BGP Selects Its Building Architects

On a beautiful day in January, 15 architecture firms—both local and from as far away as Boston and New Orleans—met with members of the BGP staff and Board of Directors in response to our Request for Proposals for the design of the Garden's buildings. The firms were oriented to the Garden's mission, vision, and schematic plan, and there were questions and answers and a tour of the existing conditions at the Garden site.

BGP received eight proposals for architectural services. The Selection Committee tasked with determining the winning candidate was

Continued inside
composed of Board Members, the Garden’s Executive Director, Jill Trischman-Marks (a landscape architect), and community members from affiliated professional fields. The process of elimination was based on the same procedures used during the selection of the landscape architecture team: evaluating the proposals based on predetermined criteria, including their portfolio of work and relevant projects, and a comparison of their fees and construction project estimates.

Once the four leading candidates were identified, the Committee interviewed the firms and checked their references. Each firm was requested to provide concept drawings of the two major architectural components—the Garden Pavilion and the Visitor’s Center. Four elements were particularly important to the Committee: a WOW! factor and innovation; the buildings’ relationship to the site and their interaction with nature; the flow and usability of the buildings and their layout; and the material choices and the overall budget. We were fortunate to have four excellent firms and the Conceptual Plans received by BGP were all inspiring, so the selection of the winning candidate was not an easy process.

We are very excited to announce that Boston-based Maryann Thompson Architects will be our architects for the buildings at Botanical Garden of the Piedmont. The community chose Maryann’s work as an inspiration for the design of our buildings during the 2018 Schematic Plan community input sessions, and her portfolio of relevant projects and her enthusiasm about BGP resonated with the Selection Committee. Located in Boston, you can read more about the firm at maryannthompson.com.

The firm will be collaborating with our landscape architects, Mikyoung Kim Design and Waterstreet Studio, to develop a Garden oasis in the heart of Central Virginia. We welcome Maryann Thompson Architects to the BGP community and look forward to “Growing the Garden” to the next level of its development. We also thank the members of the Selection Committee for their time, hard work, and thoughtful consideration!
The Architects

**Maryann Thompson** is the Founder and Principal at Maryann Thompson Architects. She was educated at Princeton University and the Graduate School of Design at Harvard University, where she received a Masters in Architecture and Landscape Architecture. She brings to her practice an interdisciplinary approach where issues of site, landscaping, and sustainability are central to her design thinking. Maryann leads the firm and clients in a thoughtful and inclusive process of collaboration, guided by the belief in site and regional driven architecture that is based on building consensus and relationships with all members of a community. One of her Awards from the AIA states that Maryann “has made a significant contribution to architecture. Her work reconnects architecture with the landscape and celebrates tectonics, materials and a poetic approach to design.”

**Martha Foss** is a principal at Maryann Thompson Architects and has been with the firm for 18 years. She brings extensive experience in site planning, programming, design and detailing of small institutional and community projects. Equally focused on materiality and detailing as on issues of site and landscape, Martha’s design interests are driven by architecture’s relationship to direct human experience, and the belief that architecture has the potential to serve as a mediator between us and our surroundings—locating us within the world and meaningfully constructing our relationship to it.

Martha was born and raised in Charlottesville and earned a B.S. in Architecture from the University of Virginia School of Architecture and a Masters in Architecture degree from Yale University School of Architecture.

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**We’re Hiring!**

See piedmontgarden.org/about/staff for more information

**Interested in Birds?**

Check out the new bluebird blog at: piedmontgarden.org/bluebirds
Plant Highlight: Passiflora Incarnata

Passiflora incarnata, also known as Purple Passionflower, is a fast-growing, climbing perennial vine native to Central Virginia. It grows up to 8 feet tall and dies to the ground in the winter. In the summer it has very showy, fragrant fringed flowers with white petals and sepals circling around a crown of pinkish-purple filaments. Maypops, the fleshy, egg-shaped edible fruits appear in July and mature to a yellowish color in fall. They can be eaten fresh off the vine or made into jelly. Maypop is also a common name for this vine. (Maypop refers to the loud popping sound made when fruits are stepped on.)

Source: www.missouribotanicalgarden.org
The Northern Long-Eared Bat

As Gertrude Jekyll once said, “Every garden is a grand teacher.” Such is the case for the stream restoration project at the Botanical Garden of the Piedmont. If you have been wondering why you have not seen bulldozers yet in the Garden, here’s why: the stream restoration project will require the removal of all of the trees along the stream corridor (remember: we will be planting 1,000 new native trees and shrubs on the newly restored streambank), and some of these trees may be the homes of bats, particularly the Northern Long-Eared Bat (NLEB).

Bats are important to the health of natural ecosystems, providing essential functions in the form of insect pest consumption, plant pollination, and seed distribution. The NLEB (*Myotis septentrionalis*) is distinguished by its long ears, particularly as compared to other bats in the genus *Myotis*. They roost in hardwood trees and are found in 37 states and eight provinces in North America. However, because of a fungal pathogen that affects the bats’ hibernation, the NLEB has just been listed as an endangered species by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Although we are eager to begin construction in the Garden, we must balance our eagerness for progress with our mission to promote environmental well-being, and our commitment to maintaining a positive impact on the ecosystem. To that end, the city (who is funding the restoration) has hired Biotic Systems Assessments to survey if any NLEBs roost in the Garden trees. This process uses acoustic detectors that capture ultrasonic echolocation calls from bats (which are not detectable by the human ear) and software, like sonograms, that identify what type of bats are making those calls. Because NLEBs communicate on a different acoustic frequency from all the other bats in our area, biologists will examine the recordings to establish the presence or probable absence of NLEBs in the Garden.

