

THE CONSERVATORY NEWS

Fall 2008

A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This place in The Conservatory News is usually occupied by the President's Corner. As it turns out, FOC President George Gosline is at this time on his way to London, where he'll be spending the next several months volunteering at the Kew Gardens. So I'm taking this opportunity to give you a chance to get to know me a little bit.

Allow me to introduce myself: I'm Sally Mitchell, Executive Director of the Friends of the Conservatory since mid-June. My background is in music (Medieval and Renaissance music, to be specific) and non-profit management. So how did a recorder player from Southern California end up working for the Friends?

Well, going back to 1979, I was new to Seattle and started volunteering at mailing parties for the Early Music Guild. It was a fun way to get to know some of the other people involved in

that organization. That led to editing the Guild's newsletter, which led to nine years owning a small typesetting business. Then in 1989 I offered to help organize a Medieval music workshop, and *that* led to several years as Education Director of the Early Music Guild, with activities on the side: performing and teaching recorder lessons, workshops and classes. Later, I took the job of Membership Director of Early Music America, a national service organization. During all these years there were stints on four non-profit boards, two as president.

But how did that get me to the Friends? I first became familiar with FOC by volunteering at a couple of plant sales (I was asked by a friend that I had met at that workshop I helped to organize in 1989). When I heard that FOC was searching for an Executive Director, I threw my hat in the ring, and here I am.

Looking back over my less-than-direct career path, I see that every volunteer task I took on led me somewhere new and interesting. Every major change in my career was stimulated by a volunteer project!

As important as volunteering has been in my life, I have to admit that what I've done has been pretty small peanuts when compared to the level of volunteerism that goes on in and around the Conservatory. Would it surprise you to know that approximately 100 volunteers give over 2500 hours to the Friends each year?

There are volunteers that have regular, weekly shifts in the Gift Shop. There are board members and committee members working tirelessly as caretakers of the FOC's mission. There are volunteer Docents giving tours of the Conservatory, or just being on hand to answer questions. The

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IN AND AROUND THE CONSERVATORY

ON DISPLAY IN THE CONSERVATORY

Here's what to look for in the Conservatory during the next couple of months:

Spectacular Orchids and Bromeliads/November & December

Chrysanthemum Exhibition/November

Poinsettias, Gardenias, Amaryllis, Euphorbia/December

CONSERVATORY AFTER HOURS

It happens just once a year, the annual "After Dark" event at the Volunteer Park Conservatory on Thursday, December 11 from 5:00 to 8:00 pm. Admission is free.

As a special benefit, new and current members of the Friends of the Conservatory will get a 25% discount on any purchases made in the Gift Shop that night.

Please bring your friends and family to this special viewing of the Conservatory and plan to do your holiday shopping, too.

Come for a festive evening with refreshments and music.

WREATH MAKING CLASSES

Coming in December: always-popular wreath-making classes will be led by Conservatory gardener Patricia Ward. Two classes will be held on Saturday, December 6: 10 am - 12 noon and 1 - 3 pm. All supplies will be provided. Please bring your own gloves, pruners, and favorite objects (dried flowers, etc.) to include in your wreath.

FOC Members \$20, non-members \$25. Cash or check only.

Pre-registration is required. Call 206-322-4112, email foc@volunteerparkconservatory.org, or stop by the Gift Shop (Wed.-Sun., 10 am - 3:30 pm). Register early, space is limited!

To register by mail, make your check payable to "City of Seattle" and mail to FOC, 1402 E. Galer St., Seattle, WA 98112.

MUSIC IN DECEMBER

Listen for the music of harpist Bill McJohn on Saturday afternoons in December. Bill will play in the Seasonal House from 1 to 2 on December 13, 20, and 27. Stop by the Conservatory for a musical treat!



POINSETTIA TALKS

Want to find out more about the beautiful poinsettias on display in the Conservatory? Come to the Conservatory Sundays during December (7, 14, 21, 28) at 1:00 for a short talk "All About Poinsettias."

CONGRATULATIONS NEW DOCENTS!

Congratulations to the following new docents who have completed their training at the Conservatory: Nicole Atchison-Payne, Shaw Fitzgerald, Patty Hieb, Terry Huang, Bob Jenkins, Katie Lundin, Rosita Romero, Mary Whitmore, and Edie Wilch. Look for them around the Conservatory!



