

MOVIN' ON UP:

THE OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF BECOMING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AMERICAN PUBLIC GARDEN ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE 2017
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Presenters

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KARA NEWPORT, *FILOLI*, WOODSIDE, CA

ADRIANA QUIÑONES, *CAPE FEAR BOTANICAL GARDEN*, FAYETTEVILLE, NC

ANN PARSONS, *SMITH-GILBERT GARDENS*, KENNESAW, GA

SCOTT LAFLEUR, *SHERMAN LIBRARY AND GARDENS*, CORONA DEL MAR, CA



*f*ILOLI





Eric Garton

Robert and Peggy Weed Executive Director



Wellfield
Botanic Gardens



Founded 2005

36 Acres (18 Acres Water)

27,000 Visitors

1,200 Members

\$550,000 Budget

10 Public Events

2000 School Children

14 Employees (6.5 FTE)

200 Volunteers



“Letting go” ...

- Letting go of the programs you used to facilitate
- Avoiding micromanagement
- Sharing your experiences and perspectives for success



“I would like you to be more self-reliant, show more initiative and accept greater personal responsibility — but check with me first.”

Professional Development...

- YOUR growth
- Your STAFF's growth



“Yes, I have room in my schedule to attend a Time Management Seminar...the day after I retire!”

Relationships...

- Creating and fostering relationships as 'the new guy' to the organization – how to engage
 - Board
 - Staff
 - Donors
 - Volunteers
 - Community
-Create layered opportunities



Shifting...

- It's **not** fear of *change*... What is everyone *truly* scared of?
- Answer the why's and how's
- "Make Change Work for You", Scott Steinberg: "*Embrace change by taking calculated risks and meaningful action, and you'll put yourself on the path to regular reinvention--the essence of remaining relevant--and create positive, lasting effects on every level.*" – 10 Tips



"I don't want to change. I want all of you to change!"

Lead by Example...

- Getting involved in your community
- Live your Mission
- Use your organization's passions and principles to guide decision-making
- We all have our own story - -
Don't forget what got you where you are today!



**“Leadership experience? I have
13 people following me on Twitter!”**



Kara Newport
Executive Director

*f*ILOLI

Founded 1975

695 Acres

136,000 Visitors
54% San Mateo County

10,000 Members

\$7.5 M Budget

38 Public Events

6,000 School Children

60 Employees

1,200 Volunteers



f ILOLI

Advice From Professionals

RICK KING, CHAIRMAN

KITTLEMAN

Rick has over 40 years of nonprofit leadership experience as a nationally-known nonprofit executive search consultant and nonprofit chief executive officer

Former Public Gardens Association
Board Member



The First Source for Nonprofit Leaders SINCE 1963

Boomer Impact

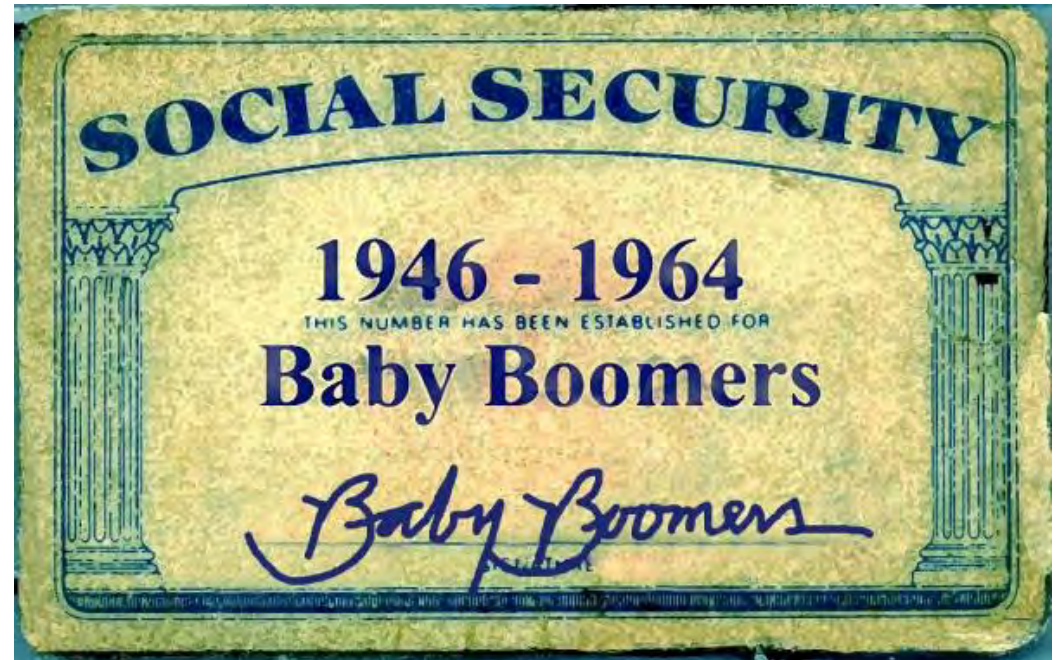
The Annie E. Casey Foundation survey in 2004 found that Boomers represented 73% of Directors Predicted that two major waves of retirement 2010 and 2020

Recession dampened the first wave prediction pushing back by about 4-5 years

Second wave prediction looks like it will occur as they forecasted

5 years and beyond expect unprecedented turnover in top leadership.

