Contributor Page

# Cover Story – Karen Johanssen

Pacific Northwest native, Karen Johanssen, gives us an insider’s guide to outdoor living in the City of Roses. Johanssen, a master landscape artist, shares her insight on her latest design concepts. “I’m passionate about modern and clean—yet soft and warm design,” says Johannsen. “It may seem like modern and soft shouldn’t go together, but that’s what’s great about outdoor design. We get the best of both worlds!”

# Contributor Stories

Architect **Raul Pietro** prides himself on educating his clients about the benefits of sustainable design. “We all have a responsibility to reduce our carbon footprint,” says Pietro. A best-selling author and staff writer for *Leaf & Mortar*, Pietro shares his green concepts from his award-winning project, Oasis Over Main Street.

If you want a striking summer flower, look no further than the dahlia. As grower **Cynthia Sylvia**, a 19-year horticultural specialist explains, “Dahlias create magnificent display of color.” Sylvia has taken a special interest to native plants of the Pacific Northwest. “This is my home, where I roam, and where I love to spend my time,” she says. “We live in a very special climate, where a great variety of flowers and plants thrive like in no other location I’ve seen.”

Guest writer and Community Garden founder, **Bob Taylor**, has been working with Portland metropolitan area organizations to create public garden spaces for nearly 20 years. “We’re providing opportunities to bring our community together through volunteer work while providing nutritious food sources for low-income families.”

**Jason Wells**, master chef and author of *In the Kitchen with Wells*, shares how he uses food from his garden to create nutritious, fresh meals. “We’re too caught up in complex meals with several ingredients,” says Wells. “I like to keep it simple, with fewer ingredients and bold flavors that bring my dishes to life.”

Traditional plants, statues, water features, bridges, and pathways are the perfect backdrop to the majestic views. **Karen Dillingham** from Washington Park’s outdoor showcase offers visitors an urban view of the vast varieties of plants and trees thriving in their native climate. It only makes sense that Washington Park also is home to the four-and-a-half-acre International Rose Test Garden, the oldest operating rose test garden in the United States.

Editor Letter

By Ed Smith, Editor in Chief

# Portland’s Public Gardens

Every year, we plan a week to volunteer at a non-profit organization to give back to communities, enrich the lives of others, and stay connected with the world around us. Last September, we volunteered at the Community Garden in Portland, Oregon. My first impression of Community Garden founder, Bob Taylor, was that he is enthusiastic, loves gardening, and loves the people he’s working with.

Since then, my respect for Bob has grown tremendously. His commitment to his cause is inspiring. Not only could I talk to Bob endlessly about landscape design, but also about community, leadership, and the enrichment of serving others. I’m proud to have Bob as a guest writer in this addition of *Leaf & Mortar*. He’s doing great things, and I’m proud to share his work you.

Bob graciously offered to take me on a tour of some of Portland’s most popular garden spaces during my trip. Portland is a unique city with a bustling city life, a wide variety of outdoor adventures, and close access to natural spaces. Washington Park, an eclectic public garden space with numerous hiking trails, Japanese gardens, museums, and even a Zoo, could take days to explore all on its own. This is just one of many locations throughout the Portland Metropolitan area where you can find spectacular public gardens.

Examining what is so special about the Portland metropolitan area and its landscape, people, and culture is at the heart of this issue of *Leaf & Mortar*. We talk with well-known landscape designers, local growers, and people who call the City of Roses their home. We hope that this issue helps you find the inspiration for your next design idea and guides you to bring it to life.

# Multifaceted Portland

Multifaceted Portland The Pacific Northwest’s rainy climate makes for a lush, colorful landscape. As Janie Lane, a 32-year-old Portland native (left), explains, “I love exploring the great outdoors here in Portland, rain or shine!” East of downtown is the nearly 160-acre Washington Park where visitors can see hundreds of varieties of roses, hike dozens of trails, and explore Japanese gardens, all in the same day.

Midtown Bounty

# Main Article

Bob Taylor is no stranger when it comes to getting his hands dirty. Taylor is on a mission to change the landscape of our inner cities by helping design and build community gardens in Portland, Oregon. “There are unique challenges in inner-city spaces, but I welcome them,” Taylor explains. “These gardens do more than supply fresh fruits and vegetables to nearby residences,” he says. “They instill a sense of community, and when people have a community, magical things happen.” Indeed, the community gardens have been doing something magical: they are providing more than 1,000 pounds of food monthly to low-income residents! “That far exceeded our expectations,” says Taylor. “We started with one location and our goal was to yield 100 pounds of food every month.”

