



2023

ANNUAL REPORT

WATERFRONT
BOTANICAL
GARDENS



PRESIDENT

I am thrilled and honored to introduce myself as the new President & CEO of Waterfront Botanical Gardens. When I moved back home to Louisville in 2020 after many years living in Chicago and Los Angeles, the Gardens were one of the first places I visited with my family. As a parent, I can't imagine raising small children without a botanical garden nearby. In L.A. I was a regular visitor to Descanso Gardens with my two toddlers, and I was a longtime member of the Chicago Botanic Garden and the Huntington Gardens and Library in Pasadena. I feel strongly that in this age of constant digital distraction and hyper-connectivity, **public gardens are exactly what people need.** They provide an endless supply of fresh air, reflection, exercise, beauty, and so much more. I am a passionate advocate for these important public spaces, and I encourage you to seek opportunities to support the Gardens.



The Koester Family in Warsaw, Poland

Now that I am back in my hometown, it is so gratifying to put my 25+ years of nonprofit management experience to work at WBG. We have a terrific staff, an engaged and committed Board of Directors, and hundreds of fabulous volunteers! I am so looking forward to carrying out our mission as an **urban botanical garden focused on environmental, ecological, and horticultural education for all.** I am proud of the work the Gardens are doing reclaiming a former landfill, promoting the importance of environmental conservation

and sustainable practices, and engaging Jefferson County and beyond in environmental stewardship. The Gardens are also an important part of the tourism corridor along River Road, through NuLu, downtown, and into southern Indiana. Our special events and programs promote cultural exchange, community connection, and **highlight the importance of nature in many aspects of our lives.** We have so many tremendous opportunities!

Our achievements and future plans would not be possible without the support and dedication of our members, donors, and volunteers. Your continued support fuels our efforts and enables us to make a tangible impact on our environment and community. Whether through volunteering, participating in our events, or contributing to our educational projects, **your involvement is the cornerstone of our success.**

Importantly, we are actively fundraising for the Japanese Garden, with many solid strategies in place to secure government, foundation, corporate, and individual funding. At the same time, we are building out our education programs and other activities to ensure operational sustainability into the future. The path ahead is green and bright, which is why **the Gardens' theme for this year is Forever Green.** This idea will be woven into our 2024 programs, events, and approach to Gardens operations. Together, we are cultivating not only an urban botanical garden but a legacy of environmental responsibility and community engagement that will flourish for generations to come.

I look forward to seeing you in the Gardens soon and sharing in the beauty and inspiration it offers.

Philip Koester
President & CEO

STAFF

Philip Koester
President & CEO

Megan Bibelhauser
Director of Marketing & Communications

Andrew Hagerty
Director of Horticulture

Jen O'Connell
Director of Events

Lori Kay Scott
Director of Development

Daniel Cash
Facilities Coordinator

Duncan Cherry
Marketing & Media Manager

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Horticulture Manager

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Rosie Devine
Development Administrative Manager

Abby Fleming
Special Events Coordinator

Jordyn Fowler
Special Events Coordinator

Haley Justice
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Wanda Peck
Youth Education Manager

Molly Young
Volunteer & Memberships Manager

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CHAIR OF THE BOARD

Thank you for your support and belief in Waterfront Botanical Gardens. Over the past year there have been many changes and we deeply appreciate your enduring dedication to the Gardens' mission. The spring flowers are blooming and **it won't be long before we are surrounded once again by the full spectrum of colors on the Gardens plaza.** I hope you will come by for a stroll.

A sincere thank you to our Board of Directors, donors, volunteers, and of course the Gardens staff for sharing their time and talent. **Nancy Davis, Vice Chair of the Board, is deserving of special recognition** for stepping into the Chair role last year while I supported the Gardens as Interim CEO. Having trusted partners among the board and staff is invaluable.

Waterfront Botanical Gardens is very fortunate to have attracted Philip Koester as our new President & CEO, as well as Donna Krabill as Chief Operating & Programming Officer. Both Phil and Donna bring deep nonprofit and business experience that will benefit the Gardens as we embark on exciting plans for future growth. **I could not be more pleased with our team.** I would like to personally thank Greg Buccola who chaired the CEO selection committee alongside a Board cohort.



