

# INBLOOM



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Pictured:  
Plat map of proposed  
site for Louisville's  
Waterfront Botanical  
Gardens

# BOTANICA

## OUR VISION

To create a botanical garden and conservatory of extraordinary beauty that engages, enlightens and inspires people about plants and nature.



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WaterfrontGardens.org**

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## PRESIDENT'S NOTE - THE GREAT TITLE SEARCH



Dear Friends,

During my first meeting with the folks at Louisville Metro Government, one sentence stuck in my brain: "I'd love to let you use the land...but I'm not sure if we own it."

Eventually I understood. Even though the proposed site for the garden at Frankfort Avenue and River Road had been managed by the city for years, there was a chance it didn't have the deeds. Before we could formalize Botanica's acquisition of the site, we needed to prove that Louisville Metro Government actually owned it. Sounds simple enough, right?

Ownership was a bit fuzzy, though. After the monumental 1937 flood, the city took control of the neighborhood and turned it into a landfill. The neighborhood became a dumping ground for construction debris. All of the residents essentially packed their bags and headed for higher ground. For the next 75 years, none of the plots were sold, and no property taxes were paid, so there wasn't a handy paper trail.

What followed was Botanica's Great Title Search - an arduous, complicated review of the sales transactions for over 130 plots of land. The research tracked ownership of the land back to when Jacob Geiger first platted the area around 1833.

I'm happy to share the news that the title search of the proposed garden site is complete - and we didn't get any paper cuts in the process. We've established clear Metro ownership of the site, with only a few details left to work through.

Completing the title search has been an important milestone for us, bringing us one step closer to our goal of formalizing site acquisition by the end of this year. We're still working with the city, and we are optimistic about where we'll be at year's end. This title search itself was expensive and was made possible through the generous funding of individuals such as you - so, thanks!

If you haven't given already, I hope you'll consider supporting Botanica with a donation. Your gift will help us take the next step toward making the Waterfront Botanical Gardens a reality!

Happy gardening,

Brian Voelker  
President, Board of Directors

## BOTANICA'S SUMMER BUS TRIP RECAP BY BRIAN VOELKER

On June 16, Louisville plant lovers were privy to a special treat – Botanica's first-ever summer bus trip! First, we headed to the Boone County Arboretum in Northern Kentucky, where we saw a remarkable collection of trees – from dwarf conifers to giant canopy trees and everything in between. Arboretum director Kristopher Stone shared the story of how the arboretum acquired many of the trees; some of the mistakes that have been made along the way; and how arboretum management has applied the lessons they've learned. We also learned about its vision, which led to the creation of this horticultural treasure – and its partnerships with the local government and extension office.

That day our group also toured the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden, one of the best zoo gardens in the country. We enjoyed its colorful collection of more than 3,000 types of annuals, perennials, shrubs and trees. Many of the plants were part of the zoo's unique Annuals Trial program, wherein new varieties are planted to see how they look and perform in the landscape. We also toured the zoo's conservatory and rain garden, where the latest ideas for reducing urban storm water pollution are put into practice.

We had a great time, and we are looking forward to next summer's bus trip! Where do you think Botanica should travel to next? Let us know your thoughts at [www.facebook.com/botanicaky](http://www.facebook.com/botanicaky).



## FOLLOW BOTANICA ON PINTEREST

<http://pinterest.com/botanicaky/>

Looking for some information on botanical gardens? Turn to Pinterest! Botanica's Pinterest page is an ever-growing collection of information and design ideas for botanical gardens. Take a peek at our Botanical Gardens board, where the pins for the Albuquerque Botanical Gardens and Toronto Botanical Gardens will give you a sneak peek into what a contemporary, energy-efficient conservatory looks like. Images of glass installations in garden settings will conjure up visions of what a partnership between the Waterfront Botanical Gardens and Louisville's art-glass community could look like.

In addition, Botanica's boards offer a collection of design ideas that you can incorporate into your own

garden – ideas for container gardening, vegetable gardening, water features, vertical plantings, garden lighting, raised beds and more! More pins are added each week – so be sure to follow us on Pinterest!



# WORTH THE WAIT – PITTSBURGH ADDS SECOND MAJOR BOTANICAL GARDEN

BY ALEX LUKEN

Pittsburgh is already home to the world-renowned Phipps Conservatory – an award-winning, LEED-certified botanical garden and conservatory founded in 1893. Not content with just one wonderful botanical garden, the city is adding another jewel to its crown with the opening of the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden after decades of planning. The garden, built on top of a former coal mine site, will be completed in three main stages – the first of which is set to open for a “sneak peek” tour this month.



## Creating a Community Vision

The Pittsburgh Botanic Garden’s roots trace all the way back to 1888, to the formation of the Horticultural Society of Western Pennsylvania – a nonprofit organization founded to promote botany and horticulture, the conservation of natural resources and the development of a botanical garden.