EXOTIC TRAVELS

Two tours coming up in the spring will benefit the Friends of the Conservatory. More information is available on the FOC website: www.volunteerparkconservatory.org

NICARAGUA AND COSTA RICA

March 19-31, 2009

With On the Loose with Lars and Hoppin' with Henry.

Explore Nicaragua, a land of lakes and volcanoes, one of the most beautiful and fascinating areas in Central America. Then on to Costa Rica's Rincon de la Vieja area with its volcanoes, dense lush forests, thermal springs, and beaches. For more information catrina.forcier@europeexpress.com, lhusby@bellevuecollege.edu, or henrykuh@comcast.net

WE WANT YOUR INPUT!

The Board of the FOC is beginning a strategic planning process. We'd like to include your ideas as we make our plan. Enclosed in this newsletter is a survey. Please take a few minutes to fill it out and return to our office. You can mail it to us, or drop it by the Gift Shop. Thanks for your input!

A Note from the Executive Director

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plant sales take over 500 hours of volunteer effort. And there are "angels" who drop everything to rush to our aid when we have a

computer crisis in the office (I'm especially grateful to these folks at this particular time).

I find this really humbling. The volunteers are the heart and soul of the FOC. Without you the Friends couldn't exist.

There's no way I can acknowledge our volunteers enough, no way to express my deepest sense of gratitude. All I can say is *thank you!*



Sally Mitchell
Executive Director



BOTANICAL TREASURES OF BHUTAN

April 27 – May 12, 2009

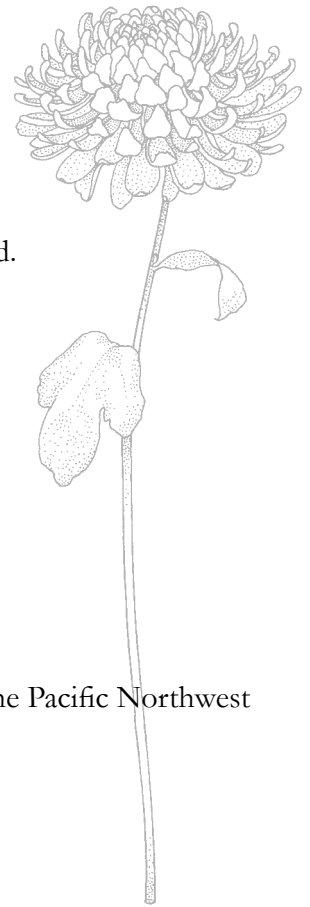
Join an intrepid group of plant explorers on this adventure of a lifetime. Discover Bhutan's timeless sense of balance amidst magical natural surroundings. Flora and fauna abound with more than 5,400 species of plants, 770 species of birds, and 160 species of animals. Contact ellen@wholeworldjourneys.com, 206-499-2646.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY: EARLY WARNING

Once again the Friends of the Conservatory will have a booth at the Northwest Flower & Garden Show, February 18-22, 2009. We'll be looking for lots of volunteers to help staff our table. More information will be available in the Winter 2009 newsletter (look for it in January).

CALENDAR

- November 1 “First Saturday” Docents available in Conservatory 11 am - 3 pm
November 6 “First Thursday” Docents available in Conservatory 11 am - 3 pm
December 6 **Wreath Making Class**, 10 am - 12 noon and 1 - 3 pm. Preregistration required.
December 4 “First Thursday” Docents available in Conservatory 11 am - 3 pm
December 6 “First Saturday” Docents available in Conservatory 11 am - 3 pm
December 7, 14, 21, 28 “All About Poinsettias” Short talk in Conservatory 1 pm
December 11 **Conservatory After Hours**, 5 - 8 pm
December 13, 20, 27 **Harp Music** in Conservatory, 1 - 2 pm



EARLY NOTICE:

- February 18-22, 2009 **Northwest Flower and Garden Show** (*watch for more details*)
March 10, 2009 **FOC presents Ciscoe Morris** “How to Incorporate Tropical Plants into the Pacific Northwest Landscape” (*watch for more details*)



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