# Callout

Volunteer labor helps charitable co-op deliver only the freshest, most nutritious food.

Oasis Over Main Street

# Caption 1

Cool rooftop garden is a quiet haven from the urban hustle below.

# Caption 2

WEEKLY trimming ensures rooftop plantings remain as neat as their high-tech surroundings. Hand tools eliminate noise and allow gardeners fine artistic control over every inch. Trimming takes a full week and is repeated throughout the year.

# Caption 3

SHARED SPACES maximize social activities and create cozy entertaining spaces. “These spaces were designed to bring people together and create warm, inviting common areas,” says Sam Smith, Lead Architect for the Oasis Over Main. “The central idea of this project was creating innovative communal spaces.” Whether celebrating a special occasion, having a few friends for a dinner party, or entertaining a large group, the five shared spaces in this oasis are sure to meet your needs. Patios with large seating areas, as well as smaller more intimate decks, are sure to set the mood for any social setting.

# Caption 4

SHELTERED seating spaces are perfect for rainy winters in the Pacific Northwest. They were designed with floor-to-ceiling windows to create maximum light exposure, especially on the lower floors where natural light is typically more obstructed.

Pink Dahlia

# Main Story

\*Portions of this were taken from the Project Gutenberg ebook Talks about Flowers

The national flower of Mexico, dahlias are annual plants that bloom in late summer through early fall. Generally, those who plant dahlias purchase the tuberous roots, which create strong plants raised from cuttings. Dahlias can be planted from seed but tend not to do as well as their tuberous counterparts. Ranging from 8-inches to 5-feet tall, dahlias are available in 12 different types of blooms which can be 2- to 12-inches wide and range in colors from white to dark purple. Smaller versions are referred to as the “pompom” dahlia, and larger versions are known as “dinner plate” dahlias, due to their rather large blossoms. Though some varieties can have multiple flowers, single flowering plants tend to have better blooms and are more sought after. It is common for growers to prune new flower growth and encourage only one blossom per plant. Dahlias develop best in high-moisture, heavy soil and enjoy a fair amount of daily sunshine.

# Caption (quote about President Lopez)

In 1963, President Adolfo López Mateos published an official decree declaring that the dahlia, one of Mexico’s numerous “gifts to the world,” would be the nation’s national flower. Mateos’ decree stated that, “Mexican flowers, due to their peculiar characteristics, have deserved distinction both in the country and abroad, and among them particularly the dahlia flower.”

Portland Today

# Main Story

The Pacific Northwest’s rainy climate makes for a lush, colorful landscape. As Janie Lane, a 32-year-old Portland native (right), explains, “I love exploring the great outdoors here in Portland, rain or shine!” Surrounded with beautiful green trees, bushes, and shrubs, the Pacific Northwest’s rainy climate makes for a colorful landscape. East of downtown Portland, is the roughly 160-acre Washington Park, where visitors can hike through forest, see hundreds of varieties of roses, and explore Japanese gardens.

The Hoyt Arboretum, a 189-acre museum of trees located next Washington Park, shares some of the 152 miles of hiking trails located in the Portland area. Also located in the acreage are five historical memorials, including the Pittock Mansion, a children’s museum, and the World Forestry Center—all accessible from the network of hiking trails.

The Portland Japanese Garden is a 12-acre Japanese garden that embraces tranquility and serenity. The space includes eight gardens, a tea house, café, and gift shop. Traditional plants, statues, water features, bridges, and pathways are the perfect backdrop to the majestic city views.

Washington Park showcases a wide variety of plants and trees thriving in their native climate. Including the four-and-a-half-acre International Rose Test Garden, the oldest operating rose test garden in the United States, with over 10,000 rose bushes and 650 unique varieties.

Red Dahlias

# Main Story

Same copy as pink dahlia story.

# Caption

**Grower Samantha Kent** specializes in dahlias at her farm in Oregon’s Willamette Valley. Dahlias are annual blooming plants, with mostly tuberous roots. While some have herbaceous stems, others have stems which lignify in the absence of secondary tissue and re-sprout following winter dormancy, allowing further seasons of growth.

As a member of the Asteraceae, the flower head is actually a composite (hence the older name Compositae) with both central disc florets and surrounding ray florets. Each floret is a flower in its own right, but is often incorrectly described as a petal, particularly by horticulturists.