In 1992, a workshop was held about the development of the botanical garden. Attendees included local government officials, economic development experts and representatives from community and professional organizations. Noted horticultural leaders from around the country were also in attendance. The result of the workshop was a comprehensive plan and direction for the garden project. A vision was cast for the community, and a consensus was reached regarding the characteristics of the garden project. Direction was also given as to how funding, marketing, programming and future planning would be handled.

The garden was originally to be named the Western Pennsylvania Botanical Garden (WPBG), and the search for suitable property began in 1993. With the assistance of a landscape architecture firm, over 50 parcels of land were evaluated for suitability.

## Complementary Partnerships

In 1996, a partnership was formed with the Pittsburgh Civic Garden Center. The two organizations worked together on fundraising, programming, special events, marketing and public relations. They worked together to promote regional gardening issues and highlight new regional trends and plants. Other complementary relationships were also formed with organizations such as the Pittsburgh Zoo and the Carnegie Museum of Natural History.

## Land Acquisition

An agreement was reached with Allegheny County in 1997 for the WPBG to lease a parcel of land that was located within a larger tract owned by the county, and a lease was signed by both the WPBG and the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy.

## Master Planning

Two years after the lease was signed, a \$100,000 grant was given by the state to be used to pay for the master plan. Fundraising began, along with a search for the perfect landscape architects to oversee the entire project. In 2001, two firms were selected for the project – one to oversee the landscape design and another to focus on buildings and structures.

In 2002, the WPBG hired an experienced executive director to provide dedicated resources to the project. A master plan was completed in 2003, and environmental remediation, water quality and economic impact studies were conducted.

## Groundbreaking

In 2006, a ceremonial groundbreaking was held on-site. Using funds from a \$5 million grant from the state, the WPBG was able to begin work on the entrance corridor to the site. Invasive plant species were removed, the Legacy Trail was constructed and native species were reintroduced to the site. The property had been the site of significant coal mining operations in the 1920s, and remediation of the site was necessary. Federal grants were obtained for portions of the work, including drainage of contaminated surface ponds, removal of contaminated groundwater and collapse of the abandoned mines. The extracted coal was sold to offset the \$7.9 million reclamation costs.

### Community Involvement in Design

In 2010, the name of the garden was officially changed to the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden. Among the first items completed was an Eagle Scout project to build and plant a wildflower trail on the property. Other volunteers planted more than 300 trees, including many native species, to help restore the ecosystem. A nursery, greenhouse, shed and solar-powered irrigation system were also completed. A small tract of additional property was also acquired, which includes an 1855 farmhouse that will eventually become a welcome center for the garden.

### The Next Chapter

Upon completion, the garden is to have 18 thematically distinct gardens, woodland experiences and a visitor's center, as well as outdoor event facilities. Nineteen years have passed from the first planning workshop for

the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden to the completion of the first buildings on-site - the greenhouses in 2011.

Projects of such great magnitude don't just happen. They are a balance of planning, awareness-raising, partnership and fundraising long before any shovels enter the ground. The unexpected often arises along the way, and challenges have to be overcome.

The story of the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden is a great example of what it takes to bring a botanical garden to life. Without the support of the community, the cooperation of the local government, generous donors, people of great vision, and a healthy dose of determination, this project could never have become a reality. This story is still being written, but we look forward to what the coming chapters have to tell us.

A complete history of the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden can be found at [www.pittsburghbotanicgarden.org](http://www.pittsburghbotanicgarden.org).

# Help us grow – become a member today!

By becoming a member you'll be providing essential support to our organization as we work to build the Waterfront Botanical Gardens. You'll receive all the benefits of membership, plus you'll get an inside view as we realize our vision of creating the gardens.

**JOIN US TODAY!**

Become a member:

- Online at [WaterfrontGardens.org](http://WaterfrontGardens.org)
- Mail completed form to:  
**Botanica**  
**PO Box 5056**  
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Botanica Inc. is a 501(c)(3) Not-for-Profit organization. Your donation is tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

## Membership

- Free admission to exclusive, members-only events
- Discounts on tickets to speaker series programs
- A complimentary subscription to our newsletter

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# YOUR FALL LANDSCAPING PLANS BY BOB HILL

**Y**es, it was a summer that left many gardeners cowering in their homes alongside an air-conditioning duct, wondering which bill to pay first – the water or electric – and considering taking out a second mortgage to do so. But nothing lasts forever. The rain inevitably comes. The temperature inevitably changes. So here's a list of 10 things you can and should be doing in your home landscape in the fall.

