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Yr 03

2019

ANNUAL REPORT

WATERFRONT
BOTANICAL
GARDENS



THE WATERFRONT BOTANICAL GARDENS IS WELL ON ITS WAY.



From the

PRESIDENT

2019 was an incredible year for Waterfront Botanical Gardens.

In spring, we officially changed our name from Botanica Inc. to Waterfront Botanical Gardens. I'm so glad that many of the members of the original Botanica organization were with us to celebrate the opening of the Waterfront Botanical Gardens on Oct. 4.

And what a wonderful day that was! Surrounded by supporters, staff, Board, volunteers, elected officials and more, the Graeser family cut the ribbon on the Graeser Family Education Center, and we officially opened to the public.

Even though many have congratulated us on what we have accomplished in the last few years, the momentum has been building for decades. The current team of staff and Board were lucky enough to carry the ball across the goal line. Our recent work represents the vision of hundreds of people for over 40 years.

Young people often ask me what it's like to work on a project that won't come to full fruition for several more years. Older folks ask how long it will take to build - they are more focused on what they will see in their lifetime. Is this a normal timeline for a large project - specifically a botanical garden?

Yes, other US cities have been building botanical gardens for over 100 years. The Missouri Botanical Garden was the vision of Henry Shaw in 1851. He was a pioneer in building botanical gardens in the US, after visiting many in Europe. The 150-acre garden opened to the public in 1859.

The New York Botanical Garden was founded in 1891, largely through the efforts of Nathaniel Lord Britton, a professor of botany at Columbia University. The 250 acres were opened to the public in 1900.

The Atlanta Botanical Garden started as a small plot of display gardens in 1973, and is now a 30+ acre urban oasis of plants, art, research and more, boasting over 700,000 visitors per year.

And my favorite inspiration, the Naples Botanical Garden in Florida is just 10 years old. In 2009 their now-developed 23 acres were a construction site, much like ours. Executive Director, Donna McGinnis, a mentor and friend, shares helpful information on what can be accomplished in 10 years, and what it means to run a public garden.

2019 was a momentous year in the development of Waterfront Botanical Gardens, and in the history of Louisville. How exciting for all of us to be a part of this history. We will continue to focus and work to complete this project. 2020 will be just as exciting as 2019 as we complete Phase 1, and move toward the building of the Japanese Garden.

So, my answer is that it's amazing to be working on a large project that will take years to fund and build, and will be a significant cultural asset for the city for generations to come. In the future, no one will ever really know what it took to build the dream, the Waterfront Botanical Gardens. Today, our staff, Board, construction team, volunteers, members and donors know what it takes. There's a lot of personal satisfaction to be had from working so hard on a project that will mean so much. Thank you for being a part of our "Dream Team."

Warmly,


Kasey Maier
President



Excerpted from remarks delivered by Board Chair Jon Salomon

AT THE OPENING OF THE GRAESER FAMILY EDUCATION CENTER, OCTOBER 4, 2019

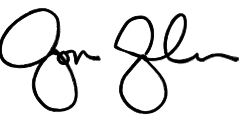
Just a few years ago, our board faced a critical strategic decision: whether to break ground on Phase 1 of the overall master plan for the Waterfront Botanical Gardens, despite lacking resources to complete even the first small piece of it – or to wait until funding for the entire project had been secured. Then, as now, we heard the voices of our believers telling us, in so many words, "if we build it, they will come."

Our believers include Helen Harrigan, a member of our predecessor organization whose love of daylilies, irises and roses inspired her to leave \$1.5 million towards the development of a botanical garden in Louisville when she passed away in 1999; Dot Wade (an avid gardener, trained flower arranger and longtime member of our board); Emil & Nancy Graeser (him a dedicated fan of bonsai and Japanese gardens); George Duthie (a close friend of the Graesers who supported the development of the Gardens in memory of his wife Mary Lee Duthie); Sam Shine (an entrepreneur and supporter of nature conservation) and literally thousands of others in our community who have brought us to today through gifts of their resources and time.

