

THE CONSERVATORY NEWS

Fall/Winter 2011

A Note From the President

INTRODUCING THE RESTORATION ACTION COMMITTEE

It's been quite some time since the last official update from the Friends of the Conservatory, but by no means is it due to lack of activity. The FOC have had an extremely busy year planning one of its most ambitious campaigns to date. We have finally reached the point where we're ready to share our efforts with the world!

In early 2011, a passionate and vivacious woman named Audrey Van Horne introduced herself to the FOC. Audrey was the original architect responsible for planning the Conservatory renovation - replacing the aging wooden framework with long-lasting aluminum duplicates of the original pieces. While the Bromeliad, Fern and Palm house renovations were completed a few years back, the Seasonal and Cactus houses have not been restored. Both houses are now beginning to show serious signs of wear. While the City of Seattle financed the first phases of renovation, the current economic climate leaves the city unable to fund a project of this size. The project is otherwise shovel-ready; the only obstacle standing in the way is the \$3.5 million necessary for construction. Audrey also called our attention to the fact that while all necessary building permits and paperwork have been filed and approved, they are set to expire at the end of 2012.

From this sense of urgency, the Friends of the Conservatory incorporated the Restoration Action Committee (RAC) to tackle the daunting task of funding a major capital improvement project. The RAC meets bi-weekly and consists of members of the FOC and the community at large.

In addition, the RAC engaged the services of The Collins Group, a highly regarded consulting firm, to help guide the effort which is admittedly a far larger project than the FOC has undertaken previously. We also hired an outstanding production company, Hand Crank Films from Bellingham, WA, who filmed an engaging 4 minute video highlighting our efforts. You can find it either through our website or by going directly to YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rv8iicX2d1A> Share it with your friends!

Meanwhile, the Mayor's office proposed transitioning the Conservatory to a model of self-sustainability, rather than relying solely on the city's general fund for operating expenses. Members of the FOC and RAC worked to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with Seattle Parks and Recreation with a couple of goals in mind. First, Parks and Recreation recognizes that the RAC's capital improvement fundraising efforts underscores the importance of preserving the Conservatory as an historic landmark. This helps donors give with confidence trusting that the City is committed to keeping the Conservatory open. Secondly, Parks acknowledges that the FOC is committed to helping the Conservatory achieve a self-sustaining operation.

It's been a long and eye-opening journey, but we are finally ready to solicit donations for the Cactus and Seasonal houses in earnest.

We have a little more than a year to raise the lion's share of the funds, but we're confident that the community will want to give back to the Conservatory which has touched so many lives and hearts for

the past century. For more information on donating and more information about the Restoration Action Committee visit <http://www.volunteerparkconservatory.org>

OTHER NOTEWORTHY ACCOMPLISHMENTS & PLANS

It's that time of year again when the trees in Volunteer Park are putting on one final display of beauty before winter's dormancy. While we may have been short-changed on a long, hot summer this year, the magnificent colors of the foliage seem to be trying to compensate and will certainly not disappoint anyone making the trip.

Volunteer Park's crown jewel, the Conservatory, watches proudly from the north, no doubt contemplating the final few weeks of being a youthful 99. The year 2012 marks the 100th anniversary of the Conservatory in Volunteer Park, which will be commemorated throughout the entire year through events and programs open to the public.

The Friends of the Conservatory, now in its 31st year of service, has had one of its most active years in recent memory. Our two plant sales in May and September were extremely successful; the Spring Sale was the most successful sale on record! The Education Committee sponsored the "Around the World in Four Days" Summer Camp program for grade-school students which received glowing praise from participants and parents and will be expanded next year. The summer also featured a series of open houses to remind the Capitol Hill neighborhood of the often overlooked treasure right in their backyards. Visitors were treated

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In and Around the Conservatory

Cont'd from Pg. 1

to a behind-the-scenes tour, live music, and a book signing with Sara Chapman, author of an extensive and beautiful book chronicling the Conservatory collection throughout the year: "Flowers of Volunteer Park Conservatory: Blooming Month by Month" (available for purchase in the Conservatory Gift Shop.) At the end of October, the Conservatory gardeners surprised us with the first-annual Spooky Conservatory Open House in which the tropical paradise was transformed with eerie decorations, chilling special effects, treats for visitors, and a screening of "Little Shop of Horrors" in the Cactus House. December brings our annual Holiday Open House. Additionally, December highlights a very special treat just in time for the centennial; the Conservatory will be outfitted with thousands of energy-efficient LED bulbs which will shine bright starting in December and remain installed for the duration of 2012 to commemorate the festive occasion. The FOC Gift Shop has had a remarkably successful year with October sales up 68% over the previous October, and overall sales are up 19% from last year!

