

PUBLICITY FOR BOTANIC GARDENS,
ARBORETUMS AND
HORTICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

By

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of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	iii
List of Tables	viii
Abstract	ix

Chapter

Introduction	1
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I. The Rational for Publicity

Why Publicize	4
Publicity from a Marketing Point of View	7
Advantages of Publicity	12
Disadvantages of Publicity	13
Summary	14
Endnotes	15

II. Publicity in Horticultural Organizations

The Negative Image of Publicity	17
The Role of Publicity in Horticultural Organizations	20
Problems in Publicizing Horticultural Organizations	21
Advantages for Publicity Unique to Horticultural Organizations	26
Endnotes	30

III. Survey Results: Botanic Garden and Arboretum Publicity Activities

Sources of Information	32
Press Kit Survey Results	36
Postcard Survey Results	
How Much Publicity is Done by Botanic Gardens and Arboretums?	37
What Media are Used?	38
Who is Responsible for Publicity Activities Within the Organization?	39
Institutional Publicity Budgets	43
Personal Interviews	44
Analysis	45

IV. Developing an Effective Program

The Staff Position	51
Creating the Position	52
Responsibilities of the Publicist	53
Qualifications	54
Sources of Support	56
The Program	
Elements of the Program	
Knowledge	65
Institution	65
Audiences	66
Principles of Communication	67
Tools	68
Media	71
Professional Services and Associations	75
Planning	76

Implementation	
Getting Organized	81
Tailoring	83
Timing	85
Distribution	91
Guidelines for the Basic Tools	
News Release	92
Feature Story	97
Public Service Announcement	101
Photographs and Slides	104
Basic Brochure	107
Special Event	110
Media Relations	
Establishing Rapport	111
Services for the Media	115
Bad Press	118
Media Advocacy	119
Legal Concerns	120
Cooperative Ventures	
Advantages	122
Types	123
Evaluation	125
Sources of Information	126
Analysis	128
Reporting	129
Endnotes	131
Conclusion	133
Bibliography	134
Appendices	139

Appendices

I. Case Studies: Publicity in four not-for-profit horticultural organizations.

Case Study I	139
Case Study II	144
Case Study III	147
Case Study IV	150

II. Samples of Publicity Tools

Calendar of Events	152
News Release	153
Feature Query	154
Feature Story	155

LIST OF TABLES

1.	A Copy of the Postcard Survey	34
2.	Questions Covered in the In-Depth Interviews	35
3.	Media Usage	40
4.	Responsible Person/Department for Publicity Within the Organization	41
5.	Publicity Budgets for Responding Organizations . . .	42
6.	Other Publicity Tools	72
7.	Services	77
8.	Action Plan	87
9.	News Release	96

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ABSTRACT

A well-researched, carefully planned publicity program is the best way for horticultural organizations to inform the public of its services, attractions, and need for support. Publicity is part of the marketing function promotion. It may be defined as the first step in providing an institution's audiences with information about the institution and its activities, and convincing those audiences to act on the information.

Publicity costs nothing to place, and has greater credibility than advertising because it is published by impartial sources, the media. However, the media give no guarantee that publicity will be published, nor does the publicist have control over what is published, as he would had he paid for space.

Some not-for-profit horticultural organizations have been slow to effectively employ publicity. The representatives of the organizations may not know how to publicize their garden, arboretum or society. They may believe that publicity is unnecessary, or an undesirable way of calling attention to the garden.

Publicity does have a role in botanic gardens and arboretums, however. It is the means by which the public can be informed of aspects of a garden or services which are intangible: relaxation, beauty, education. Gardens are rich in opportunities for publicity as well: spectacular displays, seasonal changes, and educational programs.

A survey of publicists from botanic gardens and arboretums in the United States and Canada revealed how often those institutions used publicity, what media were most often used, and who was responsible for publicity. In-depth interviews with thirteen museums, gardens and horticultural societies showed how publicity is currently being practiced, and what some of the characteristics of a successful publicity program are.

The last section is a manual for the development of an effective publicity program. First, the staff position of publicist must be considered: what sort of position it should be, the publicist's qualifications and responsibilities. Support for the publicist from the board, management and staff is essential.

The publicity program itself must be carefully researched, planned, and implemented. Organization and the use of the right publicity tool in the most effective medium at the proper time is especially important.

Guidelines for the preparation of the basic tools of publicity are given: news release, feature story, public service announcement, photographs and slides, basic brochure and special events.

The value of good media relations is discussed, and recommendations for their establishment are made. Legal concerns for publicists are also covered.

Cooperative ventures are valuable means for expanding publicity. The advantages of working with other organizations and the ways in which it may be done are described.

An effective publicity program must be evaluated if it is to continue to be effective. Recommendations for ways to evaluate publicity and report the results are made.

INTRODUCTION

Information. Webster's Dictionary defines it as facts, data, news, or intelligence, with the qualification that those facts are being told or communicated. Nearly everyone has some sort of facts or news to communicate, so much so that society is said to be in the midst of an information explosion. Indeed, this proliferation of information and related technology has made it more and more difficult to pick out and absorb what one needs to know.

It has become increasingly important that traditionally reticent not-for-profit cultural institutions join the information explosion and communicate with the public. Gone are the days when generous benefactors or large endowments made it possible to exist comfortably without actively courting the public. Today, inflation, energy shortages, tax laws and widespread cuts in funding have made it necessary that substantial amounts of income be derived directly from the public through admissions, memberships and fund drives. The public must be persuaded to come to the garden, use its services, and support it through fees, memberships, and contributions.

Without the necessary information, however, how can the public know whether an organization is worth supporting, and what the benefits of such support would be?

Conversely, how can an organization communicate without getting lost in the flood of facts, figures, and appeals that already exist? It is my belief that botanic gardens, arboretums, and other not-for-profit horticultural organizations should take the example of other for-profit and many other not-for-profit institutions, and employ well-researched, carefully planned publicity to build public awareness and support for their programs, services, and attractions.

Publicity is the activity of providing sectors of the public with information about an institution and its activities, and convincing them to act on that information. It may be used to meet immediate, short-term needs, as in notifying the public of an upcoming event, or to help achieve long-term goals such as better acquainting the public with all the institution has to offer. This thesis has been written to help botanic gardens, arboretums, and other horticultural organizations gain an understanding of the need for publicity and show them how to design and launch an effective program.

Part I will consider the rationale for publicity in not-for-profit horticultural organizations. Part II will address special problems and advantages of publicity in these institutions. Part III will examine current uses of publicity in gardens, arboretums, and plant societies. A summary of a short survey of the efforts of some of these organizations, and interviews with publicists from fourteen gardens, museums, plant societies, and a convention and visitor's bureau will be given. Part IV serves as a manual, offering guidelines for developing a publicity program based on the literature, interviews, and my own observations. Four case studies in the appendix will examine how publicity is being done in four horticultural organizations, and illustrate points made in Part IV.

CHAPTER I

THE RATIONALE FOR PUBLICITY

Why Publicize

The most obvious reason for calling attention to one's institution is to let potential audiences know what the organization's services and attractions are. This is achieved by providing information. Information is the tool used to bring an audience from ignorance of the institution and its concerns to awareness, comprehension, conviction, and finally, action, whatever the desired action may be.¹

Specific motives or reasons for informing the public about the institution abound. At the bottom of each lies the need for success, even survival; thus, many of these motives are closely related. One of the most important motives is the need to win public understanding and support for one's institution, in order to create a climate favorable for its growth.² John Sheppard, Director of Public Relations at the Brandywine River Museum says,

It seems all too clear that in our society today, the success of an organization's decision (about anything) depends not only on the soundness of the decision, but also on its acceptance and support.

A favorable, believable image of the institution is basic to that understanding and support. This image begins to be established by providing the public with information about the institution's purposes, goals and activities. For example, once a potential donor realizes that an arboretum is truly a not-for-profit organization, with collections of merit, valid educational programs, or other valuable services to offer, he or she may be much more amenable to providing financial or other support.

The institution must balance the need for increased funds through increased attendance with the trend toward audience segmentation and specialized markets, and information can help the institution compete successfully for its markets. Rather than appealing to the general public with the promise of a stroll in the garden, the institution must provide information about certain aspects of the garden: beauty, special collections or groups of plants, or services and activities aimed at particular segments of the public (e.g., senior citizens, youth, athletes) whose interests and

needs are easier to identify than those of one large, undifferentiated market. It becomes important to differentiate between gardens, which can seem to be a generic blend of trees, grass, and flowers to the uninformed public. By pointing out what one's institution does best or is unique in, one provides specific sectors of the public with a reason to go there rather than elsewhere.

Financial gain is one result desired when providing information; however, there are other reasons for doing so. An institution may fulfill commitments required by its charter by supplying information about its services. Public recognition for a group within the organization (volunteers, for example) can be secured by describing the group's services or activities. Last but not least, one can share the knowledge of something that one believes to be quite special -- the beauty of a garden, the sight of a two hundred year old tree, or the value of understanding the world of plants.

Not only is information necessary; an organized, well-planned approach to disseminating that information is crucial to its favorable reception and understanding. I believe that publicity should be employed as the approach. However, in order to use publicity well, it is important to understand why it has been chosen.

Publicity from a Marketing Point of View

Publicity is best understood within the framework of marketing. Marketing is defined as the "attempt to form mutually satisfying exchange relationships."⁴ An exchange occurs between a seller and a buyer, "exchanging" a product for a fee. Not suprisingly, that simple definition incorporates a world of potential theory and activity. Marketing is traditionally broken down into four decision areas or functions: product, place, price, promotion.⁵ Some students of marketing add two more: market research and evaluation.⁶

The differences between marketing in for-profit and not-for-profit organizations exist in the kinds of institutions involved; their goals, products, markets, the kinds of exchanges that take place and the desired results. Not-for profit organizations go beyond profit to social, cultural, and educational goals. Such institutions are service, government, and cultural organizations, and their products are more likely to be services or ideas.⁷ They have two markets rather than one: clients and donors. Exchanges include transactions in which a volunteer may exchange time and service for appreciation or the feeling of doing right.⁸ The desired results of the marketing process are more than the improved economic well-being of the institution, but may

focus on the need to improve the quality of life of its audiences through its services.⁹

The marketing functions of product, place, price, and promotion may seem to bear little relation to not-for-profit organization, in particular public gardens and arboretums. However, they can be applied. A product is, in the broadest sense, the garden or arboretum itself, or a service provided as part of its outreach program, for example. The institution must decide how that product will be placed or made available to the sectors of the public it wishes to serve. The price of an educational course, or admission to the garden must be determined, taking into consideration the cost of producing and maintaining the product. Finally, information about the product, price, and place must be communicated and promoted to the chosen sectors of the public.

This last function, promotion, is the most important for our purpose, providing information. Promotion is, in the strictest marketing sense a "one way flow of information ... the process of moving a person or organization closer to the point of making a marketing exchange."¹⁰

In marketing, promotion is both the content and the method of the communication process, composed of four elements: advertising, personal selling, sales promotion, and public relations.¹¹ Though all of these elements may be appropriate, the last, public relations, is by far the most popular and widely used among not-for-profit organizations because it is best suited to the responsibility and service to the public implied by their not-for-profit status. Public relations may be defined as:

...the management function that evaluates public attitudes, identifies policies and procedures of an organization with the public interest, and executes a program of action to earn public understanding and acceptance.¹²

The practice of public relations involves two major activities: establishing policy and carrying out programs,¹³ which themselves require that the following be done: fact-finding, planning, communication/action, and evaluation.¹⁴

In most not-for-profit organizations like the botanic gardens and arboretums I am addressing, communication is the key function of public relations. Many of the gardens are small, or little known, with reputations to build and information to communicate about their purposes, services, and activities.

Publicity is the communication tool of public relations, the first step in providing sectors of the public with specific information about an institution and its activities and convincing them to act on that information.

This communication function must not be confused with the complete practice of public relations, though the tools of publicity are often used to do more than simply communicate, and there is a certain amount of fact-finding, planning, and evaluation involved. Confusion on this point is common, and natural as Cutlip and Center explain in Effective Public Relations.

Public relations practice, in part has evolved from publicity. Much of public relations practice is still concerned with publicity getting.¹⁵ Publicity's role must be understood and practiced in the larger framework of the whole public relations process...It can only serve to focus attention on good works and to clothe institutions with personality.¹⁶

The fact-finding, policy making, and evaluation of public attitudes of public relations provide the basis and methods for the communication achieved through publicity. As an institution or its representative become more expert at communicating, and the institution's image is established, the other functions of public relations such as community relations become increasingly important.

Publicity has been defined in a number of ways:

"Communication that is usually free and always proposed hopefully,"¹⁷ "Advertising that is published free due to news worthy content,"¹⁸ "A subtle method of inspiring editorial coverage."¹⁹ Whatever definition one chooses, the facts remain that publicity is information provided by an institution to its audiences by means of tools like press releases, public service and calendar announcements, and photographs, through an outlet or outlets over which it has little if any control, i.e. the media: newspapers, periodicals, radio, and television.

Publicity may also be used to meet long term goals by providing more general information about the institution or presenting the facts in a different, often more subjective way. Some of the tools of this kind of publicity are brochures, feature stories, or special events. Their outlets may be the media, a brochure rack in an information center, or the institution itself. These materials may be more sympathetic to the institution, and their distribution and use better controlled. However, they may be more costly and lose some credibility when they are being produced and distributed by the institution itself.

Advantages of Publicity

There are basically two types of publicity: product publicity, covering goods, services, people, and places, and institutional publicity, concerned with "reporting day to day activities that are deemed newsworthy."²⁰ The concept of "product" publicity brings to light one of the best arguments for using publicity to provide information about botanic gardens, arboretums, and other horticultural organizations. Like many other not-for-profit organizations, they often render services, or ideas rather than tangible products: the service of helping to organize a community garden, for example, or the idea of experiencing the sight, smells, and sounds of a garden. For these intangible products, the information provided by publicity serves as the product substitute until the sale is made, the service used, or the experience experienced.²¹

One of the greatest advantages of publicity is its credibility. Because its outlets -- the media -- are generally perceived as disinterested neutral sources, information appearing in a newspaper or on the radio has that medium's implied endorsement, and correspondingly increased credibility. This can be very important when one is striving to establish a favorable, believable image for one's institution.

Another advantage, a very great one for not-for-profit institutions with tight budgets, is the fact that publicity is relatively free. Unlike advertising, it costs comparatively little to produce and nothing to place.

Disadvantages of Publicity

However, both of these advantages have corollary disadvantages. Because the outlets for publicity are disinterested and neutral, there is no guarantee that one's publicity will be accepted or used. Nor can it be controlled. The media may be just as likely to print or broadcast something unfavorable, not generated by the institution. This lack of control is also due to the fact that nothing is paid to assure that the information is passed on verbatim, or even used. "Free" publicity is attractive to many organizations, both for-profit and not-for-profit; therefore, the competition for coverage is quite stiff. In fact most representatives of the media admit that they receive so much information in the form of publicity that most of it is thrown away.

Summary

John Sheppard described the positive effects of publicity very well:

In addition to helping increase visitation by gaining the attention of virtually all segments of the public, publicity can enhance the general prestige of an organization, tell about its new interests and accomplishments, communicate with its members and donors, stimulate community and industry action and support and²² reach those whose opinions have cultural impact.

These effects are much like the reasons for providing information given in the beginning of the chapter. Indeed, the combined coordinated efforts of a well-executed publicity program can have a synergistic effect, doing more than just informing the public but building "a permanent bridge of understanding between the institution and the sectors of the public it serves and depends upon for support."²³

Endnotes

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19. Ted M. Levine, President, Development Counsellors International, Ltd., New York, Delaware Tourism Seminars, "Achieving Effective Public Relations," April 1, 1980.
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21. Ibid, p. 446.
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23. Ibid, p. 59.

CHAPTER II

PUBLICITY IN HORTICULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

The Negative Image of Publicity

Public relations and publicity have been practiced since the early twentieth century, though many botanic gardens, arboretums, and other not-for-profit horticultural organizations have shied away from their use. Don Callender, Executive Director of the Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitor's Bureau explains his view of why this attitude persists, and how it has begun to change:

Traditionally, arboretums tend to be conservative organizations, conservators of a natural tract of land...people who really don't know much about dealing with the public or have much idea about or are really interested in how many people come through, how many people see them. Traditionally, they didn't have to justify their existence, usually they were endowed. But...they've started to run into trouble with inflation...so they had to do something to justify their existence and that is relating to a larger public.¹

Mr. Callender's opinion calls attention to several important reasons why botanic gardens and arboretums have

neglected to publicize themselves effectively. The most important reason is the persistent negative perception of publicity and publicizing oneself, that publicity is low-class and may somehow cheapen what is being publicized. This attitude may derive from the board, whose personal distaste for publicity causes them to restrict the amount of time and effort to be spent publicizing the institution expecting that word of mouth will suffice. The administration of the institution may share the board's low opinion, feeling that publicity is too commercial and therefore not in keeping with the best interests and not-for-profit standing of their organization.