I want to tell you about one more believer who you probably don't know. To be fair, we've only learned about Ellen Leslie recently ourselves. Ellen was a lover of dogs and gardens – she owned Vine Crest Kennels for over 30 years, and took immaculate care of the garden at her home in Lyndon. Ellen was unassuming and lived her life modestly – and when she passed away last summer at the age of 87 (having requested that no visitation or services be held), Ellen left the vast majority of her estate to the Waterfront Botanical Gardens – a gift that we anticipate will exceed five million dollars. We never got to meet Ellen – and she apparently had no interest in the spotlight – but boy, did she ever believe in the Gardens.

Around half a decade ago, after Perkins + Will completed our master plan, we printed booklets depicting what the Gardens might look like if the dream ever became a reality. Emil Graeser sent one of these to each of his children inscribed with a note imploring them to always "believe in the future." This is the lesson that our believers taught by their example – and it remains at the core of our organizational principles.

Because of our committed believers, a landfill has been transformed into a landmark – one that will drive tourism, promote economic growth and further education and appreciation of our natural world. So, thank you to the believers who shared a dream of what this land could become – who led us here through their deeds and generosity – but many of whom are with us now only in spirit, and in our hearts. May their memories live on – as the seeds they have planted here continue to grow for generations to come.



Jon Salomon
Chair, Board of Directors



From the

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Remembering **ELLEN LESLIE**

Excerpts from a 2019 Story

BY BOB HILL

Ellen Leslie's friends and neighbors all agreed she was a strong, independent and hard-working woman with a fun, if not occasionally risqué, sense of humor. She was very approachable, would be as direct with people as the occasion required, and loved her animals and gardens "much more than most humans she knew," as was written in her Courier-Journal obituary.

There was also her very private and generous side revealed in her will after she died at age 87 leaving the Waterfront Botanical Gardens more than \$5 million. "We had no idea it was coming," said Waterfront Botanical Gardens President Kasey Maier.

Nor did Leslie's neighbor and friend Marilyn Taylor. Taylor first met Leslie about 35 years ago, the day before Leslie was to have her vocal cords removed – the result of smoking-induced cancer that left her speaking through an air passage in her throat for the rest of her life.

Leslie, an only child who was briefly married, was the long-time owner of Vine Crest Kennels, a popular, well-worn facility she would donate in 2016 to what became GRRAND Central Station Kennel for rescued Golden Retrievers.

Her father, Fred Bruce Tetzels, a former vice-president of sales at Louisville Gas & Electric, died in 1985 at age 87, and her mother, Helen Downing Tetzels, died in 2006 at age 98. The only other family members at the time of Leslie's death were a niece and great niece.

"She just loved flowers and animals, her yard and her ponds, and every time we went somewhere she would meet people who kept their dogs at her kennel. She would never remember their names, but she would always remember the names of their pets," remembered Taylor.



Leslie rarely traveled, not wanting to leave her kennel. She had three beloved cocker spaniels, Lucy, Tony and Oliver – each a rescue dog. Leslie's three Cocker Spaniels are now in the temporary custody of long-time friend and associate.

Leslie was a tall, stately woman with an infectious smile, her eyes surrounded by large-framed glasses, her hair turning a bright silver as she aged. Her hands were large and strong, the hands of a gardener. Her cancer spread and worsened in later years. Even so, Leslie preferred to do her garden work herself, placing the heavy metal oxygen tank required to keep her breathing in a cart, pulling it behind her in the garden, or rigging it up behind her riding lawnmower.

It has been said by many close to Leslie that she never complained about her health and still wanted to

work in her yard even as a developing pneumonia kept her inside. She died in her home on June 22, 2019 and was buried in the family plot in Cave Hill Cemetery.

Although she had no known contact with anyone on staff at the 23-acre Waterfront Botanical Gardens, Taylor said they drove to look at the site several times. "She loved the whole idea," said Taylor.

Leslie's gift to Waterfront Botanical Gardens will allow the gardens to finish phase one of an estimated three-phase, \$63 million total project cost. Maier said she first heard about Leslie's gift from a phone call. "We had surprise, amazement and tears. It was hard to believe at first, but once we got to know her through others, it was easier to understand. She will long be remembered at Waterfront Botanical Gardens."