We are hoping you can join us for the festivities in the New Year! The Centennial Committee has some terrific events planned throughout the entire year, and we look forward to sharing them with you! For information about upcoming events or to learn how you can get involved, visit volunteerparkconservatory.org, write to foc@volunteerparkconservatory.org or call 206.322.4112.

—President, Antonio Pettit

Please welcome our newest docents, who completed their training in October 2011:

Christie Aesquivel Genevieve Dolan Sara Lawrence
Jennifer Tussing Claire Woodward

Poinsettia

Euphorbia pulcherrima -
Euphorbiaceae

Country of Origin: Mexico

What is the proper pronunciation? PoyN-SEHT-ee-uh or PoyN-SEHT-uh? According to the dictionary both are correct... it's your choice.

Poinsettias arrived in U.S. around 1825 when Joel Poinsett, botanist and first U.S. ambassador to Mexico became enamored with the plant and sent some home to South Carolina. By 1836, Joel Poinsett became so well known and associated with poinsettias, whose scientific name is *Euphorbia pulcherrima* (pul-KAIR-ih-muh), that it was named after him.

December 12, the date of his death, was enacted by Congress as National Poinsettia Day.

Native to Mexico, there it is called "Nochebuena" (beautiful night or Christmas Eve). The Aztecs call it "Cuetlayochitl". Chile and Peru call it the "Crown of the Andes." Contrary to much rumor, poinsettias ARE NOT poisonous.

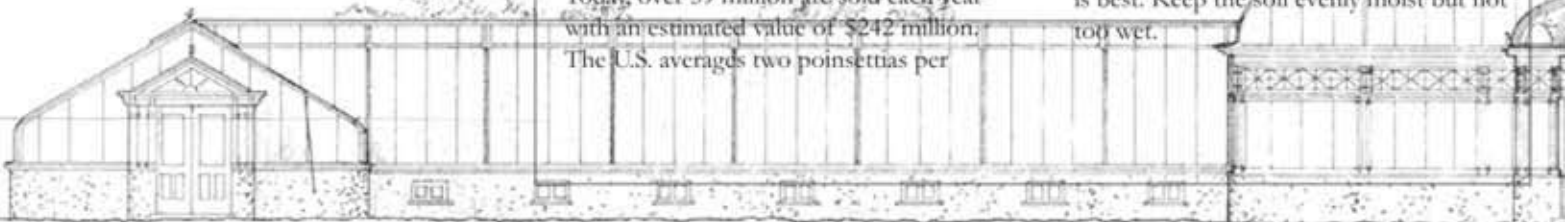
Today, over 59 million are sold each year with an estimated value of \$242 million. The U.S. averages two poinsettias per



household.

When shopping for a plant, a close look at the flowers will help you purchase a plant that will stay in bloom longer. A fresh poinsettia is one on which little or no yellow pollen is showing on the flowers. Plants that start shedding their pollen will soon drop their colorful bracts. Avoid plants with pale green, yellow or fallen leaves.

Once you get it home, your poinsettia will thrive with tender loving care. When in bloom use a high nitrogen fertilizer every two weeks. If your air is dry, misting lightly early in the day at least 1-2 times weekly is helpful. Place plant in a draft free environment at 60-70 degrees. Ideally, six hours of indirect/filtered light is best. Keep the soil evenly moist but not too wet.



After Hours

After Hours at the Conservatory

One Night Only!

Friday, December 2nd 5:00-8:00pm



Jeanne hangs a wreath on the Conservatory

A UNIQUE opportunity to tour the historic Volunteer Park Conservatory after dark! Kick off your holiday season with Seattle's own tropical paradise. Join us as we unveil our holiday display, and enjoy live music, refreshments, and shopping.

The FOC Gift Shop will offer new and current members a 25% Discount!!! One Night Only.

For more information contact Friends of the Conservatory at 206-322-4112 or www.volunteerparkconservatory.com

MUSIC

REFRESHMENTS

SHOPPING

Friends of the Conservatory

Wreath Making Class

Saturday, December 3rd

10:00 am - 12:00 noon

Please bring your own gloves, pruners and your

favorite objects, like dried flowers from home

to include a personal touch.

All other supplies will be provided & refreshments served.