Many people feel uncomfortable "blowing their own horn." However superior they believe their institution and its services to be, they fail to recognize the value of enlightened self-interest and are too reluctant to promote the institution. Related to that feeling is the belief that an institution can stand on its own, without actively publishing its reputation or its attractions. That opinion originated in part with the isolationist attitude of a well-endowed garden or arboretum that really needed no additional interest or support from the public to grow. Not many such institutions still exist.

Few not-for-profit horticultural organizations cling to the belief that publicity and promotion are to be completely avoided. Most accept that they must publicize themselves to some degree. Negative attitudes toward publicity do persist, however faintly, often hampering a publicist's efforts to do her job well. Some organizations harboring remnants of that distaste fail or refuse to recognize what publicity really is -- a means for gaining recognition for their services and activities. They may even think that they never publicize themselves. For example, in my short survey, Chanticleer, a garden near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, said it never publicized itself. Yet, the garden was included in the Tercentennial Garden Guide, a publication available throughout the Delaware Valley listing gardens in that area. Chanticleer has also been the subject of several articles in the Green Scene, the magazine of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, describing plants and plantings that could be seen at the garden. In each instance, the garden had control over whether or not it would be included in the publications. It was being publicized without admitting to or recognizing it as such.

Often the distaste for publicity in general is transferred to the media. While recognizing that they must

somehow inform the public, staff members responsible for publicity may feel that the press is unsympathetic, that "you can't win," pointing to the lack of coverage the institution receives as proof. The lack of success is more likely to be due to the staff's poor understanding of the media's needs and limitations, as well as the inability of the publicist to get across what is special about his institution in terms that appeal to the media and the public.

The Role of Publicity in Horticultural Organizations

Whatever the reasons for disliking or avoiding publicity may be, the fact is that publicity is the best way for a garden to communicate with its desired audiences. As I have said in Chapter I, the benefits or products that these institutions offer are often services: education or recreation, for example. These services are intangible, one can't touch them or see them as one would a sweater or book, and the benefits of such services are not readily apparent. They need to be described to be understood. At the very least, the public needs to know they exist in order to take advantage of them. More intangibles inherent in gardens and gardening are beauty and other visual aspects of the garden, relaxation, satisfaction, the intellectual stimulation of a

well executed design, or an inspiring lecture. Robert Montgomery, Director of the John J. Tyler Arboretum, put it this way: "What we're asking them to do is buy an idea, buy a segment of the quality of their lives."² One must enumerate or describe those sights and feelings for the person who has not visited the garden or had the opportunity to experience them. Information is indeed a "product substitute."³

Problems in Publicizing Horticultural Organizations

In addition to the common need to inform the public of what the garden offers, horticultural organizations have their own special needs and misconceptions to overcome. Many of these problems originate with people's perceptions of the gardens.

One problem lies in the failure of gardens to communicate what others can get from them, and conversely to see themselves through their public's eyes. Just as a teacher with a broad and complex knowledge of a subject must simplify the information for a student, and relate it to the student's life or frame of reference, so must the garden. A horticulturist may be thrilled by the symmetrical branch structure of a tree. A visitor will probably see only the whole tree, and will need to be shown how to appreciate its component parts.

Another problem is the lack of understanding of the purpose or reason for being of most gardens and arboretums. The problem is two-sided. Appreciation for plants and gardens can be hampered by the "anyone can garden" syndrome. Nearly everyone has grown a houseplant, tended a vegetable garden, or planted a shrub by the front door. Since they can do it, many people expect perfection when they visit a public garden, a place where professionals grow plants. John Floyd of Southern Living Magazine identified it as a conflict between the perceived value of a garden and its true value. Very often, gardens don't live up to first expectations.⁴ Seeing a plant one grows at home featured in a professional garden display can serve to put that garden on one's own level, and qualify one as a critic. As a Horticulture Information Aide at Longwood Gardens, I heard visitors say over and over, "Oh, I have that! Mine looks better." Nearly every horticulturist has had the funny but frustrating experience of being asked for advice about a particular plant or gardening problem, only to have the advisee disagree and ignore the advice if it didn't reinforce her own opinion.

Colvin Randall, Publicity Coordinator at Longwood Gardens pointed out a related attitude. Gardening and plant and garden displays are perceived to involve "low level

art."⁵ The artistry involved in the Longwood Conservatory's Christmas display is not considered to be as high as that of a new art exhibit. After all, the medium is plants, and anyone can grow plants. This perception is echoed in a visitor's comment about Winterthur Museum and Garden's naturalistic landscape design. "Why should I pay two dollars for a walk in the woods?"⁶

Conversely, one finds the problem that Catherine Wheeler, Head of Public Relations at Winterthur calls "the mystery of the aesthetic experience."⁷ One can look at a garden and consider it to be attractive, but it is more difficult to say why. Like painting or sculpture, landscape architecture and design may seem imposing and hard to understand to the uninitiated.

This feeling of being outclassed or unable to understand contributes to the elitist image that many gardens, arboretums, and horticultural organizations suffer from. The image of elitism may be derived from a time when the garden was a private estate, never open to the public. In some cases, a garden's physical isolation may increase the image of exclusivity -- only people with cars or money can get there. A garden or organization whose founding or governing

body is composed of wealthy, socially prominent people who are very visible to the public also creates the air of elitism. That is the image problem suffered by The Wilmington Garden Center, a not-for-profit, educational organization open to the public. The impetus for its origin came from a private garden club composed of wealthy, socially prominent women. Despite the Garden Center's services, their availability to all socio-economic levels, and lack of any formal connection with the club, it was still perceived to be run by and for the club's members.

Gardens and arboretums are often perceived as luxury items, former playgrounds of the rich with little social value. It must be admitted that aesthetic experiences, recreation, and relaxation are not basic to survival. However, this does not render gardens and activities related to them valueless. It does indicate that this is a point that requires explanation.

Related to the misconception of gardens as luxury items is the quandry of all not-for-profit organizations whose income or a portion of it comes from an endowment. Such organizations, because associated with the rich are often assumed to be "rich" themselves. Many people do not

understand that the institution can only use as income the interest earned from a fixed amount of money, one that does not increase with inflation.

Yet another problem involved in publicizing botanic gardens and arboretums is the visual nature of their attractions. They must be seen to be appreciated. Somehow, people have to be motivated to get there. Many of the publicists I have talked to agreed that this is one of their most difficult tasks. Once the people are there, the publicists believe that the garden can speak for itself.

One difficulty in getting people to come is the fact that gardens and plants are perceived as being permanent. If they don't visit this year, next year or next season will do just as well. They don't understand the transience of a garden's beauty, that its plants and images are constantly growing, shifting, peaking, and fading.

The media are also members of the public that the garden or horticultural organization is serving. Often they too have difficulty understanding what value the garden or organization has, or what is interesting to them or their readers or listeners about it. This can be especially true when representatives of the press are not familiar with the

subjects or setting they are covering. Donald Adams, Director of Public Relations for the Greenfield Village and the Henry Ford Museum in Detroit, Michigan, discovered this to be quite true during the Republican National Convention when members of the press covering the convention seemed only to be able to think of the museum as a place that their delegate was visiting. They had to be told what else there was of interest.⁸

Advantages for Publicity Unique to Horticultural Organizations

None of these problems are insurmountable. All of them may be cured or at least ameliorated by a well planned and executed program of publicity, designed to interpret and inform the public about a garden, arboretum, or horticultural organization. In fact these types of institutions have special advantages or opportunities for publicity, some of which are derived from the disadvantages I have discussed.

The fact that most people do garden or have grown plants established a common ground for communication. One does not have to introduce a completely new subject when talking about plants or gardens. Rather, there is a basic awareness, however simple, already in existence. The task of

the publicist and other staff is to develop that understanding and enlarge upon it to suit their purposes.

Another advantage gardens and arboretums have to work with is the proven benefit of experiences with plants. Studies conducted by social scientists have shown that people prefer to see natural settings with plants rather than those without.⁹ Views including plants "significantly improved the emotional states of stressed individuals" in a study conducted at the University of Delaware.¹⁰ Results from another experiment suggested that "people felt more wakefully relaxed while viewing settings with plants."¹¹ It is not too far fetched to promise relaxation and refreshment as results of a visit to a garden. The field of horticulture therapy provides evidence for the therapeutic effects of plants on people with mental, physical and emotional problems.¹² Organizations like the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society and civic garden centers point with pride to community gardens and beautification projects that foster individual and community pride and confidence. The basic components of botanic gardens and the concerns of other horticultural organizations -- plants -- really are valuable, even beneficial to people in general. These positive effects of plants are something which publicists can and should emphasize.

On a more practical level, plants and gardens provide many legitimate opportunities for publicity. Gardens and the plants in them are so visual and full of appeal to all the senses that they easily lend themselves to verbal and pictorial description. A photograph or television spot about a garden at the height of its beauty is the perfect "hook" or device to get the public to come. Gardens are very seasonal. Their attractions are always changing, always creating opportunities for news. The cyclical nature of change in a garden or arboretum is very much like the cycle of life itself, something everyone can relate to. It provides the opportunity for establishing tradition, patterns of visiting again and again throughout the seasons or even for years to come.

There are many levels of interpretation of the assets of botanic gardens and arboretums. The setting or garden itself is one. The setting may also be treated as a background for other events, such as Longwood Garden's summer performing arts series. The gardens at Independence National Historical Park exist only as settings, there to convey the feeling of the period without pretensions to historical accuracy.

The plants themselves may be emphasized in several different ways: as individuals, or specimens; as collections important for their rarity, completeness, educational value, or beauty; as groups, combined in harmonious or otherwise noteworthy design.

Some gardens are able to develop descriptive themes for themselves with educational and visual appeal. The John J. Tyler Arboretum calls itself "An Outdoor Living Museum." Bartram's Garden uses the living history theme, too, as its trees help tell the story of William Bartram's life and plant explorations. A theme can provide a reason for visiting a garden in capsular form, and can become a valuable indentifying hook for the publicist to use regularly in all of her efforts.

Plants and gardens provide publicists with many other newsworthy aspects. Plants provide spectacles, like the azaleas in bloom at the United States' National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. These spectacles are transient as well as worth noting, and must be seen or taken advantage of while they last. Very often these displays help carry the institution and its continuing, more stable and perhaps less spectacular attractions.

One last opportunity for publicity lies in the common experience and knowledge of plants. Because many people do garden or grow plants, it is possible to link that interest with another, seemingly unrelated one. This is called a tie-in. A business or industrial periodical or annual report, for example may be interested in publishing an article describing one's experiences in office gardening, growing plants in those restrictive circumstances. It may also carry a report of a program carried out by the institution that their organization has sponsored.

The advantages and opportunities available far outweigh the prejudices concerning publicity, and the special problems of publicizing botanic gardens, arboretums, and horticultural organizations. A competent publicist, well versed in his craft and every aspect of the institution involved can design a comprehensive program of publicity aimed at informing the public of the institution's attractions, services, and activities, and go beyond them to establish the image of the organization and win public understanding and support for it.

Endnotes

1. Donald Callender, Executive Director, Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Wilmington, Delaware. Personal interview with the author, May 4, 1981.
2. Robert Montgomery, Executive Director, John J. Tyler Arboretum, Lima, Pennsylvania. Personal interview with the author, April 21, 1981.
3. William G. Nickels, Marketing Principles (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1978), p. 446.
4. John Floyd, Horticulturist, Southern Living Magazine, Birmingham, Alabama. American Association of Botanic Gardens and Arboreta Annual Meeting, "How to Reach the Public Through the Media," April 12, 1980.
5. Colvin Randall, Publicity Coordinator and Publications Editor, Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. Personal interview with the author, April 15, 1981.
6. Catherine Wheeler, Head of Public Relations, Winterthur Museum and Gardens, Wilmington, Delaware. Personal interview with the author, April 24, 1981.
7. Wheeler, "Publicity for Cultural Institutions," Lecture to Longwood Fellows, October 28, 1980.
8. Donald Adams, Director of Public Relations, Greenfield Village and Henry Ford Museum, Detroit, Michigan, Annual Public Relations Conference, seminar discussion, March 27, 1981.
9. Roger S. Ulrich, "Benefits of Passive Experiences with Plants," Longwood Program Seminars, Vol. 12 (Newark, Delaware, 1980), p. 28.
10. Ibid, p. 30
11. Ibid.
12. Herbert S. Plankinton, Jr., "Horticulture as a Work Program for Therapy," Longwood Program Seminars, Vol. 5 (Newark, Delaware, 1973), p. 36.

CHAPTER III

SURVEY RESULTS: BOTANIC GARDEN AND ARBORETUM PUBLICITY ACTIVITIES

Sources of Information

Three studies were conducted to measure how United States and Canadian botanic gardens and arboreta were accomplishing their publicity activities. In the first, the press kits of eighteen museums and botanic gardens were examined to see what kind of information these institutions were producing and how it was presented. Most kits contained assorted news releases about special events and background material on the institute. Almost all were packaged in special press kit folders. The information gained from the analysis of press kits was used to design the questions for the second and third surveys.

In November, 1980 a short, postcard-sized survey was sent to a list used in a previous American Association of Botanic Gardens and Arboreta survey of 272 botanic gardens and arboreta in the United States and Canada. (A copy of

the survey instrument appears in Table 1.) The postcard survey was specifically designed to measure:

- What type of institution used publicity,
- How often such publicity was used,
- What media were used for publicity activities,
- How much time was devoted to publicity activities,
- Who in the organization was responsible for publicity activities, and
- How much money was spent on publicity.

Seventy percent of the institutions sampled responded to the questionnaire. Sixty-five percent of the institutions that responded were operated by city, county or state governments, twenty percent were university affiliated, and the rest were privately operated.

The third study involved a series of personal interviews with publicists or the person responsible for publicity in nine east coast gardens and museums, three plant societies and a convention and visitor's bureau - some thirteen organizations in all. The interviews were held to determine in greater depth how not-for-profit organizations went about publicizing themselves, what their special problems or opportunities might be, and to identify any especially effective approaches used. The interviews were

1. Do you publicize or otherwise promote your institution's services and attractions?
___regularly ___rarely ___never
2. What media do you use for publicity and promotion? Please rank, 1 = most frequent
___newspapers ___television
___periodicals ___mementoes
___other publications ___other (give example)
___radio _____
3. Who is responsible for publicity and promotion?
_____ name and title
4. How much time does he/she devote to it?
___full time ___part time ___amount of time
5. Do you have a public relations or publicity department? ___no ___yes If so, what is its approximate yearly budget to the nearest thousand, excluding salaries & paid advertising?

TABLE 2

Questions Covered in the In-Depth Interviews

Statistics

- name of institution, publicist
- position title
- full, part-time, other duties, who reports to
- publicity responsibilities; any assistance
- background: education, on the job experience, etc.

The Publicity Program

- how long has publicity been a part of institution's activities; how important
- written policies, goals, annual planning, budget (when known)

Tools (how the program is implemented)

- publicity, long and short term
- how combined, distributed
- media relations

Audiences

- who are they
- how defined

Evaluation of Program

Collaboration With Other Institutions, Organizations

Tourism

Press Kit Survey Results

conducted during the spring of 1981 and updated during the spring and summer of 1983. Table 2 contains an outline of the questions covered in the personal interviews.

Press Kit Survey Results

Eleven of the eighteen institutions I contacted responded by sending press kits to me. Of the eleven, only six came in folders designed for use as a press kit, the remainder were collections of releases, brochures and other publications placed in the mailing envelope. Materials most often included in the kits were: press releases, a map or visitor's guide to the institutions, general brochure, and a calendar of events. Some of the other materials were: news letters, membership information, requests for contributions, program descriptions, fact sheets, feature stories, photographs and public service announcements.

Ten of the kits were aimed at acquainting the reader with the institution in general. A few publicists seemed to have sent everything they could think of. The best of these general kits included: the publicist's business card, a long, general news release, releases describing various events throughout the year, a calendar of events, a general brochure, several brochures dealing with different aspects of

the institution, a visitor's guide, two copies of the institutions bulletin, and information on the founder.

The eleventh kit was put together to promote a specific exhibit; it seemed an excellent example of a press kit of that sort. It included the following: a table of contents, the publicist's card, several news releases dealing with different aspects of the exhibit, two feature articles, an exhibition fact sheet, general information on the museum, a photograph request form, a copy of the museum newsletter, and a general brochure.

The two kits were superior because they contained both general and specific information appropriate to the purpose of the kit without including irrelevant information, it was clear who to contact for further information, and they were attractively packaged in folders.

Postcard Survey Results

How Much Publicity Is Done by Botanic Gardens and Arboretums?

Seventy-seven percent of the respondents to the postcard survey said they "regularly" publicized or otherwise promoted their institution's services and attractions.