Margaret Bell at the 2023 Fascinator Affair

If we have interacted in any setting over the last eight months, you have probably heard me emphasize the reasons we are building a Japanese Garden, as well as the current status of construction. Last year the Gardens realigned our priorities and reassessed our plans. We have decided to split the two-acre Japanese Garden into a multi-part project, **beginning with the Bonsai House and Display Garden.** We currently have 40 bonsai trees, and we will soon need a place to showcase and maintain them. In 2023, we held our first annual Bonsai Weekend that attracted over 2,000 attendees. We recognize the interest this has generated, and know this will be an important revenue-generating opportunity for sustaining the Gardens into the future. We look forward to our second annual Bonsai Weekend in partnership with the Greater Louisville Bonsai Society this August.

Since the 1980s, Japanese companies have invested billions in Kentucky. We are building a Japanese Garden as a cultural landmark, symbolizing the important economic relationship between Kentucky and Japan. As only one of three Japanese Gardens in the United States built by world-renowned Japanese Garden designer Shiro Nakane, **it will attract visitors to Louisville, Kentucky from around the world.** I can think of no better host site for current and prospective Japanese firms considering Kentucky for their home.

All the changes in 2023 have paved the way for exciting developments in 2024. We look forward to sharing those with you throughout the year, and I hope you will participate in the many events and programs that will take place at the Gardens.

Margaret C. Bell

Margaret Bell

Chair, Board of Directors
Retired, Former Managing
Director, Fort Washington
Investment Advisors

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Senior Investor Relations
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Frances Scholtz
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Volunteer

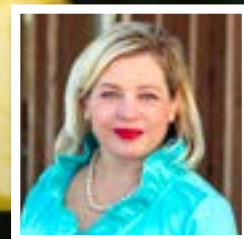
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The Helen Harrigan Legacy Society



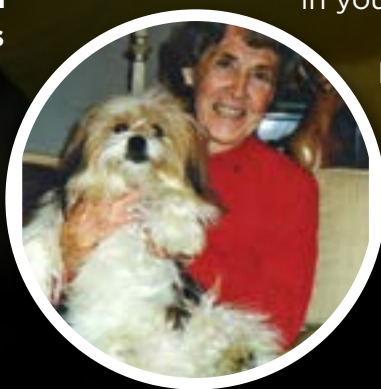
Lori Kay Scott
Director of Development

If you plant a seed, you can touch the future.

If you stop and listen, you can hear the past.

Flourishing atop the former Ohio Street Dump, the Waterfront Botanical Gardens stands as a testament to the beauty and importance of preserving our natural world. **It is our desire to inspire meaningful connections among people, plants, and nature through horticulture, education and community engagement.** Thanks to the vision of Helen Harrigan to “build a botanical garden and conservatory” in Louisville, her estate provided the means to do just that in 2001.

As we carry out Helen’s legacy over 20 years later, and we work to secure the future of your urban garden, I invite you to explore the transformative impact of planned giving. **The Helen Harrigan Legacy Society recognizes those who demonstrate the highest level of loyalty to the Waterfront Botanical Gardens by making a gift in their will or trust,** as a beneficiary of their retirement account, or through another type of planned gift. By incorporating planned giving into your estate planning, you can contribute to the longevity and vitality of the Gardens,



Helen Harrigan

leaving an enduring mark on the community for generations to come. Since Helen’s bequest, many members of our community have connected with that same vision and have pledged lasting gifts to the Gardens.

All donors who include the Waterfront Botanical Gardens in their estate plans or make a planned gift are eligible to become members of the Helen Harrington Legacy Society. Members receive an invitation to an annual cocktail party, recognition in the Annual Report, and complimentary private tours of the Garden. The Society is the Garden’s way of saying “thank you” for including the Garden in your plans.

By choosing planned giving, you become an integral part of securing the future of the Waterfront Botanical Gardens, and cultivating a legacy that transcends time. In the words of Audrey Hepburn, **“To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.”**



For more information, or if you have already included us in your estate plans, please contact Lori Kay Scott, Director of Development at **502-609-3580** or **lkscott@waterfrontgardens.org**

2023 EVENTS



Kaleidoscope Family Festival



Fascinator Affair



Gardens Aglitter



Music in the Gardens -
The Jesse Lees



Sprouts Camp



Florals with a Citrus Twist



Dr. Allan Armitage



Gardens Aglitter



KU - Void Room



SUI - Water Room



FU - Wind Room



CHI - Earth Room



For more information about the Japanese Garden and ways to support this project, please contact Lori Kay Scott, Director of Development at 502-609-3580 or lkscott@waterfrontgardens.org.