- 1** Contrary to all those green fertilizer trucks you see running around all summer, fall is the very best time to fertilize and renew your lawn. It's a time when the weed roots are finally beginning to die off, or at least slow down, and your grass needs more food. Go with a fertilizer with a higher nitrogen ratio – such as 20-10-10 – and spread it evenly. Water well.
- 2** Reseed or sod your lawn. The trick to reseeding a ragged-looking lawn is to clear away all thatch, dead grass and debris, and be sure the seed makes good contact with the soil. Use a tall fescue grass; Kentucky Bluegrass may sound homey, but it is NOT a good grass seed for this area. Water well.
- 3** If the heat and drought made a disaster of your garden, consider a fall vegetable garden. The folks at the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture say some crops will do well in the fall – among them lettuce, carrots and kale (which is less bitter in autumn). If you can get them into the ground in early September, you can still get a crop before the first hard frost. (Finding starts is very difficult now, so you may have to go with seeds.)
- 4** Check your landscape for heat and drought damage to your woody ornamentals. It's a grim task, but it's your yard; somebody has to do it. With some shrubs and even trees, it's easy; death is nature's way of telling you it was a bad summer. But most established material, and even the newer stuff that got well-watered, will be fine or at least salvageable. A shrub's leaves may brown, but just nick the bark with your fingernail and look for green as a sign of life. If it's green, you should still be OK. Pliability of the limb is also a good sign. Just keep watering. The problem is that drought damage can be accumulative – two or three summers of drought in a row can fatally damage a tree or shrub.
- 5** Prune away what needs pruning. In the case of drought-damaged plants, prune back everything that is dead or comatose, keeping in mind that many flowering shrubs (lilacs, some hydrangeas and viburnums, for instance) should not normally be pruned back in the fall because they have already set buds for next spring's flowers.
- 6** Check your perennials for damage and, equally important, prune them back to the ground and pick up the mess. What's uglier than an abandoned perennial bed? Most of them will be back in the spring, too. It's their job. While you're at it, divide your perennials in the fall, or at least mark them for early-spring division.
- 7** Start that long-talked-about compost bed. Just pick a corner of the yard – perhaps first defining it with some treated lumber or landscape timbers – and begin piling up the debris, the leaves, the kitchen scraps. Add water on occasion if it doesn't fall from the sky. You will be amazed what life dead debris can bring to your garden. It's great, loamy, wonderful stuff – and your plants will love it, too. It's all just a matter of making composting a habit.
- 8** It's never too soon to begin planning for next year. And there will be a next year, I promise – right on Jan. 1, 2013 (unless the Mayans are right). The garden world is already being inundated with magazines that used to come in January. Be tough on yourself and your garden. What went right, what went wrong, and what are you going to do about it? Then order a few hundred dollars' worth of plants. It's good for the psyche – more proof there will be another year, another chance.
- 9** Admire the neighbor's fall-blooming bulbs. There are many different bulbs out there worth admiring – ones such as colchicum, crocus and cyclamens, the THREE Cs. We are always hung up on spring-blooming bulbs, but the fall-blooming bulbs are an equal joy – and a bigger, much-needed surprise.
- 10** Order your spring-blooming bulbs, and get them in the ground. It might require a pickaxe or backhoe this year, but it is so worth it. Try something different, such as allium, the ornamental onion. The big ones are like pink-purple candy on a stick. It's been a tough year. You deserve a little candy.

# A BIG THANK-YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

Botanica would like to thank the many individuals, organizations and corporations that support our work. The list below reflects memberships and donations received June 1, 2011, through July 31, 2012.

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## BOTANICA RECEIVES A MAJOR DONATION

The Crescent Hill Woman's Club, founded in 1937, recently sold its property on Grinstead Drive and made the decision to donate a portion of the proceeds to Botanica! It **generously donated \$50,000** in honor of two longtime Botanica supporters, Dot Wade and Miriam Mann, who are also members of the Woman's Club. Many thanks to the Crescent Hill Woman's Club, whose generosity will help us as we build the Waterfront Botanical Gardens.

# BOTANICA

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## Botanica's Annual Member Meeting and Garden Tour at Hidden Hill Nursery



Thursday,  
September 27,  
6 p.m.-8 p.m.

Admission is free.  
Light refreshments will be served.

1011 Utica-Charlestown Rd.  
Utica, Indiana 47130

*(Just 15 minutes from  
downtown Louisville!)*

The event will feature updates from Botanica on the organization's progress over the last year, highlighting the advancement of the Waterfront Botanical Gardens project. Bob Hill, writer, radio host, regional botanical expert and owner of Hidden Hill Nursery, will be giving tours of the nursery and providing guests with insights on how he transformed what was once a simple field into the nursery and sculpture garden that it is today. Wear your walking shoes, and feel free to bring a friend or two!

RSVP to 502-276-5404 or  
[info@waterfrontgardens.org](mailto:info@waterfrontgardens.org).

Be sure to leave a message with your name, contact info and the number of people in your party.



Full driving directions at  
[www.hiddenhillnursery.com](http://www.hiddenhillnursery.com).

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