Director turnover occurs an average of every 5-7 years



Source: Rick King, Kittleman

Boomer Impact



Baby Boomer retirements are effecting all positions in the industry

Baby Boomers = 75 million

Generation X = 41 million

- *best educated and most pragmatic*

Recruiting the Best Talent Highly Competitive

- **Millennials or Generation Y = 71 million (born 1977 and 1994)**
incredibly sophisticated, technology savvy and more racially and ethnically diverse

Result in opportunities coming to Millennials earlier in their career including top leadership positions

Source: Rick King, Kittleman

Developing Key Skills

Gain management-level experience early in career

Most important leadership qualities:

- **Adaptability**
- **Resourcefulness**
- **Communication**
- **Integrity**

Without integrity, the other three don't matter.

Source: Rick King, Kittleman

Development & Communications

- Fundraising is Critical
 - Anyone can be a fundraiser
 - Get involved early
- Communications is the heart of fundraising
- Serving as a spokesperson

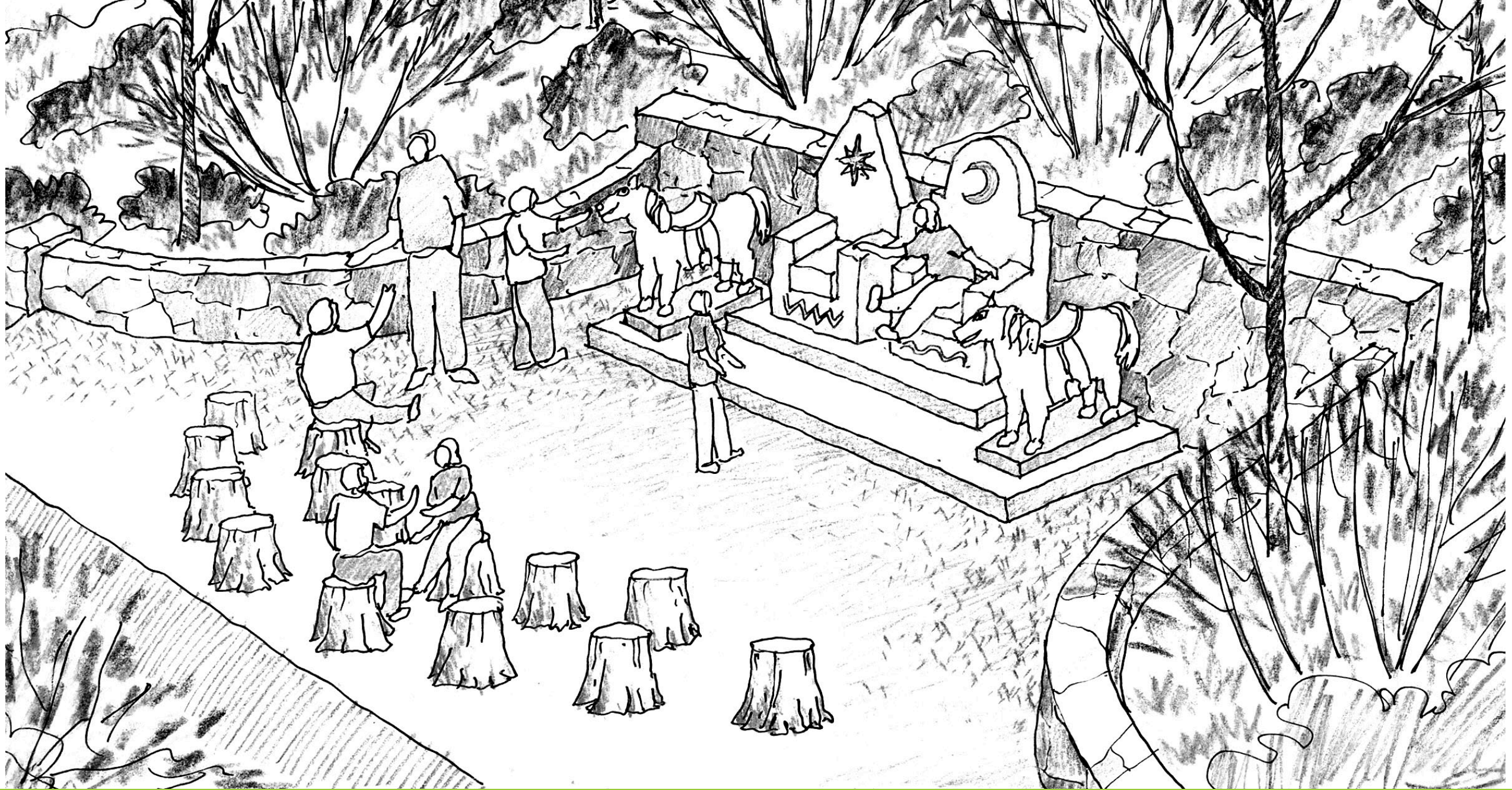


Human Resources Management

- The Power of the People
- Clarity is Critical
- Communication and Integrity

A Note About Unhappy Employees







Balance

You are Your Most Important Human Resource

- Strike your own balance early
- Communications are critical





Adriana Quiñones

Interim Executive Director

Director of Horticulture
and Education



Founded 1989

80 ac./ 23 ac. in gardens

70,000 Visitors

1300 Members

\$1.5 million Budget

36 Public Events

6000+ School Children

17.5 FTE Employees

150 Volunteers



CAPE FEAR BOTANICAL GARDEN
FAYETTEVILLE, NC

LETTING GO:

- Promoted from within- how to balance what you did with what you do now.
 - Pros and cons
 - From peer to supervisor
 - Keeping a pulse on your passion



BOARDROOM CONVERSATIONS:

What to do when you are following a disaster

When to talk and when to not

Board is now skittish-how to work within those parameters



RELATIONSHIP COUNSELING / BALANCING ACT:

- How to get all staff on board and raise morale
 - Survey
 - Retreat



HR?!?!:

- Reaching out for help-who, what and where
- Dealing with Doubt



Do you stay or do you go?



Key Leader Attributes (Joan Garry)

Authenticity
Conviction
Joy
Humor
Fearlessness



Thank you!





Ann Parsons
Executive Director



SMITH GILBERT
GARDENS
A CITY OF KENNESAW BOTANICAL GARDEN

Founded 2009

16 Acres

10,000 Visitors

325 Members

\$500,000 Budget

8 Public Events

1800 School Children