Thank You to Our **Crane Community Donors**

The 1,000 Cranes Campaign raised a total of \$234,926.75!
The 1,000 Cranes Campaign was inspired by a story in Japanese folklore that says if you fold 1,000 origami cranes (千羽鶴, *senbazuru*) your wish will come true. Donors that committed to a gift of \$1,000 or more

were welcomed into the Crane Community. This campaign will help us fulfill our community's wish of building a world-class botanical garden in Louisville, Kentucky. Thank you again to the Crane Community for your tremendous support!

A look inside the future **Graeser Family Bonsai Garden**

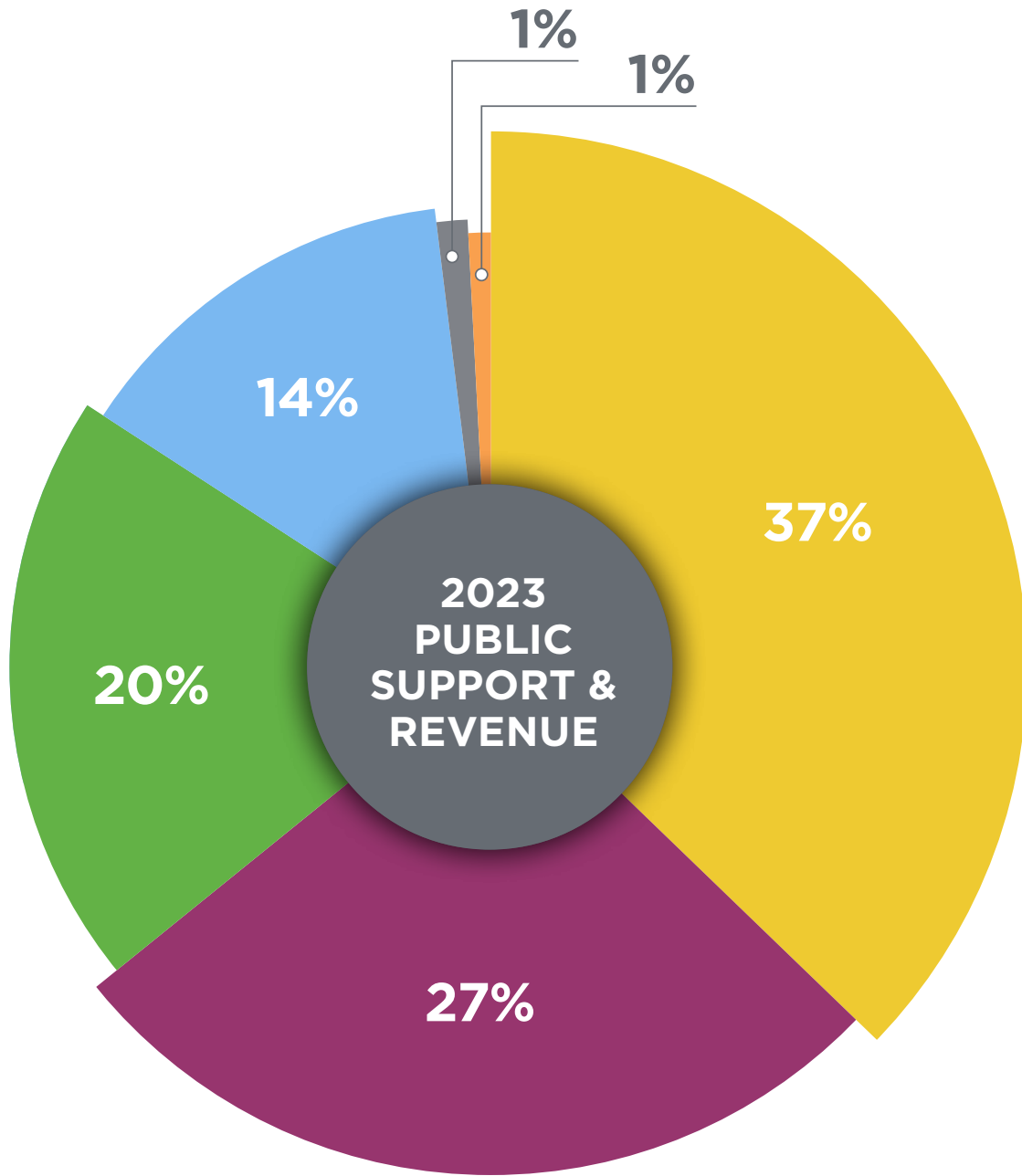
An important feature of the future Japanese Garden is the Graeser Family Bonsai Garden, which will display WBG's growing bonsai collection. The design of the Bonsai Garden will balance the traditional form of the adjacent Japanese Garden with the contemporary design of the larger

