

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 14, 2014

Andréa Miller
(302) 658-6262 ext. 125
(302) 753-4608
amiller@TheDCH.org

Guests raised \$100,000 for greening underserved communities *\$3,200 was top plant bid at TheDCH 2014 Rare Plant Auction®*

[CLICK FOR PHOTOS OF RPA](#)

For gardening enthusiasts with an eye for the rare, beautiful, difficult to propagate plants, and interesting centerpieces for conversation, the Rare Plant Auction® on April 26 had something for everyone. Hundreds of guests enjoyed the ambiance of Longwood Gardens East Conservatory, and took home more than 450 fantastic specimens to raise \$100,000 for Delaware Center for Horticulture's public landscapes, tree and urban agriculture greening programs that often serve low-income neighborhoods.

This year's top bid was a pair of trees from the Brooklyn Botanic Garden's hugely successful breeding program. The Magnolia 'Lois,' and a newly identified and yet unnamed Pink Form of Magnolia officinalis var. biloba together sold for \$3,200 in the live auction. The event also featured three silent auctions.

The Magnolia was the last addition to Brooklyn Botanic Garden's breeding program and was named after its former chairman of the Board of Trustees, Lois Carswell. It is a late bloomer in spring with intense yellow and fragrant flowers. Magnolia officinalis var. biloba Pink Form is a recently identified and unnamed pink flowering form of the species, said TheDCH Associate Director of Development and plant expert Lenny Wilson. It has huge potential in Magnolia breeding development and was discovered by magnoliophile John Kuhlman, he added.

Plant lovers throughout the region and beyond plan their calendars around this event, because they know that renowned experts have carefully curated a premier selection of specimens from across the country.

This year's "travel trophy" goes to new tree introductions that came from J. Frank Schmidt Nursery in Boring, Oregon: Malus 'Royal Raindrops,' Styrax 'Marley's Weeping Pink Parasol' and Nyssa sylvatica 'Afterburner.'

Preceding the live auction, Board of Directors Chairman Andrew Bunting announced to guests that TheDCH will begin a green renovation and expansion project for the Trolley Square headquarters facility when 70 percent of the Capital Campaign goal of \$3.5 million for construction is raised. Already, nearly 60 percent has been raised through private asks. The Board also aims to raise \$500,000 for a building endowment to maintain the new community resource.

The Delaware Center for Horticulture cultivates greener communities by inspiring appreciation and improvement of the environment through horticulture, education and conservation. Founded in 1977, TheDCH supports numerous community gardens and school gardens; organizes park improvement projects, beautifies Delaware's roadsides with native vegetation; maintains the landscaping of many urban streetscapes; leads regional community forestry projects; and provides educational programs for children, teens, and adults. For more information, visit thedch.org