Seventeen percent said they "rarely" used publicity and seven percent said they "never" used publicity.

What Media Are Used?

The second question on the short survey asked respondents to indicate which media they used for publicity and promotion and, if more than one medium was used, to rank the media in terms of frequency of usage. Newspaper was by far the most popular medium (see Table 3). Ninety-one percent of the institutions publicizing their events use newspaper and seventy-three percent of these institutions ranked newspaper as their number one medium.

Radio was the second most popular medium; sixty-eight percent of the institutions in the postcard survey used radio. Television was the third most popular medium (sixty-one percent of the institutions used it), followed by periodicals (fifty-two percent), other publications (forty percent) and mementoes (twelve percent).

A number of "other" media were listed by the study respondents including:

Newsletters	Talks to Clubs	Handouts/Fact Sheets
Slides & Films	Lecture Series	Guided Tours
Posters	Annual Reports	Postcards
Tourist Papers	Special Mailings	Special Exhibits
Flyers	Directories	Member Mailings
Brochures	"House" publications	Public Field Days
Billboards	Course Announcements	

When the responding institutions ranked the various media in terms of their frequency of usage, newspaper was the most frequently used medium, followed by radio, periodicals, other publications, television, and mementoes (see Table 3).

Who Is Responsible for Publicity Activities Within the Organization?

Thirty-two percent of the institutions responding to the postcard survey had public relations, public information, or communication positions. Seventy percent of the people in these positions were part-time. Most institutions farmed the publicity activities out to other individuals or departments in the organization. The director or other administrator was responsible for publicity in thirty-six percent of the organizations, thirteen percent of the organizations gave the job to volunteers. Other departments (horticulture, personnel, development) performed the publicity activities in six percent of the responding organizations (see Table 4).

TABLE 3

Media Usage

Percentage of Respondents Indicating They Used . . .

	Total Group (n=179)	Regularly Use Publicity (n=140)	Rarely Use Publicity (n=33)
1. Newspaper	164 (91.1%)	135 (92.4%)	29 (87.9%)
2. Radio	122 (67.8%)	110 (75.3%)	12 (36.4%)
3. Television	109 (60.6%)	98 (67.1%)	11 (33.3%)
4. Other	95 (52.8%)	84 (57.5%)	11 (33.3%)
5. Periodicals	93 (51.7%)	87 (59.4%)	6 (18.2%)
6. Other Publications	72 (40.0%)	64 (43.8%)	8 (24.2%)
7. Mementoes	22 (12.2%)	19 (13.0%)	3 (9.1%)

Average Ranking of Media in Terms of Frequency of Usage
(1 = most frequent, 6= least frequent)

	Total Group	Regularly Use Publicity	Rarely Use Publicity
1. Newspaper	1.14	1.17	1.08
2. Radio	2.75	3.08	2.58
3. Periodicals	3.02	3.07	2.50
4. Other Publications	3.18	3.25	2.63
5. Television	3.32	3.38	2.80
6. Mementoes	4.41	4.87	1.86

TABLE 4

Responsible Person/Department for Publicity
Within the Organization

	Organizations Regularly Using Publicity	Organizations Rarely Using Publicity
Public Relations, Publicity, or Communications Department/Person	32.0%	10.0%
Director(s)	20.0%	34.0%
Other Administrative Person/People	16.0%	28.0%
Education Department	13.0%	---
Volunteers	13.0%	10.0%
Other Departments	6.0%	17.0%
	<u>100.0%</u>	<u>100.0%</u>
Percent full-time	21.0%	---
Percent part-time	79.0%	100.0%

TABLE 5

Publicity Budgets for Responding Organizations

<u>Amount</u>	<u>No. of Organizations</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>No. of Organizations</u>
\$ 200	1	\$ 10,000	5
500	1	12,000	1
750	1	15,000	2
1,000	6	20,000	1
1,500	1	40,000	1
2,000	1	45,000	1
3,000	2	50,000	2
4,000	1	65,000	2
5,000	1	100,000	3
7,000	1	150,000	2
8,000	1	200,000	1
9,000	1	500,000	1

Total Organization Responding = 40

Median = \$10,000

Institutional Publicity Budgets

Institutions with a public relations or publicity department were asked to give their approximate yearly publicity budget to the nearest thousand, excluding salaries and paid advertising. Forty organizations answered the question. Publicity budgets for the responding organizations ranged from \$0 to over \$100,000. The median amount spent on publicity was \$15,000, and as can be seen in Table 5, the budget distribution was bi-modal. Six organizations reported budgeting \$1,000 and five organizations reported publicity budgets of \$10,000.

Unfortunately, the budget question was poorly worded and confusing (see Table 1). It implied that one had to have a public relations or publicity department before one had a publicity budget. As a result, many organizations did not include budget information.

The wide range in answers among similar size organizations also indicates a lack of awareness as to the actual costs of publicity activities and/or significant differences in what activities are considered publicity related. Two examples of the confusion on publicity budgets are the Foster Botanical Garden and the Living Desert Reserve. At Foster,

where one employee spends an average of four hours a week on publicity using newspapers, periodicals, tourist publications and television coverage for special events, the person completing the survey noted "We do not have any publicity budget." And at the Living Desert Reserve, where an individual spends an average of three hours a week on publicity activities, the survey respondent noted that publicity was "not a budget item."

Personal Interviews

During the Spring of 1981, I conducted a series of interviews with publicists or the person responsible for publicity in nine gardens and museums, two plant societies and a convention and visitor's bureau. The interviews were held to determine in greater depth how these institutions went about publicizing themselves, what their special problems or opportunities might be, and to identify any unique or especially effective approaches used. These interviews were updated during the spring and summer of 1983. Four of the organizations are subjects of the case studies which appear in the appendix.

Analysis

Eleven out of the thirteen publicists I interviewed, characterized themselves in the short survey as regular publicizers. One of the remaining two did not participate in the survey, the other was in the rarely publicized category. There was a great deal of variation in the manner, method and frequency with which the publicists did their jobs, and in how successful they were. For the purposes of this summary, "successful" is defined as receiving regular, favorable publicity, the result of a publicist's well-planned program for publicizing the organization. They fall roughly into three categories: successful, moderately successful or at least trying and unsuccessful.

Most of the successful publicists come from large or well established organizations with the sophistication to appreciate the value of publicity and the ability to raise or allocate funds for it. These successful publicists have three very important factors in their favor. First, support: support and respect for the importance of publicity to the organization from the board of directors, the director, and staff or volunteers in an advisory capacity or those with whom the publicist must work. Second, time: enough time to do the job well both for the short-and long-term. All of the

"successful" publicists have full time public relations or publicity positions, with one exception in which the director is also the publicist. However, publicity is a top priority for him, and he spends a large percentage of his time on it. Third, the right person for the job, one chosen for his or her personality and ability to do the job of publicizing the organization and its activities. That person may not have formal training in public relations, but has been able to pick up the skills and use them well. It is interesting to note that at this time, none of the "successful" publicists has formal training in the field.

Other factors contributing to the success of publicity include the perception of publicity as an ongoing program, not a miscellaneous collection of one-time efforts for events, but a program of image-building and increasing public awareness of the organization as well as its activities. Correspondingly they plan for the future, be it for four weeks or four years, and evaluate what they accomplish. They are not afraid to work with other organizations to reach new or larger audiences, or to do something they could not do alone. These organizations can be similar to the publicist's, and the organizations work together to publicize themselves as a group, or the collaboration can be with a

service organization like a convention and visitor's bureau or another professional such as a consultant.

The successful publicists know and work with the media they are asking to give them free publicity and believe that this personal contact is essential to their success. Finally, they are flexible. Though the basics of press releases, calendar and public service announcements, photographs, features, special events and brochures are always covered, the publicists do not do them by rote and consider the job done. They are sensitive to opportunities for new and different ways of getting publicity provided by outside events or other publicity "tools" such as posters or mementoes, whatever is best suited to their needs. They can also innovate on or adjust the basics, tailoring them to the event or publicity opportunity.

The most innovative approaches to publicity were marked by collaboration. One such collaboration is the Discover the Brandywine Valley Public Relations Association, in which museums and gardens in the Brandywine Valley joined to promote themselves as a group. Another example of collaboration is the for-profit/not-for-profit partnerships. The Franklin Institute is involved with for-profit organizations such as the Tastykake Company. In that collaboration, the

bakery included a coupon for a free visit to the museum in its products' packages. Such a collaboration is mutually beneficial: the for-profit group has improved its public service image, the not-for-profit organization has gained a wider audience.

The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's use of public relations consultant for one major event is another profitable collaboration. The staff is freed from the drain of year-round planning and activity for one event to concentrate on other projects, both day-to-day and long-term. The Society is also remarkable for its Volunteer Public Information Committee, a group providing ideas, advice, and support which nonetheless allow the publicist to do the job as she thinks best.

The moderately successful publicists combine characteristics of successful organizations with difficulties influencing the unsuccessful publicist. However, they are further set apart from the unsuccessful group because they know what should be done and have tried, often successfully, to improve their publicity program.

The unsuccessful group is plagued by factors which are the converse of those helping successful publicists. In the small organizations that many of the moderately successful or unsuccessful publicists come from budgets are small and staff is kept to a minimum. Everyone is very busy and publicity is not considered to be a priority. There is little or no support from the board, director, or staff, partly because they do not understand the nature or value of publicity themselves. There is rarely enough time to do the job well, as responsibility for publicity is often a minor aspect of a job with other, more important duties. This can mean that the publicist is not necessarily the best person for the job, and has had little if any training in publicity.

Poor media relations is another characteristic, as the publicist either doesn't know who to contact, or hasn't the time to follow through. Lack of communication and planning on the part of the publicist and the rest of the staff make it impossible to plan far enough ahead to make long term deadlines or work on long range publicity projects. Often, the publicist must depend on other staff members, volunteers, or another part of the organization to do some of the work. If they do not work well together, or clearly define their relationship, confusion and a correspondingly poor job are the result.

All of these factors can contribute to the vicious circle of poor publicity. People with publicity duties tacked on to their jobs, or those who perceive it to be that way are often frustrated by the lack of time to do something they are only fairly knowledgeable in. Lack of support or emphasis on the importance of publicity on the part of the board, director or staff compounds it. If they lack the time, skills and support to do their publicity properly, chances are good that they will not be very successful. Without success or support to spur them on, publicity can become a thankless, frustrating job, one that is often given low priority and done mechanically, without much original or creative thought.

CHAPTER IV

DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM

There are two elements in an effective publicity program: the program itself, and the person or persons whose responsibility it is to carry out the program.

The Staff Position

No program will succeed without the right person to administer and implement it. That person must be given the time, freedom, and support to do her job well. Unfortunately, this is not always the case in many botanic gardens and arboretums, particularly the smaller ones. Carol Lynch of Bartram's Garden described the problem well:

In a small garden publicity gets shoved to the bottom just because there is so much else to be done...If there is not one special employee then there must be someone else with publicity described as part of their¹ job - not just tacked on to whoever is available.

It has been my observation that persons with responsibility for publicity "tacked on" to their job or who perceive it

that way are often frustrated at how little they can do and how ineffective their efforts are. A vicious circle results: without sufficient time or expertise to do publicity well, the job is not properly done, lessening the chances for its success (i.e. for the publicity to be used by the media and for the public to learn more about the garden). Without success, incentive to make time for publicity and to try harder or innovate is lessened. The resulting publicity may be of poorer quality, further diminishing its chances for success.

Creating the Position

Thus, the job of publicizing an institution, its services, and attractions must be given the status of a position created primarily for the performance of that job. It should be a paid staff position to ensure both quality and continuity -- crucial elements in this publicly visible job. It can be a full or part-time position to which other duties related to publicity are attached.

Special care should be taken to think through how much publicity one's organization requires and how much time is needed to produce the desired publicity. Reading, re-searching, writing, developing new approaches and events,

making and keeping contacts are very time consuming activities that may or may not show immediate results. Public relations professionals in the community can help one determine whether a full or part-time position is appropriate and suggest sources of funding when the institution's funds are not sufficient. Having such a position is not a luxury to be deferred, however. An effective publicity program present at the very beginning can do much to establish the organization's image and reputation, and to inform and attract potential donors as it has for Roger Mower at Bartram's Garden. Once the publicist position has been created, its scope may be broadened through the use of volunteers, donated services, and collaborative ventures.

The publicist should enjoy relatively independent status, reporting directly to the executive director. This gives the publicist the ability to observe impartially all aspects of the institution, assess public attitudes, and inform the director of the public relations implications of the two.

Responsibilities of the Publicist

The basic responsibilities of a publicist are: to use print and electronic media to disseminate news and other

information about the organization; to handle media requests for information; to develop good relations with the media; to prepare and distribute print and audio-visual material, provide staff, volunteers, director, and board with background information on the organization, and to keep them informed of his activities. For the sake of continuity and clarity, the publicist acts as the organization's primary spokesperson in person and in print. However, he will also have to prepare the director, board or staff member who serve as representatives and are often the people that the public associates with the organization. The publicist may help plan special events as well.

Qualifications

What are the qualifications for a good publicist? They are a combination of personality traits and skills. Most importantly, she is a good communicator, one who can put information and attitudes into terms the public can understand. A good communicator is creative, yet concerned with accuracy and aware of the importance of details. She has writing ability and is people-oriented, able to meet and talk

with all kinds of people. The ability to take pressure and meet deadlines is important too, along with a combination of confidence and humility that permits a publicist to speak out when it is necessary yet stand back and let someone else do the talking if that is a more effective means of communication.

There is some disagreement among publicists whether it is better to have publicizing skills or knowledge of the subject matter first. I believe that knowledge of the necessary skills is most important. The practice of public relations is a profession; those with training and experience in the field will be more effective in the long run than those without it. This knowledge may be gained from courses offered by schools and other organizations, or experience gained from working with professional public relations specialists. The ideal publicist would be one with the previously described traits, education or equivalent experience in publicity, and some knowledge of horticulture and not-for-profit institutions. An acceptable combination of skills would be education and experience in horticulture and not-for-profit horticultural organizations and some education or experience in public relations or publicity.

Sources of Support

Central to the professional status necessary for the publicist is support from the board and top management. A non-supportive board can severely restrict publicity, as it has at Nemours. Only in an organization like Winterthur, where the board and executive director recognize the importance of publicity to the organization and actively support the publicist's activities, can the publicist realize his full potential. This support can be demonstrated through interaction between the board and publicist. The board should help "develop, and approve a statement of purpose and goals"² for publicity and review them periodically. They can approve a realistic budget. The board may also be a source of valuable influence and advice, particularly when one of the members has public relations contacts and experience. One or more board members can serve on a public relations committee, a body whose purpose is to form policy, and recommend the means of its implementation. They may also help plan and provide assistance in day to day operations. The committee could be composed of one or more board members, other volunteers who have interest and experience in public relations, the director, and the publicist. One excellent

example of such a group is the Public Information Committee of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. The publicist considered the committee an invaluable source of ideas, advice and support.³

The executive director provides support first by acting as advocate for publicity and the publicist's activities with the board. She can act as a channel for information flowing to and from publicist and board, help form publicity goals and policy, and aid in the development of the publicity budget. The director may serve on the public relations committee, or act alone.

The staff is another important support group. Indeed, one magazine editor called them the most important promotional tool a garden could have,⁴ a sentiment echoed by Oliver Stark of Bowman's Hill State Wildflower Preserve.⁵ The role of the staff is to cooperate with members of the media whenever necessary, act as representatives of the institution with visitors, members and other sectors of the public, and work with the publicist to provide accurate, timely information regarding their projects and activities.

When it is not possible to have sufficient staff and/or time to properly publicize the institution, it is comforting to know that there are many sources of assistance available to the publicist. Generally, they can be divided into two groups: assistance in getting the job done, and assistance in the form of guidance and professional development.

There are many ways in which the publicist can get help to get the job done. One has already been discussed: the public relations committee. In addition to planning and policy-making, the committee can use their influence and experience to make contacts and get services from the media, other professionals, and the community.

Volunteers are an important source of assistance. Besides serving on advisory committees they may also be called upon to do a wide variety of jobs: research, typing, updating media contacts, deadlines and other requirements, distributing posters and brochures, envelope stuffing, sorting, and mailing, maintaining clipping, photo, and slide files, conducting surveys, acting as representatives of the institution at special events and other functions, and serving as word of mouth publicizers in the community. The type of job and degree of responsibility given a volunteer

will vary with the individual and the publicist's confidence in him. Some jobs should not be done by volunteers. Most of the publicists I have spoken with prefer to do the writing, editing and media relations themselves in order to keep quality and continuity to their standards and avoid the potential conflicts inherent in having someone else do those tasks. Volunteers can come from the community in general, the institution's membership, schools, universities, and associations of retired persons.