Waterfront Botanical Gardens. The renderings shown here depict the Garden's outdoor "rooms" that follow a thematic interpretation of the five great elements through the use of materials, form, and approach to bonsai.



Donate to support the Gardens at
waterfrontgardens.org/support
or scan the QR code

2023 FINANCIALS

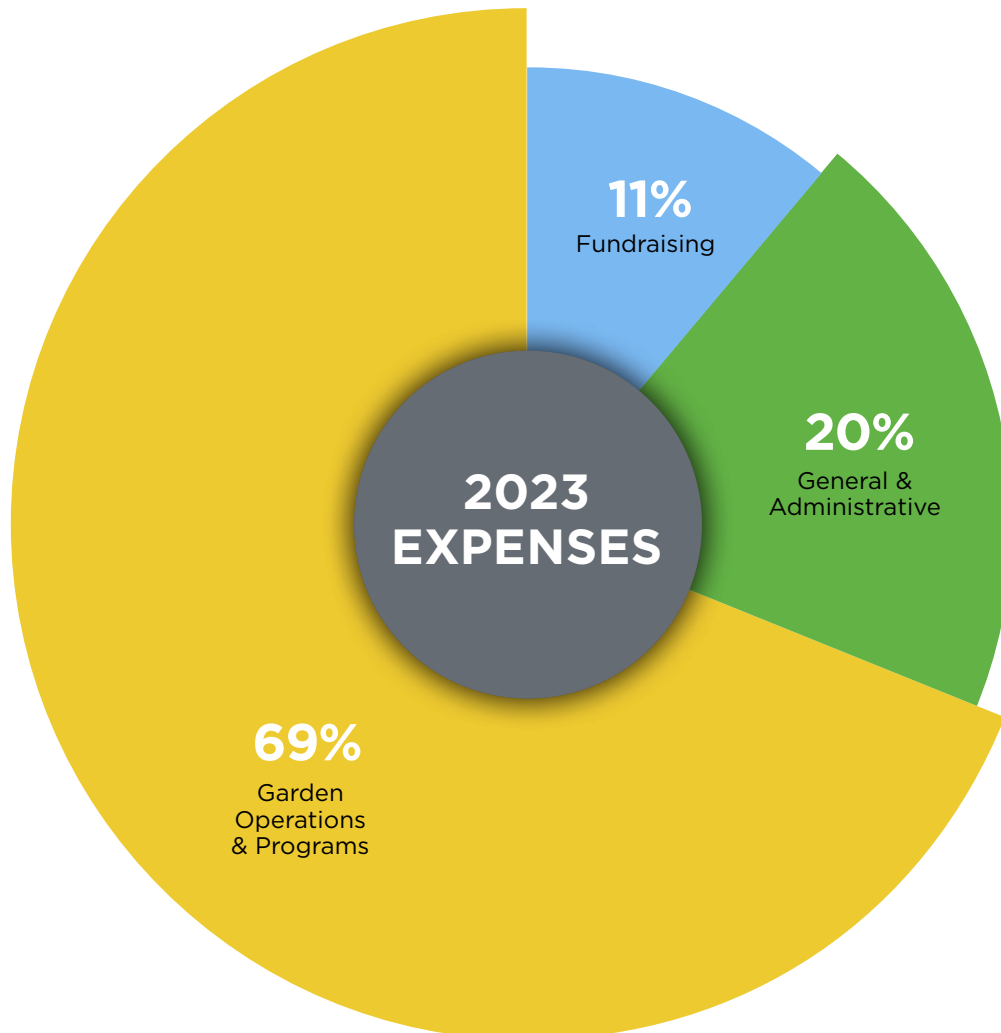


PUBLIC SUPPORT & REVENUE	
Individual	\$1,633,354
Government	1,187,538
Foundations & Corporations	873,402
Earned Income	621,049
Other Income	75,398
In-Kind	49,585
TOTAL PUBLIC SUPPORT & REVENUE	\$4,440,326