“
**She just
loved flowers
and animals,
her yard and
her ponds**
”

ROBERT W. ROUNSAVALL, JR. FAMILY FOUNDATION PLAZA FOUNTAIN



If you visited our site after September of 2019, you would have seen a beautiful bed of annuals as a temporary feature in the Gardens. Thanks to a generous donation from the Robert W. Rounsavall, Jr. Family Foundation at the end of 2019, this bed will be transformed into a plaza fountain with an interchangeable garden bed. The plaza fountain will be located near the main entrance of the Graeser Family Education Center and will sit adjacent to the Beargrass Creek Pathway. We are grateful for the Rounsavall Family Foundation’s support and look forward to unveiling the Plaza Fountain in 2020.

EDUCATION 100 UPDATE

In 2019 our group of Education 100 donors grew to include almost 100 individuals, foundations, and businesses. Each of these donors committed \$10,000 toward the construction of the Graeser Family Education Center and Gardens. This extraordinary group of donors have collectively contributed over \$1 million toward the project. As a result, each of the donors are permanently recognized on the Graeser Family Education Center. The distinctive design of the building

includes 100 pillars, each of which contain the names of the donors, or names of those they would like to remember. In 2020, we will continue to include new donors in our group of Education 100 supporters. We would like to thank all of our Education 100 donors for their vision and continued support. Below are their names and the names of those they wish to recognize.

- Kelley Abell and David Huber
Deena Kinkade Adams & Sumner E. P. Adams
Garden Clubs of Anchorage
Anchorage Botanical Society
The Arnold Family
Regan Atkinson and Brad Titzer
Patricia Wilson Ballard
Barbara Berman
Family of Lee Wilton Davis
Roland and Marie Blahnik
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Norvin, Edie, Brad, Amy, Greg & Matthew Raque
Nancy C. Reynolds
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Leslie Taylor
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The Jim and Christina Ullum Family
Brian Voelker and Christopher Padgett
Dot Wade
Porter Watkins and George Bailey
Suzanne and Robert Wayne
Jenny Wimsatt
Chris and Tiffany Wimsatt
Keith Wimsatt
Scott and Veronica Wunderlich
Susan and Bill Yarmuth

2019 CONSTRUCTION UPDATE



2019 was the Year of Construction.

We went from a concrete slab in January to a fully-functional, finished event space that holds 250 people in September.

During the year, Whittenberg Construction completed their work on the building. T&C Contracting continued site work on the Beargrass Creek Pathways, the plaza, planting areas, temporary gravel parking lot, water wall and much more.

The Horticulture team and volunteers worked very hard through the summer drought to prepare the gardens for the Oct. 4 opening. There were no major delays and everything looked beautiful for our opening week events.

In the weeks leading up to opening the site looked very much like a construction site. Last minute fixes and changes were made. Gardens were planted.

After the Grand Opening, there was more work to be done. Thanks to those who sponsored elements of the Gardens, we were able to move forward with:

The bronze sculpture by Rowland Jones, *Capriccio*, sponsored by Patricia Sullivan