7 Employees

100 Volunteers



Strengthen your resume

- Balance work experiences with education
 - Is going back to college an option?
 - Courses to complement your work experience, e.g., fundraising
 - Express interest in becoming a director; find a mentor
 - Be responsible for managing budgets
 - Work across department lines
- Connect with your Board
 - Serve on Board Committees
 - Build relationships
 - Learn communication preferences

...Strengthen your resume

- Be well rounded
 - Volunteer in community
 - Have outside interests
 - Be a mentor - help others be successful
- Be passionate about what you do
 - Believe you can make a change
 - Have confidence you can make a difference in the organization

Interview

- Be yourself in interview process
- Focus on what you want to accomplish - not just getting to be an Executive Director
- Identify institutions that will fit your comfort level
 - Financial Stability - evaluate carefully
 - Board Strength - look at individuals/connections
 - Staff - ask key questions during interview

Network

- Meaningful - personal goal at breakfasts/lunches - one meaningful connection
- Utilize for references who can speak to your larger connection with community

Final Thoughts

- Have thick skin. You can not please everyone.
- Be a leader - more than a manager.
- Think about where you want to be in a year, 5 years - move yourself and organization there. What is the take-home message?
- Be gracious. Saying thank you can go a long ways.
- Dress the part - others need to see you as a leader



Scott LaFleur
Director



Founded 1966

2.2 Acres

50,000 Visitors

2,500 Members

\$1.5 million Budget

8 Public Events

600 School Children

24 Employees

165 Volunteers



 **Sherman Library & Gardens**



Promoted from within

- Seize the opportunity
- Change or continuity
- Pros and cons



Understand Why.....

- Why do you want the position?
- Why you were hired and not someone else?
- Why will you succeed?

**I KNOW EVERYTHING
HAPPENS FOR A
REASON, BUT
SOMETIMES I WISH
I KNEW WHAT THAT
REASON WAS.**

Day one and beyond

- Day one starts before your first day
- Listen and learn
- Use your “newness” to your advantage
- Harness the excitement / trepidation of your staff
- Low hanging fruit
- Plan & set goals
- Relax, pace yourself and Have Fun!

NOW HIRING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Q & A – *Thank you for your time*

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“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

-John Quincy Adams