FOC Members: \$20 / Non-members: \$25 per person

Pre Registration Required – Space is Limited

To Register call (206) 322-4112 or foc@volunteerparkconservatory.org

Or stop by the FOC Gift Shop inside the Conservatory 10am - 3:30pm Wed thru Sun.

Shop Local

Shop Green

Support the Conservatory!

Help Wanted!

Centennial Committee Seeks Experienced Event Planners

Do you love... throwing a good party? ... having fun with new and old friends?

The Friends of the Conservatory is seeking individuals with event planning experience to help organize our Centennial Celebrations in 2012 with our neighbors and friends!

The ideal volunteer must have experience planning events, be able to work individually and in a group, be willing to have fun, and able to commit for the duration of the project. We are planning multiple events for the 2012 Centennial year, some larger and some smaller.

Join the Friends of the Conservatory!

Your membership in the Friends helps to support the Conservatory and its programs. Join us!

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Method of payment:

Check enclosed (payable to FOC) Visa MasterCard

Card# _____

Exp. date _____

Mail to: FOC, 1402 E. Galer St., Seattle, WA 98112

New Member

Renewal

\$40 Individual ✓

\$25 Senior/Student

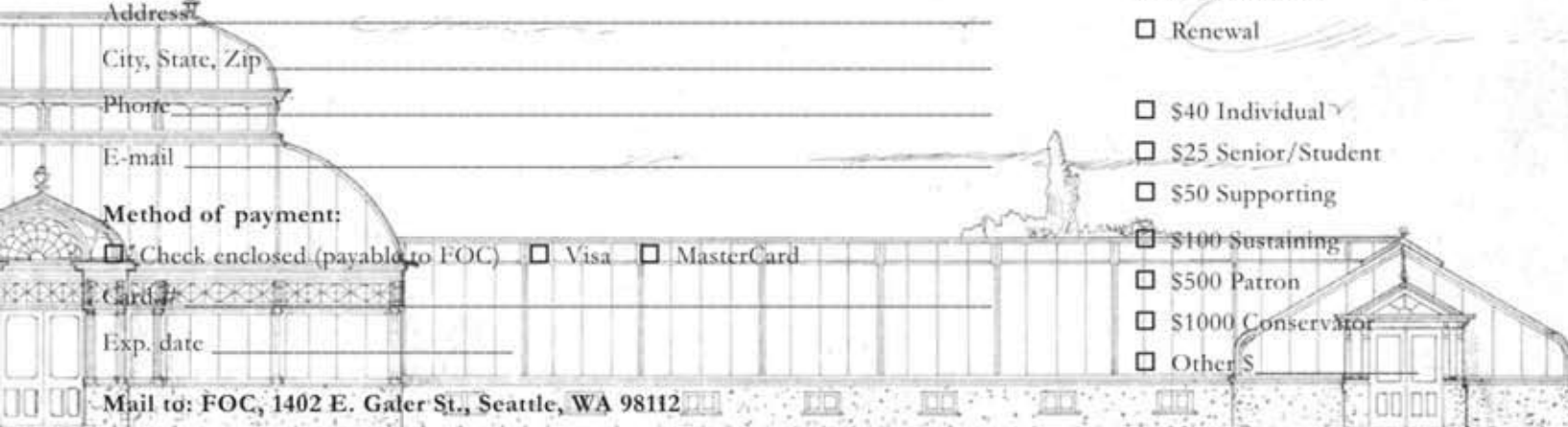
\$50 Supporting

\$100 Sustaining

\$500 Patron

\$1000 Conservator

Other \$ _____





1402 E. Galer St.
Seattle, WA 98112
www.volunteerparkconservatory.org

Return Service Requested

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Calendar

Nov 26	Docents Available: Docents available in Conservatory 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Dec 1	First Thursday: Docents available in Conservatory 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Dec 2	FOC Evening Event: Conservatory after Hours 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. (pg 3)
Dec 3	First Saturday: Docents available in Conservatory 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Dec 3, 10, 17, 31	Docents Available: Docents available in Conservatory 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Dec 4, 11, 18	Holiday Harp: Seasonal Harp Music in the Seasonal House 1 p.m. - 2 p.m. (pg 3)
Jan 5	First Thursday: Docents available in Conservatory 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Jan 7	First Saturday: Docents available in Conservatory 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Jan 5, 7, 14, 21, 28	Docents Available: Docents available in Conservatory 11 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Feb 8 - 12	Northwest Flower & Garden Show: 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. <i>Volunteers needed!</i> (pg 3)

Find us on Facebook!
Ivan Von Katzen
(Conservatory
Spokescat) & Friends
of the Conservatory
at Volunteer Park