Interns from local high schools or universities can be very helpful to the institution while gaining valuable experience for themselves. They can do many of the jobs listed for volunteers, though they would benefit most from projects designed to help them get an overview of how publicity is done. A special project format would give the publicists more control over what is being done, as it would specify what is to be accomplished, and give the publicist a chance to do something she may not otherwise have the time to do. However, one must remember that for both volunteers and interns alike, extra time must be set aside for their supervision - a small price to pay in view of their potential accomplishments.

Occasionally, the professional services of agencies and other organizations may be obtained for free to the benefit of both parties. Consultants may be persuaded to act as advisors or design a campaign as a public service. Junior groups belonging to larger organizations often donate services in order to gain experience. An example of such a service is the Atlanta Ad Club 2, the junior group of the local chapter of the Advertising Federation. The Ad Club regularly donates a public service campaign to a local non-profit institution. The not-for-profit groups compete for their services, and the campaign is funded by a media auction of donated time and services.⁶ Such a donation improves the public service image of the organizations involved while performing a real service for the not-for-profit institution.

Corporations can arrange for the loan of a public executive or publicist for a given period of time, as the Sun Company has done for the Franklin Institute.

When one's organization or garden is owned or sponsored by another larger organization, the public relations department of that organization can provide assistance. The most useful help comes in the form of making media contacts, or helping to organize and publicize a major special event.

This is the relationship that Brookside Gardens now has with the Maryland National Capital Park Commission.

There are many professional services available to institutions that can afford to pay for them. Perhaps the best known is the public relations consultant. The consultant may work independently or as part of an advertising agency. He can help identify image or other publicity-related problems and suggest possible solutions, or design and carry out campaigns to publicize the institution in general, specific aspects of the institution, or events. The consultant's biggest sources are experience and contacts. She may carry out a campaign from concept to implementation, or simply present a program for the staff to carry out. Some agencies have different fee schedules for profit and not-for-profit organizations. Because of the expense involved, consultants are most cost effective when they are working on specific projects, or one-time events. If the consultant is used regularly to publicize the institution and its activities, it may be wiser to add a staff member.

Employing a consultant involves more than having him do some work for the institution. One must consider how that person will work with the staff, and make sure he understands the institution's philosophy and needs. This is a problem

Winterthur Museum and Gardens has had with consultants. Kate Wheeler, Head of Public Relations at the Museum said,

The hardest thing about working with consultants is getting them to accept your limitations . . . They do pie-in-the-sky type thinking and then you have to bring it down to your level . . . Then they're insulted and angry.

The museum staff was also rather resentful and suspicious of the consultant. On the other hand, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society has had good results with a consultant hired to design a publicity campaign for the Philadelphia Flower Show which the staff carries out.⁸

Another professional service is a press release and public service announcement writing and distribution agency. This would be useful when there is absolutely no one available to write and send out publicity. Again, if one can afford such a service, one probably should look into paying a staff member who would know more about the institution and be more sympathetic to its needs.

There are numerous not-for-profit and governmental agencies whose purpose is to promote the attractions of a given area. These organizations can help get information about one's organization out to potential visitors, and get

coverage of the organization's activities. Some of these agencies are the United States Travel Service, state travel services, city and county convention and visitors' bureaus, tour councils for given geographic areas, and local, privately organized groups like the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance and the Discover the Brandywine Valley Public Relations Association.

There are several associations formed to further professionalism in publicity and public relations. These associations are invaluable sources of contacts, as well as providers of opportunities for professional development. One important national organization is the Public Relations Society of America. With chapters in more than eighty major cities, the Society offers a wide variety of services including professional development, education, research, and publications for publicists in both the not-for-profit and for-profit sectors. The American Association of Museums has a standing Professional Committee on Public Relations and Communications Management. The committee's efforts are directed toward individual professional development, improvement of the status of public relations in museums and increasing public awareness of the importance of American museums.

Local professional organizations are just as important as the national ones. These groups offer excellent contacts from the local media, other public relations specialists and publicists, and the community in general. They may come in the form of public relations associations, like the Philadelphia Public Relations Association, press clubs, or community organizations like the Chamber of Commerce. Often, the social hour of a meeting of one of these organizations can be as productive as several hours of phone calls and letters.

Finally, one should not overlook the value of continuing education in publicity and public relations. Courses offered by the afore-mentioned associations, local universities and other institutions and organizations like the Smithsonian Institutions or Museums Collaborative cover everything from very basic skills to more advanced problems and opportunities in publicity and public relations.

The Program

Elements of the Program

Knowledge

An effective publicity program has four elements: knowledge, planning, implementation and evaluation. The first of these, knowledge may be divided into six categories: knowledge of the institution, its audiences (sectors of the public interested in or involved with the institution), the principles of communication, the tools of publicity, the media, and the various professional services and sources of assistance for publicity.

Institution

The publicist must be well-versed in every aspect of the institution. This knowledge will furnish a solid foundation for short and long-term planning, writing, and working with the institution's history, purposes, staff, current operations and future plans. Next he should take inventory of the institution's strengths and weaknesses and the program and/or services it offers. Neighboring gardens, museums and other cultural attractions may also be investigated. The

local convention and visitors' bureau, tourism agencies or other related organizations would be good sources of information. Later, in the planning phase, these facts can be used to determine what makes the institution unique and how it relates to its neighbors. Everything learned should be kept on hand for future reference, in concise a form as possible.

Audiences

The institution's audiences, present and potential, must be identified. Who these audiences are will help determine how the institution should be publicized. A not-for-profit organization such as a botanic garden has many audiences. For the purposes of external publicity the publicist should concentrate on audiences who "consume" the gardens offerings: students, visitors, press, members. She needs to know what kinds of people make up these audiences, demographic facts such as age, sex, level of income, education, interests, and area of residence. Not only must she learn who they are, she must discover why they come and how they perceive the garden. Such facts and attitudes can be obtained through the use of surveys of visitors and the community in general conducted by the garden or other agencies. Surveys may range in complexity from asking ticket-buyers how they heard of the garden to a written

survey or personal interview that provides more concrete information. Observation of visitors to the garden or members at a gathering produces somewhat superficial though useful insight into the type of person attracted to the garden, and what he is interested in. An examination of publicity that the garden has already received will reveal who the media think would be interested in the garden, and how the media perceive the institution. Once the audiences and their attitudes are identified it will become clear what new audiences the publicist would like to have, as well as any misperceptions or image problems the garden may suffer from.

Principles of Communication

Knowledge of the principles of communication is basic to an effective publicity program. Communication is "a two way contact that exchanges information, ideas or perspectives."⁹ Lazarus gives four rules for effective communication:

- know the receiver and present the information at his level.
- speak or write clearly and concisely.
- convey the desire to reach the receiver.
- obtain feedback to confirm that the message has been received correctly.¹⁰

Thus, the publicist must do more than issue information. A full circle of carefully phrased and aimed messages, reception of the messages and confirmation of the reception must be completed. In the case of publicity, the confirmation or feedback would take the form of increased attendance at the garden, participants arriving at the proper time and place for an event, or some other indication or heightened awareness of the institution.

Tools

There are two kinds of publicity tools that a publicist uses. First, tools that help her do her job: a summary of facts and figures (size, number of visitors, budget, admission fees, etc.); staff biographies, a year-round planning calendar for noting events, media and campaign deadlines, and appointments; a working system to keep information flowing to and from the publicist; subscriptions to local papers and relevant periodicals; a radio and television network for monitoring publicity carried by those media; a complete mailing list. These tools will be described more fully under "Implementation."

The second type of tools are those the publicist uses to get publicity. Some are most useful for immediate or short-term publicity, others for long-term publicity. A few can be used for either purpose.

There are four basic tools for immediate publicity: the news release, calendar announcement, feature story, and photograph or slide. The brochure, public service announcement and special event are tools most often used for long range publicity; feature stories, and photographs are also employed for that purpose. A news release is brief and concise, appropriate when the information conveyed is current and newsworthy. Calendar announcements notify the public of one-time programs, events or services. They contain the bare minimum of information: what, when and where. A feature story is a more creative effort, usually focusing on some aspect of human interest to get the attention of the audience it is meant to attract to a program or event. A photograph or slide can help illustrate a story, or stand on its own. It is essential to the visual medium of television.

The brochure is a very important tool for longer term publicity. It provides general information about the institution's attractions, services, fees, and hours in an attractive format, and may be used again and again in a variety of

circumstances. The public service announcement is a more general version of the calendar announcement as it provides information about the institution, its purposes, and ongoing services. A special event is a tool used to attract more people to the institution for the long term by means of a one time or annual event designed to introduce or reacquaint the public with the garden and its services by providing entertainment or education in its unique setting. It is a tool within a tool, creating a newsworthy event to achieve more lasting goal. The feature story, photograph and slide are also appropriate for long range publicity when they treat timeless or general subjects such as a noteworthy tree or craftsperson working in the garden.

Recommendations for the preparation of these tools are given in the "Implementation" section. A list of more tools appears in Table 6. The publicist should also learn about paid advertising. Though it is certainly more costly than publicity, it does have the advantage of much greater institutional control over the contents and placement of the material. A few of the publicists I interviewed have used paid advertising for specific events, with varying results. Whether or not it is appropriate is a decision which must be made individually, after careful consideration of the

institution's needs, budget and probable advantages of paid advertising publicity.

Media

Knowing the tools of the trade is not enough: one must also be familiar with the media, the means by which one's communications reach the desired audiences. An inventory of daily and weekly newspapers, periodicals, special interest publications (newsletters of professional and cultural organizations, civic associations, and senior citizen groups, corporation and industry employee publications, church bulletins, etc.), radio and television stations and their programming will familiarize the publicist with every possible outlet for publicity. It is important to learn about them all, print and electronic. Each medium has advantages of its own: the broad coverage of radio and television, the wide variety of specialized writers and publications of the print media. The publicist must know the media well enough to compete for the limited space available on radio and television, and select the best print outlet for his message and desired audience.

TABLE 6

Other Publicity Tools

Annual Report

Billboard, outdoor signboard

Bulk and other special mailings

Editorials, letters to the editor

Exhibits - temporary, portable

Flyer, handbill

Lecture, speakers bureau

Mementoes: articles with the organization's logo, photograph, theme or other phrase (buttons, bumper stickers, postcards, shirts, notepaper)

Newsletter

Poster

Relocation guides published by real estate firms or the Chamber of Commerce

Slide or film show

"Stuffers" small flyers sent with bank statements or bills

Tourist publications - newspapers, directories, travel guides, airline in-flight publications

Transit placards - inside and outside buses, trains, cabs

The first step is to get acquainted with the local media (within approximately one hundred miles of the institution) for they will be most interested in information about the garden, and most likely to use it. The periodicals, special interest publications and programs that cover topics related to one's institution should be investigated: the institution's bulletin, horticultural magazines, a radio gardening program or the newsletter of a local civic association. Local cable television stations should not be ignored. Given the recent proliferation of these stations, opportunities for getting time on them are much greater than for traditional stations, particularly on the local cables. Appearing on a local cable program would be good experience, at the very least.

Once this list of local and related media has been drawn up it may be expanded to include state and national papers and other programs and publications that feature garden columns or reach audiences for whom plants and gardening are of moderate interest such as tourist and travel periodicals.

The publicist has to learn more than the names of the media; he must become familiar with them: their format, staff, editorial outlook, style, and special interests of each publication and its staff. To get started, he can consult annually published directories such as the Ayer Directory of Publications or Working Press of the Nation which provide information on the name, address, editors and deadlines of many newspapers, periodicals and television and radio programs. He should also read the weekly television guide to see what programs they carry, and check newspapers for radio program listings. Local public relations professionals, civic and tourist organizations may know of other relevant publications, and the publicist himself should try to discover new outlets. Next, he should read, listen to, and watch as many of those publications and programs as possible as often as he can to learn first-hand what is written and produced, and how. The information gleaned from these activities may be correlated with knowledge of the institution's present and potential audiences in order to choose the most effective media for the publicist's and institution's needs.

Professional Services and Associations

Finally, the publicist should learn what professional services and associations exist to help her be most effective. There are the professional associations mentioned earlier which provide assistance free or for a small annual fee. For example, the Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance publishes a media guide and promotional brochure for member organizations. Tourism related organizations like visitor's and convention bureaus can help the publicist make contacts and distribute her publicity.

Other paid services the publicist may use include: mailing list services which provide lists of names and addresses within specific subject areas, mailing services for national or regional mailing, distribution services which will deliver the institution's flyer or brochure along with a national periodical to a chosen region, wire services like the Associated Press which transmit news releases to major publications and stations, or wire services like Philadelphia's Mediawire for the local media. Advertising and public relations consultant agencies also provide a wide variety of services. Media Network Services will place camera-ready advertising copy with magazines like Time, who will use it without charge when there is unexpected space in

an issue. Several organizations provide print and electronic monitoring services to help the publicist keep track of and evaluate coverage. To discover what services are available locally, check the yellow pages of the telephone book or consult other publicists in the area. A list of some of the services mentioned appears in Table 7.

Planning

The next phase in developing an effective publicity program is planning. As with any other program of an institution, one must determine in advance what its purpose is, and how it will be developed and carried out.

Using the information gained from the complete investigation already conducted, one first analyzes what problems and opportunities exist for the institution. What is special or unique about the garden? What aspects should be emphasized or played down? How do those aspects fit in with other gardens or attractions in the area? One should try to anticipate future opportunities for publicity: new attractions in the garden, a change in traffic patterns that may make the garden more accessible, a convention coming to town. What problems exist now or in the future that could be overcome or avoided through publicity? For example, is the

TABLE 7

Services

Clipping and Electronic Monitoring

Bacon's Clipping Bureau
14 E. Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60604
800-621-0561

Burelle's Press Clipping Service
75 E. Northfield Avenue
Livingston, NJ 07039
201-992-6600

Luce Press Clipping
420 Lexington Avenue
New York, NY 10017
212-889-6711

Mutual Press Clipping Service
1510 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-569-4257

Wire Services (local representatives in major cities)

Associated Press
50 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, NY 10020
212-621-1500

Mediawire
117 South 17th Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
215-568-2961

Press Relations Newswire
150 East 58th Street
New York, NY 10155
212-832-9400

United Press International
220 East 42nd Street
New York, NY 10017
212-850-8600

Mailing List

Dunhill Mailing Lists
630 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10017
800-223-6454

Mailing Service

Public Relations Aids, Inc.
330 West 34th Street
New York, NY 10001
212-947-7733

Public Service Space

Media Network Services
600 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10016
800-223-5613

garden in an out-of-the-way location, or is it not understood by its visitors, as has happened with the naturalistic gardens of Winterthur Museum which are occasionally mistaken for "woods."¹² Potential problems such as decreasing visitation, or increase in admission fees should also be considered. Next, examine the institution's audiences. What audiences are most important to the institution, and which ones need to be attracted? This is a very important consideration, as one will be aiming the publicity principally at those audiences.

With these opportunities, problems, and audiences in mind, the next step is to make policy and set goals for publicity. In making policy for publicity, it is important to get some agreement from the board, director and other top managers on the amount of attention they wish the institution to draw (anything from a high to low profile), and what its image (i.e. how they wish the institution to be perceived by the public) should be. They should agree on how to handle newsworthy, unexpected events such as injury, death and disaster. Once this general policy has been approved, the publicist can begin to develop plans to achieve the image chosen for the institution. It is particularly important that the institution's overall image be well thought out at

this stage, for everything the publicist subsequently does help shape the way the public will perceive the institution. Now is the time to choose a logo, theme and other cues which will identify the institution and its purposes and trigger rapid recognition of those things in the minds of the public.

The publicist should next set long-term goals for her publicity - to help establish the institution's image as a family attraction or improve relations with the local newspaper for example - and create shorter term, specific, measurable objectives to meet those goals. Such an objective might be to increase family visitation by ten percent in October, or to write a writers' guide for the newspaper. These objectives should be combined and coordinated to create an overall plan, one that covers at least one year's activities, the publicity tools needed and the most efficient and cost-effective channels of communication for them and their deadlines. This overall look at the coming year and beyond is invaluable for the perspective it can give the publicist, allowing her to budget her time accordingly and avoid getting mired in details.

A budget must next be developed for the plan. Although publicity itself is considered to be free - the time, talent and materials that create it are not. Admitting that publicity does cost money also serves to establish it as an activity in its own right, worthy of the time and attention it requires. The budget will also help the publicist evaluate her efforts, comparing the results of her publicity (attendance, for instance, and resulting admission fees) to its cost.

How the publicity will be evaluated must also be included in the plan. Without feedback on the successes and failures of one's efforts, no program can continue to operate effectively. Comparing the costs of publicity to its benefits is one aspect of evaluation. The publicist should also keep track of the response to his publicity, and set up a system for determining which of his tools are being used, when, and by whom, and for reporting the results of the evaluation. Here is where attendance figures, visitor surveys, and the print and electronic monitoring services mentioned earlier are most helpful.