According to Dan Frisbee, a Water Resources Specialist for the City of Charlottesville who is managing the stream restoration project, the next steps once the recordings are done, are to “analyze them and submit a report of the findings to USFWS by the end of June. USFWS will then need to review and approve the report, after which the contractor should be clear to mobilize to the site and begin work.”

We hope that once complete, our stream restoration will provide a habitat for the Northern Long-Eared Bats that enables them to roost in the tall hardwood trees of our Garden for many years to come. Want to learn more about stream restoration, bat conservation, and ultrasonic echolocation detectors?

**Stream restoration:** [www.piedmontgarden.org/stream-restoration](http://www.piedmontgarden.org/stream-restoration)

**Bats and Bat Conservation:** [www.batcon.org/about-bats/bats-101](http://www.batcon.org/about-bats/bats-101)

**Ultrasonic Echolocation Detectors:** [www.nps.gov/subjects/bats/studying-bats.htm](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/bats/studying-bats.htm)

*Many thanks to Eric Wolf of Biotic Systems Assessments for his help with this article. Biotic Systems Assessments has been conducting wildlife surveys and habitat assessments with a focus on endangered species management since 2013.*

Your support makes growing the Garden possible. To make an online donation to Botanical Garden of the Piedmont: [piedmontgarden.org/volunteer/donate/give](http://piedmontgarden.org/volunteer/donate/give)
BGP Welcomes Our New Education Coordinator

We proudly introduce Bruce Gatling-Austin, our new Education Coordinator. A former classroom teacher and natural area coordinator, Bruce combines a deep experience in adult and childhood education with a focus on nature-based outdoor learning. He says, “Direct connection with nature allows us to care. You can't force people to care but you can support them to connect in ways that bring positive change.”

In addition to his experience in classroom teaching, Bruce managed public programs and school tours at the Ivy Creek Natural Area for over 12 years. He loved training and supporting the gifted volunteer guides to interact with school children in authentic ways, facilitating direct experience of the natural world using all the senses.

Bruce is a Certified Guide and Trainer through the National Association of Interpretation, through which he offers training for park rangers, museum docents, and others. He also provides classroom presentations for the Virginia Museum of Natural History.

At the Garden, Bruce will be coordinating:

- Create with Nature: art projects inspired by literature and the Garden, for elementary to high school students.
- Stream Testing: stream testing with our partner, Rivanna Conservation Alliance, for middle and high school students.
- Explore to Read: walk through the woods to find the pages of an enlarged storybook about nature, for preschool and elementary students.
- Specialized Educational Tours on birds, butterflies, trees, wildflowers, and more.

Please join us in welcoming Bruce to the Garden.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Botanical Garden of the Piedmont is to welcome all community members and visitors to engage in nature, to inspire learning through the beauty and importance of plants, to advance sustainability, and to promote human and environmental well-being.

Core Values: Inspiring connection, learning and joy through nature.

Our Vision: Today and for the Future of the Garden is

- Create and maintain the garden to unite plants native to our region with complimentary architecture and landscape design.
- Provide access to the garden and its natural spaces for exploration, observation, and restoration.
- Present affordable, engaging programming to provide educational and inspirational experiences for all ages.
- Commit to inclusion, excellence, and upstanding management while maintaining a positive impact on the eco-system and our community.
Friendship, love of gardening, and fundraising expertise brought Kathy Parker to the Botanical Garden of the Piedmont.

Kathy Parker’s dear friend, Carolyn Achenbach, who shares a love of home gardening and botanical gardens, inspired her to join the Garden’s volunteer force. Kathy and Carolyn have worked together with several nonprofit organizations and have enjoyed enhancing their friendship through volunteer experiences. They have also traveled together and never missed opportunities to visit gardens. When Carolyn shared her commitment to help build a botanical garden in Charlottesville, Kathy agreed to join her in her mission. Another friend, Dorothy Tompkins, was an early champion and former President of the Garden and shared her vision. “It was contagious!” Kathy said.

Kathy has been primarily involved in fundraising for the Garden, including planning, prospective donor identification, and stewardship. She has taken friends and interested acquaintances on Garden tours and arranged presentations at Westminster Canterbury of the Blue Ridge (WCBR), where she and her husband Troost live, to bring their fellow residents up to date on the Garden. She also currently serves on the Campaign Steering Committee.

Her favorite thing about volunteering for BGP is the shared passion that staff, board members, volunteers, and advisors have for this project. Kathy thinks that the staff is knowledgeable, engaging, and creative and provides excellent support for all volunteers. She has met new garden enthusiasts and has gained insight and knowledge from the shared experience of building the Garden.

Since moving to WCBR, Kathy has limited her volunteer activities to those she can manage well. The Garden is her top priority and she is committed to helping it grow. She thinks it is a treasure, and as it develops, it will impact our community in so many positive ways.

Kathy wants people to know that as we “GROW” the Garden, it is open and already providing widespread support and services for many people in our community. She encourages everyone to visit the Garden, either on their own or by requesting a tour. Kathy says, “You will catch the passion for our Garden!”

To join a monthly group tour or request a private tour of the Garden, email rsvp@piedmontgarden.org
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
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<td>10-10:45am</td>
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<td>Saturday, June 24</td>
<td>10:30am-noon</td>
<td>Bluebird House Workshop</td>
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<td>Saturday, July 1</td>
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<td>Saturday, July 8</td>
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<td>11am &amp; 1pm</td>
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<td>Monday, July 24</td>
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