

**Best Practices for Navigating Visitor Concerns
2019 Garden Docent Training
Hillwood Estate, Museum & Garden**

Every now and again, we'll catch wind of an individual's negative opinion of something about Hillwood, for instance regarding our Russian collection. Most times the comments are conversational, and standard interpretive messages and graciousness will see you through:

Interpretive messages for the Russian collection:

- Marjorie Post was in the Soviet Union at a time when the government sold imperial-era objects to finance industrialization. There, she purchased through government-sponsored commission shops.
- She continued to collect for the rest of her life through well-established dealers and auction houses.

Graciousness:

- I appreciate your concern and encourage you to complete a comment card before you leave, available in the Visitor Center. Museum's administration will respond to you.

On the rare occasion, a person might elect a more confrontational way of sharing their view—either by disrupting or derailing a formal tour or through inappropriate conversations with stationed volunteers. In this case, if reinforcing interpretive messages does not bring the visitor's behavior back in line, the protocol is:

- Excuse yourself from your visitor/s or group and contact Security (summon nearby officer, press panic button, or contact via radio).
- From this point, staff will navigate the situation.
 - *What's the staff protocol?* In most circumstances, Security will first remind the visitor of expected museum behavior. If the person feels he/she can comply and continue his/her visit without further disruption, he/she will be permitted to do so. If not, he/she will be asked to leave and escorted from the estate.
- You should gather yourself and, if possible, return to your visitor/s or group.
- If you are not able to do so, please ask a fellow volunteer or staff to attend to your visitor/s or group.