EXPENSES	
Garden Operations & Programs	\$2,073,089
Gardens & Horticulture	1,632,784
Events	233,007
Education	148,084
Membership & Volunteers	59,214
General & Administrative	595,390
Fundraising	323,088
TOTAL EXPENSES	2,991,567
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$1,448,759

ASSETS	
<i>Current Assets</i>	
Total Cash	\$1,613,896
Total Pledges Receivable	1,866,057
Total Other Current Assets	<u>2,311,524</u>
Total Current Assets	5,791,477
<i>Fixed Assets</i>	
Construction Progress	1,999,197
Buildings & Improvements, net	7,821,090
Land Improvements, net	4,021,815
Land	2,103,199
Equipment, net	80,492
Furniture and Fixtures, net	<u>1,219,128</u>
Total Fixed Assets	17,244,921
Other Assets	1,816,094
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 24,852,492

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
<i>Current Liabilities</i>	
Accounts Payable	\$111,468
Other	1,892,712
Total Current Liabilities	2,004,180
Long-Term Liabilities	<u>425,000</u>
Total Liabilities	2,429,180
<i>Equity</i>	
Net Assets	20,975,053
Change in Net Assets	<u>1,448,259</u>
Total Net Assets	22,423,313
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$ 24,852,492



**Preliminary numbers - unaudited*



WBG MEMBERSHIP

Waterfront Botanical Gardens Members receive unrivaled access to events, programs, and time in the Gardens. Benefits of membership include ticket presales, discounted registration fees, exclusive events, and special recognition. As WBG continues to grow, Members play a critical role in supporting the organization while promoting appreciation, understanding, and conservation of plants and nature.



Learn more at
waterfrontgardens.org/membership

VOLUNTEER IMPACT

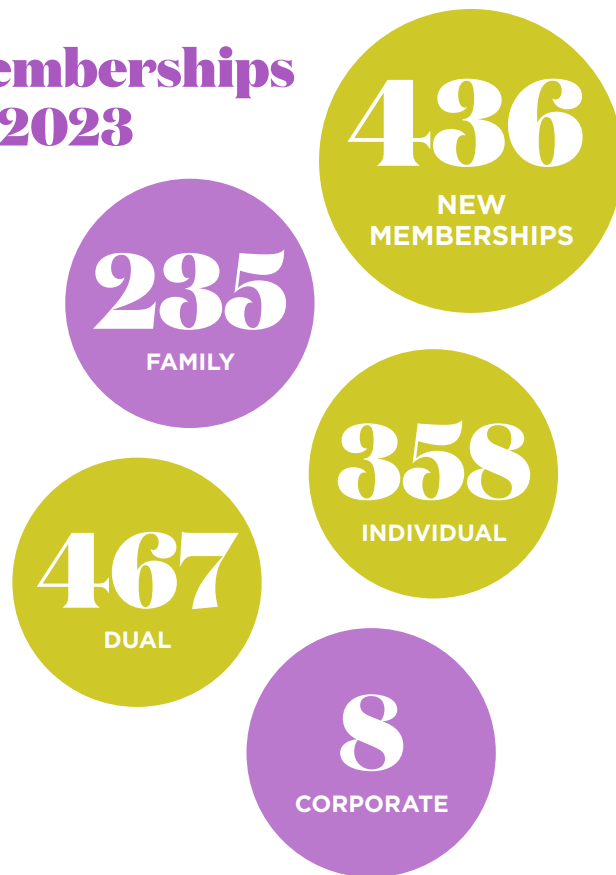
In 2023, Waterfront Botanical Gardens had 293 active volunteers. Volunteers are vital to our success across all departments. Our talented volunteers support the Gardens in many ways, from pulling weeds and mulching with the Horticulture team, to storytime and crafting with our Youth Education department. **Last year, our volunteers collectively worked 5,082 hours, valued at \$161,669.46.** To get involved, visit waterfrontgardens.org/volunteer

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITY	HOURS
Horticulture	1,298
Garden Guiding	1,220
Special Events	788
WBG Board & Executive Committees	750
Youth Education	391
Trainings/Orientations	233
Miscellaneous Support	107
Private Tours	94
Community Outreach	84
Adult Education	81
Office Support	36
TOTAL HOURS	5,082
TOTAL VALUE OF VOLUNTEER HOURS	\$161,669



To get involved, visit
waterfrontgardens.org/volunteer

Memberships in 2023



2023 DOT WADE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

Congratulations to **Trudi Cooke for being named the 2023 Dot Wade Volunteer of the Year!** Trudi exemplifies Dot Wade's passion for service and teaching the community about conservation and stewardship of natural resources through hands-on experiences. We honor you and we thank you!



THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

VOLUNTEERS

(GG) = Garden Guide

Ann Adams (GG)	Bradley Gaines	Mary Mahoney	Trilba Smith (GG)
Patty Anderson	Nancy Gow	Phyllis Manners (GG)	Lisa Soehn
Tony Aulbach	Janet Graeser	Eleisa Mason	Kala Spangler
Dustin Auxier	Jodie Graham	Sue Massey	Marla Spears
Kristy Bachman (GG)	Susan Grant (GG)	Paul Mattingly	Amber Squires
Mary Ellen Baker	Karen Graves	Mary Mccandless	Janice Staugas
William Barnes	Elizabeth Gross	Hannah McClain	Beth Steinbock
Susan Barton (GG)	Ann Groth (GG)	Merri McDonald (GG)	Marian Swisher
Kathleen Becker	John Groth (GG)	James Mcnally (GG)	Elisabeth Taylor
Abbie Bendock	Donna Gruner (GG)	Thomas Meyer	Preston Terry (GG)
Greg Berning	Valerie Hall	Shannon Meyers	Jerry Thomas (GG)
Chris Bidwell (GG)	Stephanie Hamilton	Denise Mitchell	Susan Thomason (GG)
Mary Bidwell (GG)	Ed Hammerbeck	Michelle Morris	Linda Thompson
Sally Blake	Jack Hammerbeck	Donna Myers (GG)	Mary Thompson
Paula Blankenship	Anita Hammond	Gladys Navarro	Fran Tiller
Monica Blondell (GG)	Mike Hanks (GG)	Donna Nistler	Angela Tracy
Sibyl Bogardus	Erin Harris	Stanley Nistler	Paulette Turner
Megan Bradford (GG)	Valerie Hasso	Kathy Nugent	John Uhl
Ann Brian	Toni Hattier	Emily O'Neal	Shirley Uhl
Barry Bridges (GG)	Barbara Hayes	Eleanor Orrillo	Erika Vannostrand
Shalonda Brown	Kathy He(GG)	Janet Rose Ott (GG)	Linda Vasse
Bill Brundage (GG)	H Hill	David Overstreet	Ariana Velasco
Becky Buckler (GG)	Vickie Hillary	Caitlyn Pardue	Richard Vincent
Judy Buckler (GG)	Robert Hillyer	Sarah Pearrow	Linda Wales
Po'iu Burgo	Tyler Himes	Sharen Peckham	Delia Walker (GG)
Danielle Burns	Jeanne Hines (GG)	Mindy Perry (GG)	Kathleen Wang
Paul Buser	Gene Hoffman	Lynne Phillips	Ann Wathen
Wendy Butler	Morgan Hoover	Caisie Pitman	Marianne Wheat
Dianne Bynum (GG)	Robert Hornung Jr.	Ty Pitney	Allison Whitehouse
Richard Campbell (GG)	Freddie Hoskins (GG)	Callie Potts (GG)	Allison Whitehouse
William Campbell (GG)	Patty Hottell (GG)	Ned Price (GG)	Ruth Whitehouse
Susan Carpenter (GG)	Mu Hsu	Lana Proffitt (GG)	Kevin Wilcox
Cameron Carroll	Lisa Huber	Linda Raisle	Kimberly Wilkerson (GG)
Taylor Carroll	Regan Hughes	Beth Ralston (GG)	Christine Wilson (GG)
Larry Carter	Morgan Hunter	Bryan Reid	Roger Wilson (GG)
Cheri Casey	Riyad Imam	Jeri Reid	Ewa Wlodarczyk
Diane Chappell	Megan Immerzeel-Davis	Sara Reinking (GG)	Eva Woodruff (GG)
Jelisa Chatman (GG)	Robert Ipach	Tom Reinking (GG)	Vincent Woolard
Joyce Clark (GG)	Kaeden Jackson	Susie Reis	Jill Zamiska (GG)
Karen Clayton	Mamie Jemerson	Kelley Renfrow	Barbara Zoller (GG)
Lorna Cloud	Lauren Johnson	Donna Rice (GG)	
Bianca Clyde-Palmer	Rayetta Johnson	Mary Jane Rice (GG)	
Hollie Collins	Jane Jones (GG)	Dominique Richard	
Trudi Cooke (GG)	Snake Jones	Mary Richardson	
Victoria Costello (GG)	Barbara Kamer-Thompson (GG)	Anthony Riley	
Colleen Craven-Becker (GG)	Richard Kaukas (GG)	Dick Riney	
Luann Davis	Marlene Kelley	Lacey Ringlespaugh (GG)	
Debby Dawson-Crain (GG)	Maureen Kelty	Karen Rios (GG)	
Clarice Denoux	Mary Kemper (GG)	Marcy Rosengarten	
Caroline Donnelly (GG)	Patricia Kerr (GG)	Madelaine Ru(GG)les	
Christian Dospil	Kathy King (GG)	Brian Sajko (GG)	
Christine Dresselhaus	Gary Kingry	Russell Saunders	
Misty Dunn	Maureen Kingry	Lisa Schmid	
Roger Dutschke	Susan Kissel	Brooke Schmidt	
Jane Dyer (GG)	Leslie Kistner	Amanda Schmitt (GG)	
Jan Eastburn	Bet Kohl (GG)	Richard Schneider (GG)	
Ashlynn Ellis	Margie Kommer (GG)	Gwen Schroder (GG)	
Cindy Emig (GG)	Ramsey Kraft (GG)	Christie Schuessler	
Mary Jane Emrich (GG)	Annie Kupper	Ann Schwartz	
Janice Farish	Susan Lancaster (GG)	Karen Schwartz (GG)	
Lorraine Farris (GG)	Connie Lane	Beth Seibert	
Cassie Fischer	Carole Leonard (GG)	Kelly Shambaugh	
Claudia Foulkes (GG)	Samantha Libert	Tara Sheehan	
Matthew Foy	Mario Lincoln	Hannah Shoup	
Aileen Frazier	Mario Lincoln	Shelly Shrestha	
Judy Fritz	Hoot Lindemann (GG)	John Shulhafer (GG)	
John Fry (GG)	Diane Lippelt	Sara Simmons	
Junelynn Oldham Fultz	Janice Lloyd	David Sipes	
Mark Gaff (GG)	Miriam Long (GG)	Alice Smith	
	Rebekah Love	Benjamin Smith	
	Lynn Luking (GG)	Cynthia Smith	
	Jennifer Luvisi		

VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE

The Volunteer Committee represents all WBG volunteers, serves as the primary volunteer leadership group, and supports WBG staff in the management and advancement of the volunteer program.

Ann Adams
Joyce Clark
Mark Gaff
Lynn Luking
Ned Price
Amanda Schmitt

To learn more, contact
Molly Young, Membership
& Volunteer Manager at
myoung@waterfrontgardens.org

THANK YOU, DONORS!



cherry blossom
society WATERFRONT
BOTANICAL GARDENS

Members of the Cherry Blossom Society have committed to an annual gift of \$10,000 or more. This esteemed society enjoys a customized experience, special access to the Gardens, and other exclusive benefits.

\$250,000+

Commonwealth of Kentucky
Tri-Arrows Aluminum

\$100,000-249,999

Anonymous
David Graeser
Janet and Kurt Graeser
Robert C. Ladouceur
Anonymous
Marianne and Jim Welch

\$50,000-99,999

Kathleen T. Graeser
Kathy and Jack Hillerich
Sisters of Charity of Nazareth
Stock Yards Bank and Trust Co.

\$25,000-49,999

Bernard S. Fineman
Anonymous
Edie Nixon
Estate of Dana Mercure Pettit
Shelly and Kenny Zegart

\$15,000-24,999

Baird Private Wealth
Management
Stephen C. Gault
Debbie and Joe Graviss
John Hubbuch
Susan E. Ochs
Whittenberg Construction Co.