The Sally and Charlie Moyer Pollinator Garden, surrounding *Capriccio*

The Duthie Gardens, sponsored by the Duthie Family in memory of Mary Lee Duthie

The Dr. John and Bonnie Roth and Family large plaza bench

The granite water wall, sponsored in memory of Jayne Harlan Nichols

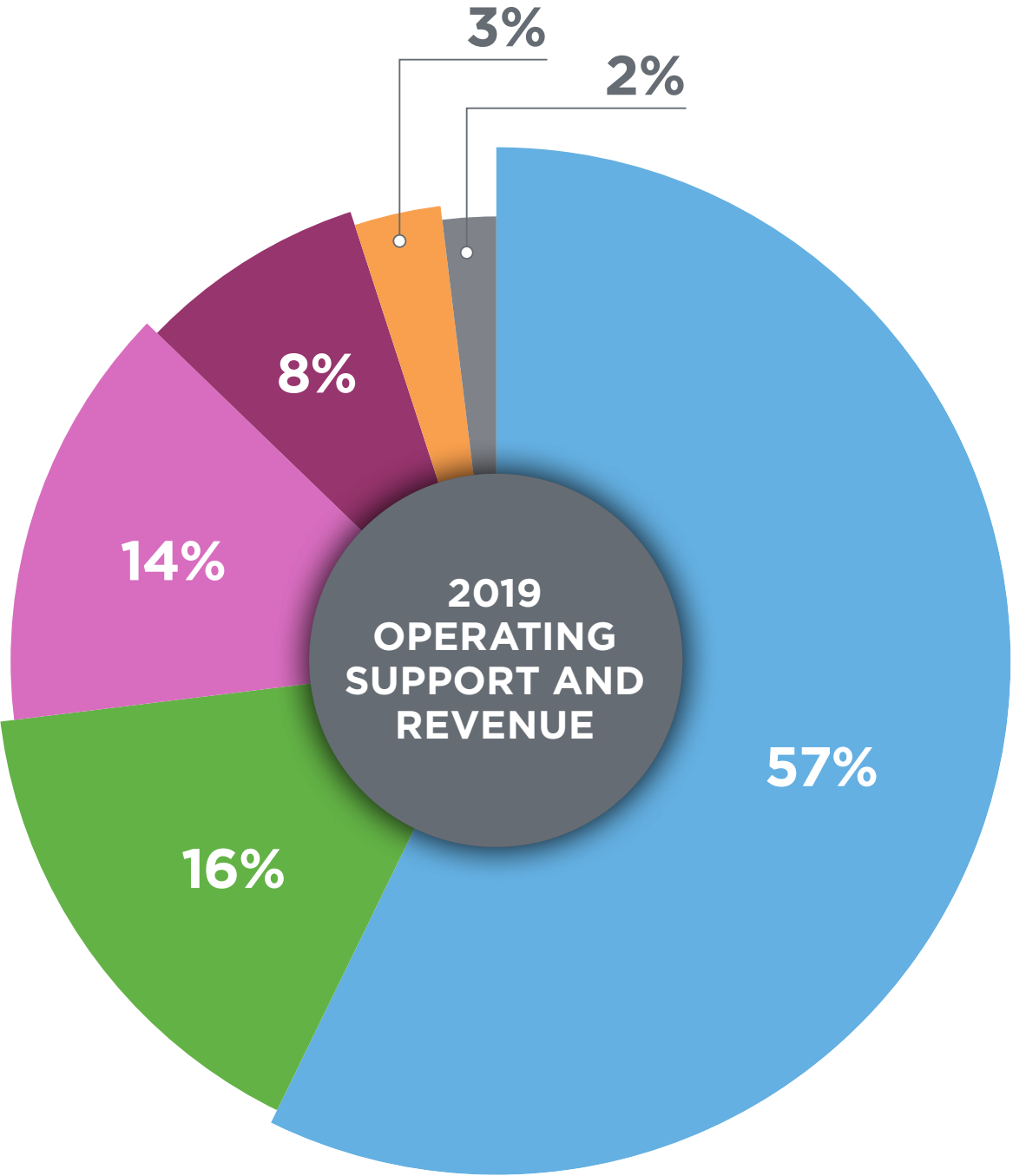
The Kentucky Native Gardens, sponsored in memory of Betty and Robert Bronner

The Plaza Fountain, sponsored by the Robert W. Rounsavall Jr. Family Foundation

Small bench sponsors, donor wall sponsors, the donors in the Education 100, and of course, the Graeser Family