Implementation

Getting Organized

Once the planning phase has been completed, the publicist is ready to put it into action. The first thing to be done is to organize the information collected earlier. Some of the facts will be used over and over again, and it would be wise to group them in as concise and accessible form as possible. For instance, a summary of statistics on the institution would be most useful: location, acreage, number of employees, date of founding, annual visitation figures, budget, names of top managers and board members, the institution's purposes, important collections, educational programs, and annual events. From this summary a fact sheet or general purpose news release could be prepared for distribution to the media as needed. A brief history of the institution may also be helpful. The publicist should have access to the names and titles of all the staff, and keep on hand professional biographies of important staff and board members - director, president of the board, department heads - to facilitate making announcements of awards and promotions and as background information in other publicity. The list of media compiled earlier should be put onto an index card file,

with one card for each newspaper (or department when appropriate), etc. detailing the names and phone numbers of contacts, deadlines, and format requirements. The cards would then be grouped into useful categories, i.e. daily newspapers, television feature programs, and so on. This list may also be put into a word processor.

The media file forms the backbone of yet another important information system: the mailing list. Add to the list of media anyone else who would be interested in hearing news of the institution: members, local and related organizations and institutions, libraries, local officials. These too would be categorized and entered in the card file or word processor.

Another organizational aid is an annual calendar, one with the entire year printed on a single sheet. When events, deadlines, appointments, holidays, and other important notes are marked on it, it becomes an invaluable aid in predicting workflow and setting priorities.

The publicist must also insure that she continues to be knowledgeable about her institution, the community, and media that she uses. A subscription to the daily paper is a must, and the publicist should try to see and read as much of

the other media as possible on a regular basis. The media file and mailing list should be updated annually. She should also keep open channels for a two-way flow of information regarding her activities and those of the members, board and staff, and any coverage they or the institution has received. Not only will this information-sharing promote good working relations: by encouraging the staff members to report whenever they read, see, or hear media coverage of the institution, the publicist will make her job of evaluation much easier.

Tailoring

The next step in the implementation of the publicity plan is tailoring. Each publicity need must be carefully matched with the tools and media that will meet that need most efficiently and effectively. Publicity indiscriminately disseminated does not necessarily equal information received and understood. Sending everything one produces to everyone on the mailing list is not only a waste of time and money, it can also be quite annoying to those on the receiving end of irrelevant or inappropriate material. Here is where a thorough understanding of the many tools of publicity, their uses and limitations, and the policies and audiences of the media through which they are used, and who the publicist wishes to

reach and when, is most helpful. There are other factors to consider as well. What audience is to be reached, and which media are most likely to reach them are two important considerations. It is pointless to send a news release to a newspaper when it has been established that more people read the daily calendar section. How much attention (i.e. how large an audience) the publicist wishes to draw will influence whether he sends information to a medium that covers a large area or restricts it to more local or specialized publications and programs. The nature of the information may determine where it is sent as well. A notice of a special event would be sent to the weekend section of the local paper; an announcement of a grant or changes in administration may be more appropriate to the business section.

Tailoring information goes beyond merely selecting a news release over a calendar announcement, or a local paper over a periodical. That information must also come in a form acceptable to the medium, at a time at which it can use the information, and in the style it prefers. These preferences or requirements vary with each medium, and it is for that reason that such information is entered in the media file. One radio station may want only fully written twenty second public service announcements; another may require a

fact sheet or release and write the announcement itself. Style requirements cover word choice punctuation, capitalization, writing numbers and times and so on. Both Ayer and the Associated Press publish books describing standards for these. The reference section of the local library should have at least one of those books.

Timing

A very important aspect of effective publicity is timing. All publicity, particularly that for an event, must be carefully timed to produce a logical flow of information designed to create, sustain, and follow up on interest aroused, for both the press and the public.

The best way to create this flow of information is through the use of a publicity campaign. It can be used to publicize an event, introduce a change, or establish or reinforce the institution's identity. A publicity campaign is a plan of action: What will be done? When? How? Who it will be aimed at? In the campaign bits of relevant information are released as they become useful, with each piece building upon what preceded it. By organizing and writing down the various tools, media, deadlines and audiences she wishes to use, meet and attract, the publicist can better

commit herself to the work involved and avoid conflicts and last minute problems. It also enables her to make sure that the information will flow in an orderly and logical fashion, neither too early or too late.

Typically a campaign for an event begins about a month ahead of time, with a release announcing the coming event. One or two weeks later public service and calendar announcements are prepared and sent out. A second release, with more information, is distributed two weeks before the event. Radio and television announcements usually begin a week to ten days before the event. In the week preceding the event, the publicist would check to make sure her information had reached the right people, and encourage media representatives to attend. These activities represent the bare minimum of publicity. The publicist would of course begin sooner or later depending on the type of event and how much build-up it requires. She would also flesh out the skeleton with other appropriate, interest-raising tools: posters, photos, feature stories, and so on. What matters most is that there is a plan and a schedule for carrying it out, and that the publicist sticks to it. A sample action plan appears in Table 8.

TABLE 8

Action Plan

Spring Plant Sale 5/2/84
 (An important fundraiser for a horticultural
 society headquartered in a city)

	Subject	Audiences	Media	Done By	Send Out	Notes
1st Release	General	Members General public City residents	Newsletters Papers (local, daily weeklies)	Publicist	4/1	
Feature Ideas	Perennials Volunteers Plants for City dwellers	Gardeners City residents Members	WHYY TV Paper - Garden Columnist	Publicist	4/8	Follow up phone call 4/15
2nd Release	Update: Plants Speakers New: lunch at the sale	Same as first; people working in city	Local paper, weeklies	Publicist	4/15	
Calendar Announcement Newspapers Newsletters Radio TV	Who What When Where	General public	All on media list	Volunteer	4/15	Follow up phone call 4/20 (volunteer)
Poster	Who, What, When, Where	Suburban residents	Post in stores, libraries	Volunteers	Post 4/8	
Flyer	Who, What When, Where + special features	City residents, business people	Hand out on mall, place in libraries	Volunteers	4/25	
Photographs	Set up actual actual sale captioned from '83 sale	Urban & suburban residents, general public	Daily, weekly papers	Publicist	4/22	Follow up phone call 4/27
Banner	Who, What, When, Where	City workers, urban residents		Volunteers	Hang on mall 4/27	
Other: interview	General	Gardeners	"Garden Talk radio show	Sale Chairman	Publicist contact 4/1 for airing 4/27	
Reminders	Ask daily paper Garden Writer to come, invite WHYY TV news crew			Publicist	4/30	

Publicity for events is the easiest to plan for and do. By calling attention to the garden as the setting or sponsor of the event, the publicist will create the opportunity to acquaint the public with the more mundane aspects of the institution. For example, in reading about a certain event, the potential visitor may also learn for future reference where the garden is, what its hours are and possibly what else the garden has to offer.

Though events do create excellent opportunities for publicity, the institution must also remain visible in between times - a much more difficult task. Here is where many of the long-range tools of publicity come into use. A brochure in a visitor's center, or a feature story in the Sunday paper will remind the public that the garden or service is always open and available. Some television stations will use slides of local attractions as background for opening and closing credits on news shows, or for calendar announcements. Perhaps the garden could provide plants for television sets or events, or be the site of a show or another organization's event. Representatives from the garden could act as resident experts or special guests on radio or television shows. Captioned photographs illustrating interesting aspects of the garden and sent to the print

media on a regular basis may be used as fillers for unexpected blank space. Often, just keeping the media informed of what is happening will spur them to visit or write about the institution on a slow news day.

An excellent way to bring the garden to the public's attention is by means of the tie-in, linking some aspect of the garden to current events. For example: during a much publicized visit of a foreign official, say from China, the publicist could try to get a feature on Chinese plants in the garden's collection. Or in the case of a crisis - drought or fire - he could place a spokesperson from the garden on a talk show or provide information to a newspaper speaking to the effect of those events on food crops, home landscaping, or vegetable gardens. As long as the tie-in is relevant and not contrived it could bring a good bit of unplanned-for but favorable publicity to the institution.

Other newsworthy events should be publicized as they occur. Announcements of promotions, awards, building plans, grants and so on are of interest and help keep the institution in the public eye. As with all other efforts, however, the subjects must be truly newsworthy or interesting to the

chosen audiences. A constant stream of irrelevant or contrived information will soon bore the press and the public, and make them more likely to overlook the real news.

Timing the release of information about the institution and its activities involves more than just preparing the material and sending it out. It must arrive when the media wants it and can use it, not so far in advance that it is forgotten, or so late that it cannot be used. Nor does the release cease to be the responsibility of the publicist once it has been sent out. She must follow-up. When the publicity is for a coming event, the publicist can call to make sure that the contact received the announcement, and use that opportunity to answer questions and offer further assistance. She could also call the day before the event or use a wire service like Mediawire to ask the reporter once again to attend, or suggest a special angle that might tempt him to come. These brief calls and reminders must be timed so that they do not coincide with deadlines for morning, evening, or final editions or similar deadlines for radio or television programs and the accompanying flurry of activity. Whether or not it is always appropriate to make these reminders is up to the discretion of the publicist.

Distribution

The publicist must also consider the distribution of the publicity she has prepared. A checklist or record such as the one the Smithsonian Public Information Office uses for each piece of publicity should be kept: the type, its title, who wrote it, where it was sent, when, and a total of the number of pieces sent out. If more than one release is sent to a location that should be noted too. Later, which media actually used the information can be added to the list.

Distribution of publicity does not end with the media and mailing list. Involved staff members, the director, and the board should be kept informed of publicity that is sent out as well as what actually gets used. At the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, news releases are circulated to staff members to make them aware of what is being sent out and to encourage their feedback on the materials.

The publicist may also want to use methods for distribution other than the mail: distributive marketing services that deliver flyers with major periodicals, "bill stuffers" (small flyers sent with bank statements or bills), special mailing services, wire services, tourism agencies, trade shows, or just passing out flyers by hand. Each one is

appropriate under certain circumstances and it is up to the publicist to determine which circumstances apply. No matter what method of distribution is used, the publicist should include himself on the list. In this way he can make sure that the materials actually are going out, and see how long it takes them to be delivered.

Guidelines for the Basic Tools

This section makes recommendations for the preparation of the most popular and commonly-used tools of publicity. The use of some or all of them is not obligatory, however. The publicist must decide on a case-by-case basis what is appropriate to use, and when.

News Release

The news release is used more often than any other publicity tool, so much so that competition for available space in all of the media is very stiff. Therefore it is essential that the release be well written and presented in the most usable format.

The first requirement for a news release is that it be newsworthy, i.e. that the information conveyed in it is current, and of interest to both the public and the press. It should be written as clearly and concisely as possible - no editor wants to wade through pages of elaborate prose. Short sentences, written in the active voice, brief paragraphs, and the use of applicable quotes will make the release more interesting and faster to read and understand. To get and keep the attention of the reader, information should be organized in pyramid style, with the most important facts stated first - who, what, when, where, why and how - and the remainder following in order of diminishing importance. If the release is shortened or edited later on, the most important facts will survive. Some publicists recommend using a standard closing paragraph which gives a brief description of the institution ("the garden is a not-for-profit, educational organization, open to the public"), its location, hours, and fees. Such a statement can help overcome long-standing misconceptions about an organization or forestall them. Longwood Gardens has used this technique to reinforce the publics' awareness of their not-for-profit status.

A brief, descriptive headline is usually included, more to get the editor's interest than for publication. Avoid stating opinions, unless they are in quotes and attributed to someone (name and title). Accuracy is of the utmost importance. Check carefully for correct names, dates, titles, misspellings and typographical errors. Ideally the release should be no more than two pages long.

The way in which a release is put together will also help determine its success or failure. Putting it in standard form will make it easier to read and to use. It should be typewritten, double-spaced, on the institution's letter head. Special "news-release" stationery is unnecessary. Leave wide margins (1 1/2") so the editor can make notes, and end the page with a paragraph whenever possible.

At the top of the page the following should appear: institution's name and address, publicist or contact's name and phone number, the date the release was issued, and the date the information may become public. Most publicists use the phrase "For immediate release" for a release that can be used right away. Otherwise, state the day and time of day that the information may be released. If the release is exclusive to one paper or station, say so, and for how long.

The headline follows all the names and dates, with four to six spaces between it and the body of the release. This is for the headline that the editor will assign. When there is more than one page, all but the last page should have the word "more" printed at the bottom. The second and following pages should indicate which number of the total number of pages it is, in the upper left corner. A shortened version of the headline may also be included. The end of the story is indicated by five asterisks or "30," centered below the last paragraph. If photographs are available, that should be stated below the asterisks, with the name and phone number of the contact. A sample demonstrating how a news release is set up appears in Table 9.

An alternative to writing a news release is the fact sheet or outline. A fact sheet simply lists who, what, when, where, why and how as briefly as possible. This, and a note suggesting a special angle or inviting the reporter to call if he is interested can be a more efficient way to send information to a medium that prefers to write its own copy, usually larger papers, periodicals and stations. (Smaller, local papers tend to print ideas verbatim.) The fact sheet may also be used for calendar announcements, or included in a press kit. It is a versatile tool that worked very well for me at The Wilmington Garden Center.

TABLE 9

NEWS RELEASE

Institution Name

Institution Address

Date

For Immediate Release

Contact:

Headline

Body, double-spaced

-30-

Photographs available upon request
Contact:

Feature Story

An interesting, well-timed feature can do much to convey the flavor or atmosphere of an institution and its attractions. It can cover almost any aspect of the institution, in greater detail than is possible in a news release. However, because it is not as immediate as a news story, the medium chosen for it must be convinced that the idea is worth using, and then guided to carry out that idea to both the publicist's and medium's satisfaction.

There are many markets for features: newspapers, their Sunday supplements or magazines, periodicals, radio and television talk shows and special interest programs. The publicist should check her media inventory for ideas, and constantly be on the lookout for feature opportunities, particularly tie-ins. Features may be used to stimulate interest in a specific event or exhibit, or to increase public awareness of the institution's ongoing activities and displays. They usually deal with timeless, human interest subjects, but must still be accurate and relevant. As Madeleine Jacobs, Science Writer for the Smithsonian Public Affairs Office says, a feature should answer the question "So what?", telling the viewers or readers why they should be interested.¹³

In the print media, placing a feature story is very different from submitting a news release, as most of the media prefer to write their own stories. Generally, it is best to submit a feature idea, or query, to the chosen medium on an exclusive basis. This query may take the form of a personal phone call or letter suggesting the story, which is followed up with an outline, personal visit to the garden, or further information as the writer desires.

Often, a feature story may be the culmination of many contacts, not attributable to a specific suggestion from the publicist. Regularly informing the media of the institution's activities can help to give them their own ideas on what they would like to write about. Good relations with the media representative will help assure that they will think of the institution when the opportunity for a story arises. A feature written by the local daily paper's garden columnist about The Wilmington Garden Center's community gardens was the product of many such contacts. It was triggered by a release about the Center's new mobile gardening unit, the Plantmobile.

Another way to place a feature story is through a free lance writer. The publicist provides the ideas, and the writer places the story. The Garden Writers of America organization would be a good source for a list of writers, and the Working Press of the Nation also publishes a list of free-lance writers.

Radio and television programming provide a wealth of feature opportunities. They take a variety of forms; stories done by the station, interviews, regular "spots" of appearances by a representative of the institution. Again, contacting the appropriate person with a feature idea and suggestions for its development is the best approach. The hosts of these programs have their own ideas about what they would like to have on the show, so it would behoove the publicist to keep them informed of the institution's activities, and strive for a good working relationship with them, too. It may take many attempts before an idea is found that appeals to the media representative. Cindy Reese, former publicist for the Franklin Institute, estimated that for every ten feature ideas she had, one would succeed.¹³

When someone from the institution does appear on the program, make sure that she is prepared and that she and the host both understand what they will be talking about. A list of points to be covered is very useful to that end.

An alternative to the submission of a feature query is the familiarization tour. Commonly known as a "fam tour," it involves inviting one or more writers or media representatives to the institution to see a new display or garden, or just to enjoy the garden during a particular season, with the hope that they will write about it or feature it in a later program.

Occasionally, the feature story may be written by the publicist once the idea has been approved. Short features may be prepared and supplied for use as fillers for last minute free space. Written features are most often used by small, local media who do not have the time or staff to write the piece themselves.

It is a good idea to provide or suggest props, particularly for television: features, photographs or slides, objects, plants; anything to help illustrate the point of the story. It could be something as simple as a boutonniere in

the host's lapel, or as elaborate as a video tape. When using slides, make sure they are numbered and identified, and a script listing them in order of appearance with brief descriptions is provided.

Public Service Announcement

There are two types of public service announcements: true public service announcements, dealing with ongoing events or services, and calendar or community bulletin board announcements, which cover one time activities and temporary exhibits or displays. Once this distinction is made, however, there is very little difference if any in how they are prepared and used.