\$10,000-14,999

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Frances and William Earley
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Elizabeth A. Sneed
Carolyn and Don Snow
Virginia Stites
Connie Story and Larry Pierce
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\$5,000-9,999

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Brown-Forman Corporation
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Services Inc.
Esther Costel and Phil Tamplin
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Anonymous
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Mary Anne and Bill Arnold
Auge Family Charitable Fund
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Barbara Banta
Dolores and Bill Bartley
Marcia and Rex Bickers
Marie and Roland Blahnik
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William H. Bowman
Elaine Branaman
Bob Breeden
Edy and Gordon Brown
Cindy and Bill Brundage
Valerie and Greg Buccola
Joseph J. Buchino
Mark E. Cain
Susan S. Carpenter
Jeanne Carr
Cheri Casey and Aldis Norgello
Mary Casey and Joe Perowski
Mary Beth and Charlie Clark
Peggy and J. Terrence Cody
Jayne and John Combs
Adam Coop
Claudia Crump
Holly Davis
Amie and Clinton Deckard
Mary C. DeGraaf
Clarice A. Denoux
Sallie DiLaura
Marcia Dorman
Patrick Dougherty
Laura Dunbar
Wallace H. Dunbar
Raymond A. Farmer
Elizabeth and Kevin Fennell
Carol Ferguson
Mark Gaff
Leigh Garrett
Cynthia and Chris Gault
Susan and Reed Gernert
Sandra and Peter Gerstle
Sue Goodman

Heather and Sloane Graff
John Gregory
Barb and Ed Haines
Judy and Robert Hanekamp
Mary Harty
Linda and Bill Hayes
Kathy and Kyle Hegg
Hikes Point Woman's Club
Katherine and Cody Hill
Peggy and Gene Hoffman
Evelyn Hwang
Patty and William Kantlehner
Sarah and Paul Keith
Ora and Howard Lazarus
Kathy and Stanley Levinson
Sarah Longford and Karl Maier
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Barbara West and Vertner Smith
Christy and Matt White
Juliette Willis and George Davidson
Veronica and Scott Wunderlich
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Sue and Howard Vogt
Jan Yusk and Ted Hodge

\$500-999

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Jenny Brown
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Mary and Bill Cheadle
Mary Crow
Marie Cull
Cultured LLC
Karen Dahlem and Ken Minor
Lorie Davenport
Marina Dennis
Donald R. Dentinger
Judith A. Dickson
Dawn Forbes
Jill L. Force
Joan and LaMar Gaston
Grant Line Nursery & Garden Center
Tracy and Chris Green
Janet and Charlie Hagerty
Frederic T. Harned
Anonymous
Karen Herrell
Clare Hirn and David Henry
Clara and Richard Iler
Mary J. Jennings
Richard Johnson
Helen Jones and Tom Pike
Betty and Tom Klammer
Kroger
Dottie and George McNair
Laura and Andy Means
Susan Means
Marilyn Meredith
Mindy Munson
Leigh and Ken Parrot
Ann Pinski and Thomas Roth
William Quenemoen

Kathryne J. Ratterman
Justin Ray
Alyson Robillard
Lea Ann and Virgil Rose
Raymond Schuhmann
Tamar Schwartz
Jeremy Sickles
Christopher E. Smith
Elizabeth and Richard Steeves
Raegan Stremel
Rhonda Swart
Linda and Kirk Swigert
Sally and Thorne Vail
Keith Williams
Jonathan D. Wolff
Michael Wright

\$250-499

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Nirmala and Mahesh Agrawal
Kathleen Alvey
Anonymous
Cindy and Scott Bagley
Abigail Ball
Emily Beauregard
Kyle Bianconcini
Emily Bingham and Stephen Reily
Bisig Impact Group
Cornelia W. Bonnie
Linda Broecker
Nancy D. Bush
James Cahoe
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132

ADULT
EDUCATION
PROGRAMS

40

WBG BONSAI
COLLECTION



57,106

VISITORS TO
THE GARDENS

91

YOUTH
PROGRAMS

436

NEW
MEMBERS

97

TOTAL
FACILITY
RENTALS

124

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BRICKS
INSTALLED

15,089

PRINTED
NEWSLETTER
RECIPIENTS

16

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19,031
FACEBOOK
FOLLOWERS

18,190
EMAIL
NEWSLETTER
RECIPIENTS

8,594
INSTAGRAM
FOLLOWERS

985
DONORS
IN 2023

3,031
YOUTH
ATTENDEES

423
GROUP TOUR
ATTENDEES

1,431
ADULT
EDUCATION
PARTICIPANTS/
ATTENDEES

293
ACTIVE
VOLUNTEERS





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Cover flora: Globemaster Ornamental Onion (*Allium* 'Globemaster')