

**Garden Conservancy Preservation Weekend  
Chicago Botanic Garden  
September 27-30, 2012**

The Nuts and Bolts of Board Member Development

In a keynote presentation by Rick King, President & CEO, Kittleman & Associates, Chicago, he emphasized the importance of board composition based on time, talent, and service. One should look for people with professional expertise in areas such as finance, technology, and management; functional expertise in education, fund-raising, media, guest services; and civic representatives, such as philanthropic leaders and elected officials; and affinity groups. He suggested that the organization analyze what is needed and look for people to fill those positions. The Nominating Committee is essential to the process of seeking out and evaluating prospective candidates as well as cultivating them for future. It is essential that members of the Nominating Committee be the best available people to represent your organization. They should attend events of potential board members and talk with them about what they could do for your organization. Suggested term limits for board members are three 3-year terms or two 4-year terms, after which people rotate off. Ideally 1/3 rotate off every year or so. In some organizations board members are expected to give donations or “get and give.” All board members should be active and productive; if not they should be eliminated. All board members should receive a written Board Member Agreement that spells out required attendance, committee involvement, and what is expected of them. In some cases it is best to ask someone to serve on a committee before inviting him/her to become a board member. Resources: [www.boardsource.org](http://www.boardsource.org) [www.managementhelp.org](http://www.managementhelp.org) [www.allianceonline.org](http://www.allianceonline.org)

Marketing and Outreach to the Community

There were several presentations about the importance of advertising, community exposure, magazine articles, TV programs, effective websites, e-News, and Facebook.

Managing Garden Change, Setting Horticultural Standards, and Maintaining Excellence

Kris Jarantoski, Executive Vice President and Director, Chicago Botanic Garden, gave a rousing talk about “Who Is in Charge?” He spoke of the layers of authority, setting up tasks, interactions with problematic staff members, and other issues. Even though the CBG is a large operation, the basic tenets can be applied to smaller gardens.

Other Sessions

There were sessions on how to renew aging gardens, creating new gardens within a historic structure, and renovating historic plant collections (trimming/replacing overgrown trees and shrubs, for example). Other sessions were devoted to the transition from private garden to public by making plans for the future. Obviously Beatrix Farrand’s once-private garden made the journey to public long ago. Experiences with fund-raising activities, such as summer galas and other events (some netting \$10,000 or more), were shared by a number of representatives.

Summary This was a worthwhile and eye-opening event. For more details, contact Judith Tankard. Next Preservation Weekend scheduled for 2014.