The announcements are brief, ranging in length from ten to sixty seconds. They contain bare essentials necessary to inform the listener of the event, service or activity. The required format varies widely with the station, so the publicist must know before he sends anything out the preferred length, or lengths, whether it should be written, or a fact sheet be sent so the station can write it, the deadline for the announcement's submission, how long it will be aired, and when they will begin to air it, and the name of the current public service director. If the station writes its own

announcements, the publicist simply sends the information at the proper time to the right person. Writing an announcement is a bit more complicated. It is a good idea to write and submit several versions of the announcement which have the same message but differ in length, ten, twenty, or sixty seconds. Then the station can choose the one it has time for. For radio, estimate twenty-five words to every ten seconds; television, twelve words for ten seconds, thirty-five words for twenty seconds, one hundred twenty words for sixty seconds.¹⁴ Write for the voice - read the announcement out loud to test it for clarity and comprehension. Time the announcement with a stopwatch, including one second of silence at the beginning and end so it will fit in smoothly with the announcer's program. Avoid repeating addresses or phone numbers. Listeners rarely remember them, and time is too precious to waste on repeating information. It would be better to state the institution's name and general location and use a phrase like - "Call for more information - we're listed in the white pages."

Slides are a great help in getting the message across on television. They may be used simply as background to evoke a mood, to help tell a story, or as a backdrop for a series of announcements. Select horizontal slides, and allow one to three slides for every ten seconds. All slides should

be labelled with the organization's name and their numbers in sequence (e.g. one of three). A slide script listing and describing the slides in order of appearance should also be provided.

The announcement is usually organized on the page in much the same way that a release is, though the publicist should check with the station to see if there are any special requirements. The organization's name, the publicist's name and phone number, the title "Public Service or Calendar Announcement," the desired start and stop date for the announcement and its length should appear at the top of the page. The copy is double spaced. If there are slides accompanying the announcement it should be stated following the end symbol (30 or asterisks).

It is rarely a good idea to send just the copy of the announcement. A note addressed to the public service director stating that the organization is not-for-profit and what the announcement is for will help him understand why the spot should be used and perhaps make him more likely to use it.

Photographs and Slides

One of the most useful tools a publicist can have is a visual one - a photograph or slide. A clear, interesting photograph is truly worth a thousand words whether it accompanies a story or tells the story itself. Slides are important visual aids for television, allowing the publicist to use the medium to its fullest potential.

Suitable subjects for photographs and slides include practically anything that illustrates aspects of the garden and people and activities connected with the institution. Photographs and slides that show action are best. Some cliches to avoid are: obviously posed or contrived "action," a speaker at a podium, handshaking, signing or studying documents, pointing, and committees grouped at tables.¹⁵ Any activity, particularly close-ups or at unique angles, children, emotion, beauty, are much more interesting. Photographs and slides can be used to report on activities and events that have already occurred, to record important events or memorable scenes in the garden or to serve as advance publicity for future activities. The pictures may be taken by a staff photographer, the publicist, a knowledgeable volunteer, intern, or staff member, or the newspaper's photographer.

Photographs for use in newspapers are shot in black and white and printed with a glossy finish, measuring 8" x 10". The subject should be simple and in perfect focus, since clarity and detail are lost in reproduction. The photograph will darken in print so it is important not to underexpose the shot. Make several copies of the best photographs of subjects that are currently being publicized, so they will be available as needed. Each photograph should be labelled with the institution's name, the subject of the photograph and date it was taken, and any people appearing in the shot. Never write on the photograph - stamp it or put a self-stick label on after the information is written on it. If there is a caption it should be included on the label. When the photograph is to be sent out, the caption is typed (double-spaced) on a sheet of plain paper. The paper is then pasted to the back of the photograph, placed so that the edge with the caption hangs over and appears below the photograph.

Photographs with captions may be sent out alone, with nothing more than a fact sheet or explanatory note from the publicist. Photographs of timeless subjects may be sent to papers for use as fillers. Before they are sent out, however, the publicist should know who accepts and uses photographs and who does not. Mail photographs between sheets of cardboard.

Thirty-five millimeter slides are another useful visual aid. They are particularly valuable for television, and may also be used in periodicals. The same rules for subject matter apply, though shots for use on television must be horizontal. Slides can be shot in color, and it is a good idea to shoot the same picture several times when the subject is a popular one, or one that the publicist expects to use often. Slides lose color quality every time they are reproduced, so it is much better to have several originals.

The slides should be identified just as the photographs are, though there will be no room for captions.

All of these photographs, negatives and slides must be stored properly to get the maximum amount of use from them. Photographs may be filed by subject, and listed and cross referenced in an index card file or on the word processor for people, objects, seasons or any other applicable subject. The information on the photograph's label should appear on the card and the publicist should keep a record of when and where the photograph is used. When space or money is not available for storing photographs, contact sheets may be used, or the publicist can refer to the index card file mentioned above. The uncut strips of negatives should be placed in paper envelopes or sleeves available from any

photography supply store. The strips' envelopes should be marked with the subject and date, and filed according to date. Then, when the publicist needs a print, she can easily find the negative.

Slides are usually stored in one of two ways: in plastic pages that have slots for approximately sixteen slides and fit into a three-ring binder, or in boxes specially made for slide storage. An index card or word processor file that includes all of the information from the slide labels and is cross referenced for relevant subjects should be set up in which slides are listed by subject. Just as for photographs, it is advisable to note on the card when and where the slide has been used.

Basic Brochure

A brochure containing basic information about the institution can be an attractive and versatile tool for publicity. Though a brochure is initially more costly than the other tools, it can be used much longer and in a wider variety of circumstances. It is the calling card of the institution, to be distributed at the garden and other locations, and at special events and programs, included in press

kits, and enclosed in special mailings such as program announcements.

A basic brochure should include the following information: name and location of the institution, its attractions, services, hours, and fees, and why the potential visitor should visit or use the services. The "why" can be conveyed through photographs and description of the unique attributes of the institution. The brochure may double as a guide to the grounds, with the inclusion of a map, or as a membership brochure by adding an application form. Depending on how much information is to go in the brochure, and the budget for it, the brochure can be a two-sided rack card, measuring approximately 3 3/4" x 8 1/2" (one-third of a standard sheet of paper) or a brochure roughly the size of a standard 8 1/2" x 11" sheet of paper folded into thirds. The latter has six surfaces to work with.

The appearance of the brochure is every bit as important as the information it contains. A full color brochure can be quite expensive, but will certainly convey the beauty or special attractions of the institution. Alternatives include one or two color formats in which an illustration, black and white photograph and/or colored ink may be used. Whatever format is chosen, it is essential that a graphic

artist be contracted to illustrate and design the brochure. The attractive finish of a professionally designed and type-set brochure far outweighs the expense. This expense can be reduced through the use of an existing photograph, logo or other illustration.

Though the artist may design the brochure, it is up to the publicist to decide how the information should be organized. One surface of the brochure should be set aside as pure advertisement, to catch the viewer's eye and keep her attention. Here is where the photograph, illustration or logo is used most prominently, and the institution's theme and special attractions are introduced. Another panel is devoted to the basics: hours, location, fees. If there is more space, the basic information can be spread out and the "why" can be further developed through a description of the garden or the institution's services, a brief history, or whatever is relevant to the organization's goals and purposes. A map, membership application or request for information form may also be included. If a tear-off form is provided, leave the reverse side blank so nothing will be lost if it is removed. One panel may be designed for mailing, with the institution's return address and not-for-profit mailing permit printed on it.

The brochure should be reviewed periodically to make sure that the information is current. Hours and fees will probably change, but the publicist should also look for more subtle alterations in the tone of the copy and the image the brochure projects.

Special Event

A special event is a publicity "tool" that creates the opportunity for publicity and uses all of the tools described. It can be the catalyst that attracts people and induces them to take the big step of coming to the garden for the first time. Publicists agree that that big step is indeed the greatest obstacle to overcome. The special event can also help change the way people perceive the garden by making the garden seem more alive, a place that can be actively as well as passively enjoyed. It may also introduce other services and attractions that first-time visitors may not have known of, thus encouraging them to return.

Many for-profit and not-for-profit organizations use special events for those very reasons. In order to avoid becoming just one of many, similar events however, the publicist must choose an event that emphasizes the unique

aspects of the institution, in a manner that will reach the segment of the public he wishes to attract.

An excellent reference for the planning and execution of the special event is Edwin R. Leibert and Bernice E. Sheldon's Handbook of Special Events for Nonprofit Organizations, published in New York by the Association Press, 1972.

Media Relations

Establishing Rapport

Favorable publicity comes from more than just timely, well-prepared tools. Good working relationships with the representatives of the media the publicist chooses to use can help assure that the releases, announcements and tips will be used when they are appropriate. Such relationships may also lead a reporter or producer to think of the institution first when feature space becomes available.

Alvin Rosenfield, Director of Smithsonian Institution's Public Affairs Office, likened the development of such a relationship to "building a reservoir of good will."¹⁶ The key ingredients in good media relations are accuracy, and

personal contacts. A reputation for accuracy and reliability means that the reporter can trust the information coming from the institution, and use it without excessive verification or investigation. Knowing who the right contacts are (name as well as title) and what their needs are indicates that the publicist cares and even understands what happens on the other end. Judicious continual contact is best: following up on material submitted, letting a reporter know when a story or event is coming up, never annoying them with unnecessary calls or information.

Having good contacts means having reciprocal relationships too: the publicist must let the media know that he is available as a source of information and assistance whenever they are needed. A good start is for the publicist to introduce herself by means of a short note expressing her availability and desire to work with the reporter. Joining the local press club will enable the publicist to get acquainted with the media representatives on an informal basis, away from the overt pressures of the workplace. Another tactic is to hold a media conference in which a panel of local media representatives meet with representatives of local, not-for-profit institutions related to the garden. There, they can exchange ideas and let each other know of their goals and needs. This can be particularly helpful when

media relations have been a problem in the past. It does require the cooperation of many different organizations.

Good media contacts can also be developed at the level of the board. Board members who are in contact with upper level management and the board of the media can help portray the institution as a responsible one, above controversy and deserving of their good will and free publicity. They can also express appreciation for good coverage when it occurs.

These personal relationships are best maintained by demonstrating consideration for the demands of a reporter, editor or producer's job. Given the volume of news releases, announcements and requests for interviews that confront the media everyday, it is unreasonable to expect complete coverage of the institution's activities. The publicist should avoid complaining about a perceived lack of coverage; rather, ask how the submitted publicity could be improved. The regular expression of appreciation for coverage received, either personally or in written form is also important. How often this appreciation should be expressed depends on the type of coverage received and where the publicist feels the line between sincerity and meaningless communication should be drawn.

Other more specific ways to show consideration include: learning and respecting media deadlines and leaving them alone when they are on deadline, tactfully correcting mistakes after it is clear who made them, and never asking to review copy before it goes out (the publicist must demonstrate trust and accept that the media will not always see it the way she does). The staff should be educated about the importance of publicity and their role as representatives of the institution, and encouraged to cooperate with the media whenever possible. One question that will never be answered to every publicists' satisfaction is whether or not to send duplicate releases to a medium. The best approach is if more than one release is sent, to indicate who else has received one.

Offering free admission to the gardens and its events and memberships to media representatives was once an acceptable way to show appreciation and encourage more coverage. It is no longer as clear when those sorts of benefits are acceptable, or even ethical. The publicist should check to see what the medium's policies are regarding those benefits before offering them. When they are not permitted, a special preview or party specifically for the members of the press may be a good way to express appreciation without compromising them.

Services for the Media

The publicist can help make the job of the reporter, writer or producer easier with a variety of aids or services which provide helpful background information as well as keeping that person abreast of the institution's current activities.

At the very least, the publicist should make sure that the press get the institution's calendar of events. It serves as a hook, getting the reporter interested and making him more receptive to the publicity that follows. Garden columnists can use the information too, in their regular listing of horticultural events in the area. A note attached to the announcement or release pointing out a special or local angle could be quite helpful and make the difference in whether the reporter can use the information or not.

A guide to the institution including a brief history and description of the garden, facts and figures such as size, location, hours, fees, facilities, collections, programs and regular events can be an invaluable resource for

media representatives with whom the publicist deals frequently. It is simply a condensation of the basic information that the publicist keeps on hand. The publicist can also prepare a resource file which lists the institution's staff and areas of expertise. Such a file would be especially helpful should the opportunity for a tie-in or a special feature arise.

The familiarization tour, mentioned earlier as a way to encourage feature coverage may be used to acquaint writers and reporters with the garden as well as focus on a particular aspect of the garden or new exhibit. The publicist at the Taft Museum of Art used a very personalized version of the "fam" tour, in which she escorted a radio personality through an exhibit, commenting on it and answering his questions. He taped their conversation and later played short excerpts throughout his show.

Another variation on the tour is a press day, in which many media representatives are invited to spend the day at the institution. It must be carefully planned, however, so there is plenty to do and see and the day is not viewed just as a transparent attempt to get undeserved publicity.

Previews are an excellent way to introduce the press to a new exhibit or event before it officially opens. By inviting them to view the new attraction first with plenty of time to see things free from the interference of regular visitors, the publicist does both herself and the media a favor. The occasion is often treated as a celebration, making it even more enjoyable for all. The media representatives should be provided with basic information about the exhibit before they come to the preview (though not everything should be revealed!). Additional information, knowledgeable staff members and the publicist should be available at the event to answer any questions that arise. Press kits are often used at previews to supply the necessary information. They may be already assembled in a folder, or the reporter can put together her own from a table of fact sheets, releases, photographs and brochures.

A general press kit filled with information on the institution, its services, and attractions may also be prepared to keep on hand for newcomers to the institution. It is similar to though less comprehensive than the guide mentioned earlier.

Press conferences should be used only when the publicist has truly important news to announce that would be of great interest to many media. It is perhaps most appropriate for a not-for-profit cultural organization in times of crisis, when information or word of a decision must get out. The publicist should be quite sure that the conference is necessary before calling one. If it is not perceived as such by the media, no one will come.

Bad Press

Bad press, or coverage that is either unfavorable to the institution or incorrect, is a problem that every publicist must deal with eventually. It is almost always due to poor media relations.¹⁷ The reporter may have misunderstood or misinterpreted information provided by the institution, or it may have been incorrect, furnished at the wrong time, or non-existent. The only time a publicist should call unfavorable publicity to the press' attention is when it is incorrect, and then it must be corrected tactfully. Otherwise, she must look carefully and objectively at the publicity she sends out, and determine how it can be improved. Asking a member of the press what his problems with the material are, and how she can better cooperate with him is also necessary, even if the publicist feels the media is at fault. If the

information she has been providing is accurate and not self aggrandizing, a personally escorted tour through the garden or discussion over lunch may do much to straighten things out. When the reporter or medium continues to be unreasonable, the publicist can only continue to provide accurate, fair information and seek to work more closely with the media with whom she does enjoy good relations. There is some comfort in the realization that notoriety isn't all bad: it may arouse the public's curiosity, thus encouraging them to visit and see for themselves what the institution is really like.

Media Advocacy

Good relations between the media and the institution and the resulting good publicity are not the sole responsibility of the publicist. The media must feel that their public wants to know about the institution, and approves of the coverage it receives. The publicist can help the media learn of the public's approval by encouraging the board, staff, and members of the institution to write to local newspapers, radio, and television stations, and periodicals expressing their appreciation or displeasure at the amount and type of coverage the media give the institution through the editorial

page or program, and personal letters to reporters, columnists, editors, producers and other media personalities.

Legal Concerns

There are certain legal issues that the publicist should be aware of. The most important relate to rights of personal privacy and photographs. When a photographer takes a picture in which people's faces are clearly recognizable, he should be sure to take their names. By giving their name to the photographer, the subjects are implicitly consenting to the photograph's use. The consent is usually understood to be for typical, post-event publicity. If the photograph is to be used for anything else, the subjects should be informed. Minors should have their parents' - not the school's - permission or consent. Verbal consent is usually sufficient, though the more serious the use (a garden brochure rather than post event publicity, for example) the more formal the consent should be.

The ownership of photographs or pieces taken or written by staff members for the institution should be established from the very beginning by a clear, written policy.

When the grounds are used by other groups as background for programs or advertising, or as sites for special events, both parties must be aware of their rights and the policy of the institution towards such uses of the grounds: who is responsible for injury or property damage. The institution should be insured to cover any injuries or damage that may occur.

Cooperative ventures with a for-profit organization (corporate sponsorship of an exhibit for example) can present legal problems. The publicist should make sure that the organization's publicity or promotion of the exhibit is not so self-congratulatory that the institution is overshadowed or just used for the purposes of promoting the for-profit organization.

Libel and slander may present problems when an outspoken curator or staff member criticizes a colleague, questions the authenticity of a claim, or just offers a professional opinion as a representative of the institution. Employees should be cautioned to preface such remarks with the phrase "In my opinion . . ." A policy for dealing with libel or slander should be formed, and all board and staff members informed of it.

