



THE GARDEN GAL

BELLA

MADRONA

Let's be honest, there is no way I can adequately explain the expanse and natural majesty of Geof Beasley's garden in Sherwood called *Bella Madrona*. My oversimplified rendition here is acknowledgement that this garden is too big for words. You see, the garden has grown and meandered over 5 acres in the past 32 years. The best I can do is offer a lay of the land. The garden is bookended, east to west, by an enormous natural pond (once a watering hole for native people) and the house terraces where the sun sets. In between the two coordinates, you will find amazing artwork, fascinating plants, new places to sit, water features, the Pink Martini Stage and wide amphitheater lawn. (*The Pink Martini* song "The Gardens of Sampson and Beasley" is an awesome tribute to the many times the Thomas Lauderdale orchestra has played there.) Your experience will depend on which path you take, which direction you're headed, and time of day. I'm telling you, there is so much to see; Hansel and Gretel would need to light flares to find their way around.

My recent chat with Geof over a cool glass of lemonade wasn't so much about the ins and outs of the garden, as his willingness to share it. Geof and his partner Jim Sampson, both retired physicians, married three years ago in Massachusetts and recently held a fundraiser at Bella Madrona to further the cause for Basic Rights Oregon.

Anne Jaeger: Why open your garden for Basic Rights Oregon?

Geof Beasley: Jim and I had an interesting situation several years ago. Jim had to retire because of a disability and had to buy his own medical insurance which costs an incredible amount. We were spending thousands of dollars a year, and I had this great Federal insurance that he should have been entitled

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