesting story ideas, taking photos of Society members at various events and writing articles. For matters concerning the newsletter, including any comments or suggestions you may have, please email the editor, Harry Merritt, at newsletter@mdhorticulture.org.

Welcome New Members!

Dmytro Bogunov
Mary Drain
Roberta Ficke
Tracy Franks
Lois Kissinger Kelly
Janet Mackey
Jean McGarry
Edward Martini
Carol Nau
Kathie Offutt
Lora Tracy
Marylee Ross
Amelia Sifleet
Marianne Willburn

Sara Yosua
Kimberly Young
These members of the Baltimore City Master Gardener 2018 class were given complimentary one-year memberships.
Andre Bailey
Leathornia Bailey
Michelle Bailey-Hedgepeth
Sucora Best
Rebecca Bradley
Megan Buresh
Debra Celnik

Paul Chalmus
Catherina Chupein
Njeri Clay
Darian Closson
Olivia Donachie
Wren Douglass
Anne Embertson
Precious Fraling
Floyd Godsey Jr.
Natasha Jones
Erin Kirley
Colleen Lamont
Zachary Lawhon
Emily Mendenhall
Lena Milcarek

Catherine Morneault
Ed Morneault
Carissa Mortenson
Lauren Muhammad
Thomasin Mullen
Anthony Nathe
Sarah Page
Danielle Pelaez
Sasha Reamer
Norah Salamone
April VaiVai
Sydney Van Horn
Erica Ward
Kristin Warren
Dominique Wilson