Cooperative Ventures

Advantages

The publicist need not do all of the work of publicizing the institution on his own. By collaborating with other organizations to publicize the group or area as a whole, she would greatly expand the amount and quality of publicity her own institution receives. The advantages to this sort of cooperation are many: often the effects of the groups' efforts are synergistic, producing more favorable publicity for each participant than the individuals could have acting alone. It can be most cost-efficient, as it avoids duplication of effort. As the group pools its resources, more money and talent are available to direct the campaign. It may also make the group more eligible for outside funding. The creation of a theme unifying the participants can provide a much broader and attractive overall image for the group without losing each institution's individual identity. Many publicists labor under the misconception that this kind of association between similar or nearby institutions increases competition. However, market research has shown that the more that is happening in one area, the more

time visitors will plan to spend there.¹⁸ Such close association should help each participant to define what is truly unique about her institution and worthy of emphasis.

Types

There are many kinds of cooperative efforts. Organizations in a given area can work to promote that area, as the Discover the Brandywine Valley Public Relations Association has. Cultural institutions can work with each other or with service organizations such as a horticultural society or civic garden center. An institution may find a corporation or industry to sponsor an exhibit or help promote the institution. The Franklin Institute received five days of free publicity from a local television station in exchange for five days of free admission for the public when the station's personalities broadcast from the museum. The not-for-profit organization benefits from the for-profit's expertise and funds; the for-profit organization benefits from the public service opportunity and improvement of its image.

The garden may also cooperate with the local, state or federal government travel service by gearing its image and publicity to a theme chosen by the agency, like the Bicentennial, in return for matching funds or inclusion in

their much further reaching publicity campaigns. The publicist can get ideas from cooperative ventures by drawing on his knowledge of the community and other organizations gained during the research and planning stages of the publicity program.

The field of tourism is rich in potential cooperative ventures for botanic gardens and arboretums. The city or county convention bureau is an organization devoted to providing potential visitors coming from near and far away with information about the area's attractions. Related organizations such as the state travel services already mentioned, the chamber of commerce, automobile clubs, and private travel agencies are additional outlets. When they are provided with information about the institution's services and activities, they will direct visitors to the garden; many may collaborate with institutions to organize tours or special events.

There are many ways to work cooperatively with other similar institutions. One of the most productive ways is through a community attractions brochure, which lists and describes the participating institutions. Special events,

tours, and exhibits may also be arranged. Cooperative education programs in which each institution provides one or more courses relevant to a unifying theme can draw many more people than those offered by one garden.

Evaluation

The final element of a successful publicity program is also the most neglected one: evaluation. It is not enough to hope that a news release will be printed or a brochure picked up and read. Publicity must be evaluated. The goals of such an evaluation are to determine when and where the institution receives coverage, how effective that coverage is in informing potential visitors of the garden's image, services, and activities, and whether it causes them to come to the garden or use its services. The publicist can do the evaluation herself, especially for the short term. She may also hire an outside firm to do a thorough, objective analysis. This information will in turn help the publicist work more efficiently and effectively, plan for the future, and gain support for the publicity program in general from the board, management, and the staff.

The evaluation of publicity resembles art more than science, however. It is difficult to determine how many people actually see a program, read an article, or hear a public service announcement, and come to the garden because of it. The publicist will be able to learn a great deal about the successes and failures of her publicity, though, through careful collection of information and its analysis.

Sources of Information

There are three phases in evaluation: information gathering, analysis, and reporting. In the first, information gathering, the publicist must find out as much as she can about how her publicity is being used and its effect on her chosen audiences. She must keep records of what publicity is sent out or used, and when. She should continue to monitor local papers, periodicals, and local television and radio stations to check on the coverage she is getting and to be aware of the general attitudes reflected there. Clippings of print coverage (calendar announcements, news and feature stories) should be collected as well. The publicist can do this herself, employ a clipping service (expensive but worthwhile when coverage is widespread), or develop a network of staff and volunteers to help cover all of the publications publicity is sent to. The clippings are usually mounted in a scrapbook or filed for future reference.

The publicist should also keep track of how often his public service and calendar announcements are played on radio and television, a much more difficult job than collecting clippings. These media are always on the air, and will not guarantee when public service announcements will be run, or play them at an hour when most people are sleeping. Electronic monitoring services can be quite expensive; the publicist must decide if it would be worthwhile. Otherwise, the publicist and his network will have to suffice. Occasionally, radio and television stations will keep records of how often the announcements are run, and inform the publicist; or, he can ask them to do it and enclose a form or postcard (with return postage) to use.

Records of all radio and television features and interviews should also be maintained, rather an easier job as the publicist usually knows when they will occur. He should record his impressions of the coverage as well: favorable or not, mistakes made, attitude of the reporter or interviewer, how well the institution's representative did, and subjects covered.

There are other sources of information, too. The organization's records can yield a great deal. Attendance figures are a vital factor in judging how effective publicity

has been. Phone calls and in-person requests for information reveal what people are hearing and reading, and what they are interested in. Surveys in which the visitor is categorized and asked how he heard about the garden or event, and what he expected to find once he arrived are also helpful. The surveys may be conducted in person, or take the form of a card which the visitor can pick up or is enclosed in a publication. Some publicists use coupons or contests to determine whether a particular medium is effective.

Analysis

All of the information collected must be analyzed regularly, if it is to mean anything. The publicist can decide how often she will do it -- monthly, quarterly, bi-annually, annually -- based on the volume of the coverage, and how often management requires a report on her activities.

There are several questions the publicist should ask herself. First, where and when not is she getting coverage? Are the media using the information and ideas she provides? What image does the institution's actual coverage project? The content of the coverage should be analyzed. What messages would a person get who learned about the institution

through the press only? The publicist should also invite comment from the board and staff on the coverage they see.

Once these questions have been answered, the publicist can compare and correlate the replies to her records and original intentions: the amount and nature of publicity sent out, her original goals for publicity, and the image of the institution she wishes to project. Her conclusions will help her decide how successful her efforts have been to date, and what changes may be necessary.

Reporting

The results of the analysis must then be reported or otherwise made available to the board, management, and staff. A scrapbook of clippings chronologically arranged should be kept; this is a good job for a volunteer. Another scrapbook of highlights of the organization's year composed of clippings, photographs, and narrative is an interesting way to keep track of publicity and create an historical record.

The publicist should submit a regular report to management, recapping the quantity and content of coverage received, its affect on attendance, and describing his plans

for future publicity. Special coverage should be copied or described and included in the report. He should also prepare a year-end summary and analysis of his activities both for management and for his own benefit. These reports can be passed on to the board as necessary.

The board, management and staff should also be informed of coverage that directly involves them. Clippings can be copied and posted or circulated. People featured or mentioned in any coverage should be given a copy of the article or a note describing their appearance and thanking them for their contribution when the coverage is special or unusual. Involving them in the positive results of publicity can do much to gain their support and cooperation for publicity in general.

Endnotes

1. Carol Lynch, Administrator, Bartram's Garden, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Personal interview with the author, April 13, 1981.
2. Anne L. New and Don Bates, Using Standards to Strengthen Public Relations, (New York, 1977), p. 10.
3. Lisa Stephano, Coordinator of Public Relations, Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Personal interview with the author, October 5, 1983.
4. John Floyd, Horticulturist, Southern Living Magazine, Birmingham, Alabama, American Association of Botanical Gardens and Arboreta Annual Meeting, "How to Reach the Public Through the Media," April 12, 1980.
5. Oliver Stark, Director, Bowman's Hill State Wildflower Preserve, Washington Crossing, Pennsylvania. Letter, December 5, 1981.
6. Hunterman, Heather, member, Ad Club 2, Atlanta, Georgia, American Association of Botanic Gardens and Arboreta "The Fernbank Media Campaign," April 13, 1980.
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8. Stephano. Personal interview with the author, October 5, 1983.
9. Sy Lazarus, Loud and Clear, A Guide to Effective Communication, (New York, 1975), p. 3.
10. Ibid, p. 4.
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13. Cindy Reese, Audience Development, The Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Personal interview with the author, April 29, 1981.
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15. Ibid, p. 54-55.
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17. Frances Schmidt, Using Publicity to Best Advantage (New York, 1977), p. 8.
18. Donald Callender, Executive Director, Greater Wilmington Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Wilmington, Delaware. Personal interview with the author, May 4, 1981.

CONCLUSION

Botanic gardens, arboretums, and horticultural organizations are exciting places. They provide many kinds and levels of aesthetic and horticultural experience. A well-planned, continuous publicity program is one of the most effective ways of communicating the excitement, and persuading potential visitors and members to make the first step toward visiting and understanding one's institution.

Creating and maintaining an effective publicity program is not an easy job. But it is possible, with the right person in the job, the support of the institution, and a creative, organized approach open to new techniques and new forms of assistance.

I have emphasized the elements of the publicity program and the steps one should take to implement them; however, it is important to realize that they are more than formula for dispensing information. They are interpretive tools which touch every aspect of the institution, helping to provide and make clear the verbal and non-verbal clues that create that institution's image and draw people to it, thus enabling it to carry out its mission.

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Jean Schumacher, August 22, 1983.

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APPENDIX

CASE STUDY I

The Alphabet Museum and Gardens is a large museum known for its collections of the decorative arts and the subtly beautiful gardens which surround it. It is an institution which has become nationally well-known in the last eight years. Behind the growth of this national reputation is the strong support for public relations and publicity provided by the executive director and board.

Before the current director came to the museum in 1976, publicity activity was at a relatively low level, though a public relations office did exist. By 1981, the director and board had given the office a mandate to concentrate on public outreach by increasing programming for wider audiences and increasing the museum's national reputation and visibility to the public and the press. Rather than expecting the head of public relations to take on the heavier work-load herself, the director encouraged her to develop her staff, and gave her the funds to do so. The office has grown from four employees in 1981 (the head, media coordinator,

public relations assistant, and administrative assistant) to eight in 1983 (the head, press bureau manager and associate manager, public relations assistant, senior writer, special event/financial development coordinator, and two secretaries).

So strong was the emphasis on professional development that the office first tried retaining consultants to develop mailing lists, prepare and place public service announcements, and develop publicity campaigns. The consultants were hired because the director and head did not feel there was sufficient in-house expertise to do those jobs. Though the consultants did help, they were more expensive than regular employees, did not always work well with the museum staff or understand the garden's and museum's collections and purposes. One agency involved the museum in some questionable publicity activities: a news release per week policy, for example, that annoyed more fellow publicists and representatives than it pleased.

The difficulty with consultants is a symptom of a greater problem with the museum's publicity program. Despite the success and growth of the public relations department, there seems to be a surprising lack of thought and research behind it. The board and executive director appreciated the

trappings of a successful relationship with the public; however it is not clear that they understood what it really entailed. Had the board and management researched their current and future needs more carefully, they might have chosen consultants better suited to the museum's needs, or decided then that adding staff would be more effective. Now, with what the head calls "a full complement of staff," she does not believe consultants are needed. Perhaps they never were.

This lack of thought has also been reflected in the image the museum has tried to project. The museum and gardens have long attracted a loyal following of well-educated people with a strong interest in the arts. In 1981, the board instructed the museum's management to work to appeal to wider audiences particularly families. This was to be achieved by attracting new audiences by means of new special events. However, the events had little to do with the museum's collections or the gardens. The events themselves have been quite successful, but the audiences for the events have not carried over very well to the museum. Now, the appeal to wider audiences is no longer a priority, and the emphasis has been returned to the audiences who have always been interested in the museum.

No formal audience surveys have been done since 1978. The potential for wider audiences should have been researched first, to determine who they might be, whether they were likely to be attracted to the museum and gardens, and how they might benefit the museum. Instead, the museum's image has wavered between trying to be all things to all people and an institution with a strong, specialized appeal.

Another factor in the success of the museum's increased national reputation has been its participation in collaborative publicity. The public relations office has worked with other institutions in the area, to promote themselves as a coherent group. Together, they developed a brochure describing the region and its attractions. The office has also worked with the area's convention and visitors' bureau, the state travel service and a local tour council. These organizations furnish information about the museum to potential visitors and representatives of the travel trade, and inform the office of any response. The head of public relations believes that each collaboration has been successful, so much so that occasionally it is difficult to tell what piece or whose efforts are working.

Despite the somewhat shaky foundation for the increased activity in the public relations office, its growth has been successful. The strong appeal of the museum's collections, the board and management's continued belief in the importance of public relations and the increasing professionalism of the public relations department have overcome the former years' floundering. Some market research is planned for the future. With the results of the research, and more thoughtful consideration of the museum's image and public relations needs, the museum's reputation should continue to grow.

CASE STUDY II

Wallace's Garden is one of North America's first botanic gardens. The residence and outbuildings of two famous eighteenth century plant explorers have been restored, and are open to the public year-round. Until recently, the garden, which is located in a poor neighborhood, was looking rather dowdy from years of minimal maintenance. Visitation was low.

The garden has had two administrators in the last eight years. The differences in their styles and approaches to publicity demonstrate the importance of having the right person for the very important job of publicity.

The first administrator came to the garden in 1976 as its only part-time employee, eventually becoming its full-time administrator. In 1981 she stepped down to research the garden's restoration, her first love. Though she believed publicity was important, she felt she had only one percent of her time to devote to it. She had no education or experience in public relations or publicity and produced very little publicity other than that for a few special events.

The second administrator was hired specifically to develop the garden. From the beginning he has devoted much of his time to publicity for the site. Rather than wishing he had time for publicity, this administrator made time for it. He believes that publicity is an essential part of the image-building process that is the foundation for fundraising.

The new administrator has had previous experience in public relations, and brought many of his own media contacts to the job. Unlike the first administrator who felt there was not much to publicize, the new administrator has found many opportunities for publicity, thereby increasing the number of potential audiences for the garden. Though the garden is still promoted as one of the first botanic gardens in the new world, the house and outbuildings are now portrayed as historic sites demonstrative of Colonial life. The stable has been renovated to serve as a meeting place for outside groups.

The new administrator has improved the image and visibility of the garden so much that visitation tripled from 1981 to 1983. Now he is directing his efforts at maintaining that level.

The garden is now covered regularly in the print media and by posters, brochures and placards appearing in the city's tourist trolley. A portable exhibit has been displayed at meetings of several horticultural societies and in shopping malls. The administrator has worked with a wide variety of institutions and organizations in collaborative events and joint publicity. He is especially eager to work with organizations that support tourism, which he believes will be key in maintaining the increased visitation to the garden.

There is only one drawback to the new administrator's approach. Much of his time and energy have been devoted to publicity beyond the traditional forty hour work week. As the garden's reputation grows he will probably acquire additional responsibilities. He must be able to sustain that level of energy for publicity, or find and fund someone else who can.

CASE STUDY III

The Ellsworth Nature Education Society is a small nature and conservation-oriented organization. The publicist for the Society is also the program registrar. She spends forty-five percent of her time on publicity.

The importance and success of publicity have varied during the years the publicist has been with the Society. This variance underscores the need for good media relations and attention to detail. The publicist began by doing everything "by the book," but by 1981 had abandoned her schedules, scrapbooks and contacts, doing publicity much more "by the seat of the pants." She claimed she was getting coverage no matter what she did. However, she also complained of poor coverage in local newspapers, and a lack of sympathy on the part of writers and reporters.

The publicist had little contact with the media, saying she felt she would be bothering them, and that she would just have to take what coverage they wanted to give her. Nor did she read the local weekly papers, a task for

which she had little time. However, she had begun to subscribe to several of the weekly papers, in hope that it may help her discover why she was not getting the coverage she wanted.

The combination of poor media relations and little attention to detail had obviously affected the coverage the Society was getting. Without communicating with the media, how could the publicist know what their needs might be, or how they had changed? Fortunately, she had begun to recognize the problem herself, and had taken the first step by subscribing to some of the papers she hoped to use as outlets for the Society's publicity.

By the spring of 1983, matters had greatly improved. The publicist increased her personal contact with representatives of the media, and reported that the Society's coverage had improved in the daily and weekly papers. The Society itself was trying to increase the number of audiences it attracted by means of more special events, new programs, and more feature-type coverage. The increased need for publicity brought the publicist in more frequent contact with the media, which also helped to improve her relations with them.

The renewed success of publicity at the Society demonstrates the importance of good media relations and attention to detail. Doing publicity by instinct may seem effective and easier at first; however, careful and conscientious approach is far more effective in the long run.

CASE STUDY IV

The Friendly Horticultural Society is one of the largest and best-known societies of its kind in the United States. Its success as an organization is due in part to a well-run, closely knit administration.

The Society provides an excellent example of how planning, evaluation and communication with the board and staff should be combined to produce a coherent, effective publicity program.

Planning is an important part of publicity at the Society. A seasonal calendar of events is prepared, and each event has its own timetable of publicity activities. The publicist meets regularly with an advisory committee composed of volunteers and board members to get ideas for publicity for the coming year, and approval for her budget and plans. She considers them a valuable source of ideas, feedback, and support. A consultant is retained to handle public relations for the Society's annual flower show. Planning for the show begins about seven months in advance, when the publicist and consultant meet to discuss the previous year's successes and

failures, and plan for the next show. The consultant develops a campaign of news releases, public service announcements, feature contacts and promotional devices that the publicist is responsible for carrying out.

Evaluation is a continuous process. In addition to consulting with the advisory committee, the publicist circulates what she has written among the staff, and encourages their feedback, particularly when a staff member's area of responsibility is concerned. The Society subscribes to a print clipping service. "Spectacular" coverage is circulated; the remainder is kept in a scrapbook that anyone can look through. Attendance at Society programs and events is considered to be directly related to the coverage received, and those figures are duly recorded and reported. The publicist makes a publicity report to the executive director after each event, and meets with her at six week intervals for a general progress report.

The regular communication and close cooperation evident at the Society may not be physically possible in every organization, but the spirit of cooperation certainly is. When the board and staff recognize the value of publicity, and work with the publicist to make it the best possible, success is certain.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Longwood Gardens
Kenneth Square PA
19348-1000

Longwood Gardens Schedule of Events

May - October 1984



Welcome to Longwood Gardens! Whatever the month, you'll find numerous activities throughout Longwood's 350 outdoor acres and 20 indoor gardens, in addition to spectacular, constantly changing floral displays. Longwood is the ideal pleasure garden, a setting where horticulture, architecture, theater, and music combine to produce a most memorable experience.

Longwood Gardens is open every day of the year, outdoors 9 am to 6 pm (5 pm November through March), the conservatories 10 am to 5 pm and frequently later for special events on evenings of fountain displays, the gardens and conservatories remain open continuously until 10:30 pm. The Gardens are located on U.S. Route 1, three miles northeast of Kennet Square, PA, and 30 miles west/southwest of Philadelphia in the historic Brandywine valley.

1984 Admission is \$4 for adults, \$1 for children ages 6 to 14, and free for children under age 6. Group rates for 30 or more adults are available except in December. Unless otherwise specified, all events are included with general admission.

Longwood Gardens information:
215-388-6741

Terrace Restaurant information:
215-388-6771

The Terrace Restaurant, Longwood's new refreshment center, is conveniently located near the conservatories and features both full-service and catering during, with seating for 400 indoors and, weather permitting, 300 outdoors. The Terrace is open daily and until 8 pm on many evenings of holiday displays, fountain shows, and theatre performances.

Peirce-du Pont House Tours are given on weekends in April, daily May through August, and on weekends from September through November. 11 am - 3 pm, \$1.50 + general admission.

All programs are subject to change without notice. For more information about seasonal display dates, fountain displays, guided tours, music and theatrical productions, student training programs, or adult continuing education courses, (phone 215-388-6741).

FESTIVAL OF FOUNTAINS

June 16 thru September 1
Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday evenings

Longwood's annual summer festival showcases a magical nighttime mixture of rainbow-hued fountains, astringe garden concerts, reserue evenings in the conservatory, and, on special occasions, spawning fireworks. The daytime spectacle offers luxuriant gardens, sun-soaked fountains, and leafy glades for quiet contemplation.



MAY

- thru May 28 Exhibit: Paintings by Henry Linderholm, 10 am - 5 pm
- 1 (Tues) Concert: The King of Instruments, music for organ and piano with Brian Jones and Andrew Gordon, 8 pm. \$5. Dinner available at The Terrace Restaurant telephone 215-388-6771 for dinner reservations
- 6 (Sun) Dulles Society concert: Songs of Summer. Edvardsson songs presented in costume with organ, piano, and voice, 3 pm

OCTOBER

- 7 (Sun) Concert: John Wilson, organist, 2:30 pm
- 14 (Sun) Concert: David Fodor, organist, 2:30 pm
- 21 (Sun) Concert: Karl Meyer, organist, 2:30 pm
- 28 (Sun) Concert: Don Turner, theatre organist, 2:30 pm

LOOKING AHEAD

- Nov 3-25 1984 Christenbaum Festival (indoors), 10 am - 5 pm
- Dec 1 - Jan 1, 1985 Christmas Conservatory Display, 10 am - 9 pm • Christmas Tree Lane, 5 - 9 pm



Children's Ice Cream Concerts are family events designed especially for children. During the concerts, ice cream will be sold outdoors.

Fountain Displays are shown regardless of weather. Every effort will be made to set off fireworks as scheduled, but in case weather conditions force cancellation of fireworks and/or concerts, no refunds will be made. Theatre events requiring special tickets have their dates.

Unless otherwise noted, all events are included with general admission: 14 adults, \$1 children ages 6-14, free for children under 6. Group rates available. Special theatre tickets include admission to gardens as early as 11 am for afternoon performances and 4 pm for evening performances.

Schedule subject to change without notice.

- JUNE**
- June 1 - July 15 Exhibit: Floral Watercolors with Oriental Flair, by Tai-Hen Hsiao, 10 am - 5 pm
- 1, 2 (Fri, Sat) Seway Company Open Air Theatre Production: Gilbert & Sullivan's "Pirates", 8:30 pm. Reserved seats are \$9 from the Seway Company, 18 Cover Lane, Haverhill, PA 19355. Send check and SASE. Telephone after 4:22: 215-647-3064 (after 6 pm). Dinner available at The Terrace Restaurant
- June 16 - Sept 1 FESTIVAL OF FOUNTAINS features half-hour illuminated fountain displays every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday evening at 9:15 pm, usually preceded by garden concerts at 7:30 pm. On these dates, the outdoor gardens are open 9 am - 10:30 pm, the conservatories 10 am - 10:30 pm
- 16 (Sat) Fireworks with fountains, 9:15 pm (weather permitting)
- 18-23 Special: Perennial Flowers, a six-day intensive course, \$100. For reservation information, telephone 215-388-6741 ext. 516 weekdays
- 19 (Tues) Concert: The Jonathan Brass, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 21 (Thurs) Children's Ice Cream Concert: Oscar, Benjo & Buddies, children's role songs by Kevin Roth, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 23 (Sat) Delaware Dance Conservatory Open Air Theatre Production: "Ballet in Longwood", 8:30 pm. Unreserved seats are \$7 from The Delaware Dance Conservatory, 700 Berramore Road, Suite 3-5, Newark, DE 19711. Send check and SASE. Telephone after 6/1: 302-731-9615 (3-7 pm). Dinner available at The Terrace Restaurant
- 23 (Sat) Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 26 (Tues) Concert: WindMusic, flute & guitar, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 28 (Thurs) Fireworks with fountains, 9:15 pm (weather permitting)
- 30 (Sat) Concert: Valley Forge Sweet Adelines, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm



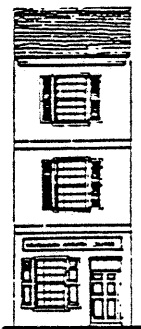
- JULY**
- thru July 15 Tai-Hen Hsiao exhibit continues, 10 am - 5 pm
- 3 (Tues) July Fourth Eve Gala Concert: First State Symphony Band, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 5 (Thurs) Concert: The New Renaissance Voices, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 7 (Sat) Concert: Cherry Hill Wind Symphony, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 10 (Tues) Concert: Lion American Service, with Cret Ramo, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 11 (Wed) Hadley Memorial Fund Open Air Theatre Production: Monty Python's "King David" by the Westminster Chorus with cantors and orchestra, 8:30 pm. Unreserved admission tickets are free on request from Hadley Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 100, Lincoln University, PA 19352. Send SASE. Dinner available at The Terrace Restaurant
- 12 (Thurs) Opening of Longwood's new Herb Garden, 5 pm • Children's Ice Cream Concert: Hilarious Musical Story: Things, with Lucille Reilly, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 14 (Sat) Fireworks with fountains, 9:15 pm (weather permitting)
- 17 (Tues) Concert: WindMusic, recorder trio, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- July 18 - Sept 5 Exhibit: Floral Exchange by Robert Buchanan, 10 am - 5 pm
- 19 (Thurs) Concert: Chuck Anderson, neo-classical guitar, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 21 (Sat) Concert: Swing Music of the 40's, with The Bitterroot, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 24 (Tues) Concert: Mozart, Movies & Musicals, with Margaret West, soprano & Jeffrey Wilber, baritone, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 26, 27, 28 Bandmembers Ltd Open Air Theatre Production: "Brigadoon", 8:30 pm. Reserved seats are \$9 from Bandmembers Ltd, P.O. Box 248, Monroeville, DE 19710. Send check and SASE; tickets mailed in June. Telephone after 5/16/84: 302-478-1330 or 478-0595. Dinner available at The Terrace Restaurant
- 26 (Thurs) Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 28 (Sat) Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 31 (Tues) Lawn Concert: Salem County Brass Society, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm

- AUGUST**
- thru Aug Robert Buchanan exhibit continues, 10 am - 5 pm
- 2, 3, 4 (Thurs, Fri, Sat) "Brigadoon" (see July 26, 27, 28)
- 2 (Thurs) Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 4 (Sat) Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 7 (Tues) Concert: Kevin Roth, Celtic harp & dulcimer, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 9 (Thurs) Lawn Concert: Chester County Concert Band, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 11 (Sat) Fireworks with fountains, 9:15 pm (weather permitting)
- 14 (Tues) Concert: Lucille Reilly, hammered dulcimer, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 16 (Thurs) Children's Ice Cream Concert: MacCombs, with Murray & Lee, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 18 (Sat) Concert: Organ at Sunset, with Larry Ferner, Open Air Theatre, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 21 (Tues) Concert: Barbershop Evening, with Family After & Fountains, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 23 (Thurs) Concert: Songs and Songs, with Madeline Mitchell, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 25 (Sat) Concert: Country Current, US Navy Country Western & Bluegrass Band, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 28 (Tues) Concert: Saul Brandy, folk singer, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm
- 30 (Thurs) Big Band Night Concert: Al Raymond's Big Band, 7:30 pm • Fountains, 9:15 pm

SEPTEMBER

- thru Sept 5 Robert Buchanan exhibit continues, 10 am - 5 pm
- 1 (Sat) Fireworks with fountains, 9:15 pm (weather permitting)
- 9 (Sun) US Marine Band Concerts in the Open Air Theatre, 2:00 - 7:30 pm. Unreserved seats for either concert are \$5. Send SASE with check made payable to Longwood Fire Conservatory for Secretary, Marine Band Concert, Longwood Fire Conservatory, 1001 E. Baltimore Pike, Kennet Square, PA 19348. Dinner available at The Terrace Restaurant
- 23 (Sun) Piano Recital: Rags, Jazz, Blues & Dances, with John Young, pianist, 3 pm

NEWS RELEASE



The Wilmington Garden Center

503 Market Street Mall
Wilmington, Delaware 19801

(302) 658-1913

April 15, 1982

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Bonnie Day
658-1913

WILMINGTON GARDEN CENTER ANNOUNCES SPRING PLANT SALE

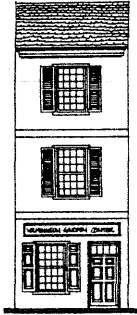
Vegetable, herb and flower plants will be overflowing Willingtown Square during the Wilmington Garden Center's annual Spring Plant Sale on May 4th and 5th, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. This popular sale is held at the beginning of the planting season, and gives urban gardeners a chance to purchase plants for indoor and outdoor growing at a location convenient to them.

Two special features of the Spring Plant Sale are live demonstrations on plants and planting techniques, and plant information people who will be on hand to advise shoppers. "Attic treasures" and baked goods will also be available.

Proceeds from the sale benefit the Wilmington Garden Center, a non-profit civic and educational organization which promotes gardening throughout New Castle County. For more information regarding the Spring Plant Sale or other Garden Center programs, call 658-1913, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. weekdays.

* * * * *

FEATURE QUERY



The Wilmington Garden Center

503 Market Street Mall
Wilmington, Delaware 19801

(302) 655-7161

April 16, 1982

POSSIBLE FEATURE STORY IDEA

CONTACT: Bonnie Day
655-7161

SPRING PLANT SALE

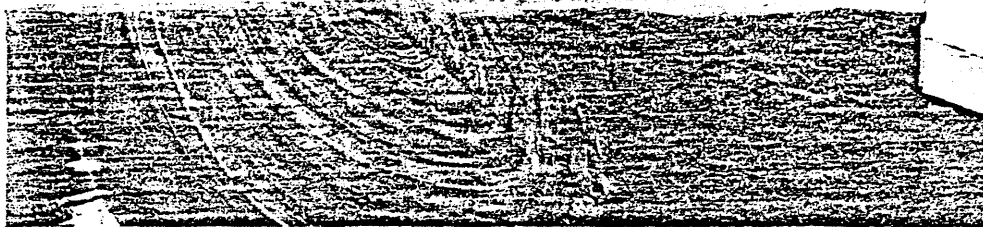
- Who: The Wilmington Garden Center, 503 Market Street Mall, Wilmington, Delaware.
- What: Annual Spring Plant Sale - vegetable, herb and flower plants, live planting demonstrations, attic treasures and baked goods.
- When: Tuesday & Wednesday, May 4th & 5th - 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Rain or shine.
- Where: Willingtown Square, in the 500 block of the Market Street Mall.
- Why: Proceeds benefit The Wilmington Garden Center, a nonprofit organization which promotes gardening throughout New Castle County, Delaware. For more information call 302-655-7161.

Your coverage of our Spring Plant Sale is invited. I have photographs and ideas for special story angles that I'll be happy to discuss with you.

Bonnie Day 655-7161

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FEATURE STORY



ON DISPLAY in the Peirce-du Pont House at Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square, is a cross section of a 180-year-old cucumber magnolia felled in 1978. Important dates in the history of Longwood and the

surrounding area have been marked by counting annual growth rings of the tree, viewed by tourist daily from noon to 3 p.m.

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Longwood tree on display

By BONNIE SWAN DAY

Something new and unusual has been added to the historic Peirce-du Pont House at Longwood Gardens, Kennett Square. Nature's own history book, a four-foot slice of an ancient cucumber magnolia (*Magnolia acuminata*) dating back to the early years of the Republic, is on display.

The tree round was taken from a 90-foot specimen felled in 1978 for safety reasons. Visitors may view the circular section daily through October from noon to 3 p.m. as part of the popular Peirce-du Pont House tour.

The tree was planted between 1798 and 1805 by Joshua and Samuel Peirce, amateur botanists and enthusiastic plant collectors. They established an outstanding collection of native and unusual trees over a 50-year period. By the latter half of the 19th century, Peirce's Park was regarded as one of the finest collections of ornamental trees in the country.

George Washington Peirce opened the arboretum to the public and continued its development as a pleasure garden. After his death in 1880, interest in and upkeep of the park dwindled and the property changed hands several times. In 1906, Pierre S. du Pont purchased it to save the arboretum from destruction at the hands of a lumbering operation.

Many rare and historic trees, remnants of the famous park, still stand. A huge Kentucky coffee tree grows near the house, a majestic reminder of times when early settlers substituted the tree's dried fruit for coffee beans. One of this country's largest specimens of the primitive ginkgo can be seen at the southwest edge of the arboretum.

Removal necessary

The decision to cut the cross section was made after the magnolia was taken down in March, 1978. Adverse weather, insect damage and old age made it necessary to remove the old tree, by then hollow and a threat to the nearby Peirce House.

Cutting a round for display in the Peirce-du Pont House was the brainchild of several Longwood staff members. They saw it as an opportunity to better interpret the history of the gardens, from the origin of the Peirce brothers' arboretum to the Longwood of today. Events of interest from 1978 back to 1821 are indicated by means of annual growth rings visible in the wood.

To avoid having a large hollow in the center, the four-foot by four-inch piece had to be cut 25 feet from the base of the tree.

Then began the process of preserving and finishing the round, a project requiring extensive chemical and historical research, continuous monitoring and patience.

Preventing shrinkage and subsequent cracking of the soft, rather moist wood was important. Following the recommendations of the USDA Forest Service, project members chose to treat the round with a substance called polyethylene glycol-1000 (PEG). PEG is a water-soluble wax which, in solution, displaces natural moisture in the wood structure. After prolonged immersion in this solution, wood does not shrink appreciably when dried, nor will it swell when exposed to high humidity.

Among largest

"This is one of the largest pieces ever processed in PEG," William McLimans, foreman of Longwood's carpentry shop, said. "It has been used primarily by woodworking hobbyists for much smaller projects. Our problem was figuring out the necessary concentration as well as the length of immersion."

The 200-pound round stands in the library of the Peirce-du Pont House, where it can be seen by tourists.

An interesting feature is the presence of clearly defined growth rings in the

wood, approximately 173 in all. Each represents a year of growth. By counting back from the edge of the round, important dates in the development of Longwood and in the history of Peirce's Park can be pinpointed.

Suzanne Knowles, visitor education specialist at Longwood, researched the history of Longwood, Peirce's Park and Chester County to find significant dates.