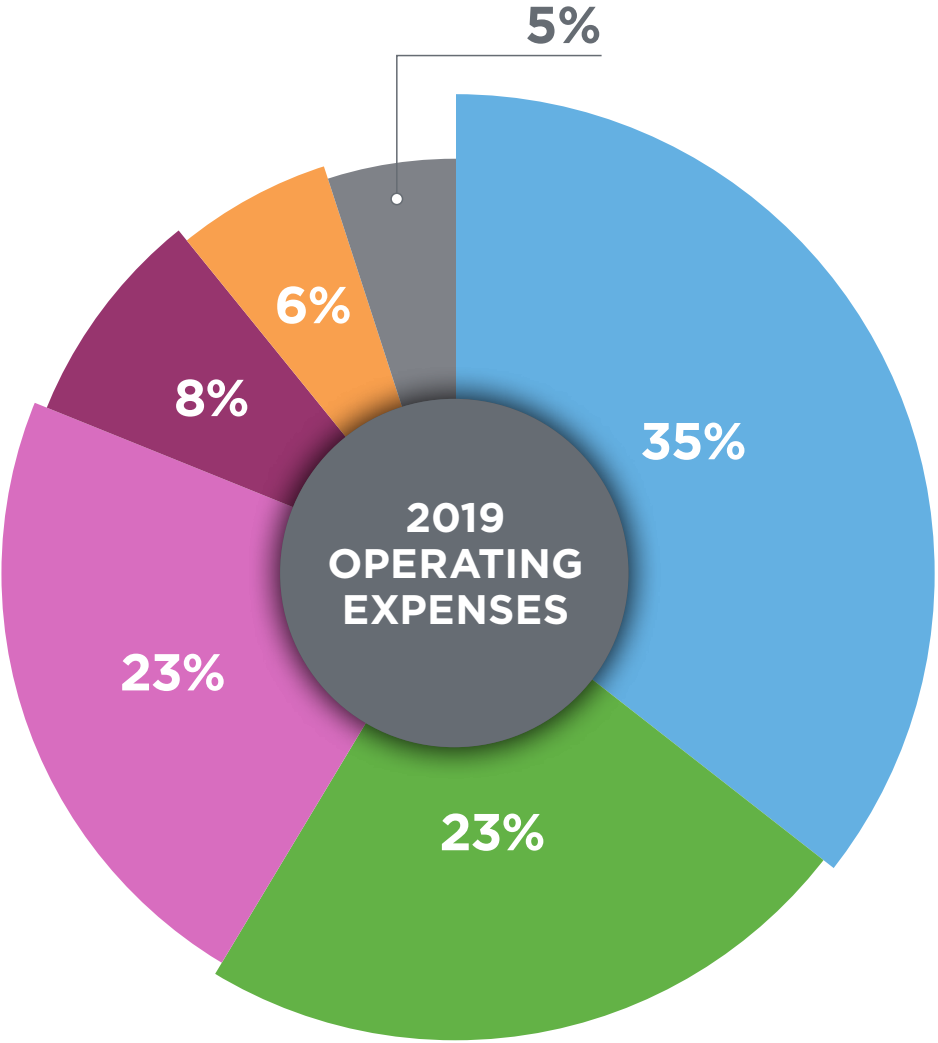


2019 FINANCIALS



REVENUE		EXPENSES	
Earned Income	\$ 162,483	Payroll	\$ 567,566
Individuals	\$ 3,066,567	Professional Services	\$ 94,459
Foundations & Corporations	\$ 769,396	Programs and Events	\$ 361,646
Government	\$ 859,651	Marketing	\$ 124,944
In-Kind	\$ 89,336	Fundraising	\$ 73,558
Other Income	\$ 459,463	Operating & Administration	\$ 368,009
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 5,406,896	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,590,182

ASSETS		LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	
Current Assets		Current Liabilities	
Total Cash	\$ 1,697,581	Accounts Payable	\$ 87,616
Total Pledges Receivable	\$ 312,160	Other	\$ 47,886
Total Other Current Assets	\$ 369,427	Total Current Liabilities	\$ 135,502
Total Current Assets	\$ 2,379,168	Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$ 390,000
Fixed Assets		Total Liabilities	\$ 525,502
Construction in Progress	\$ 249,164	Equity	
Buildings (less accumulated depreciation)	\$ 5,149,751	Net Assets	\$ 9,574,886
Land Improvements (less accumulated depreciation)	\$ 1,817,986	Net Income	\$ 3,816,714
Land	\$ 1,563,475	Total Equity	\$ 13,391,600
Equipment (Less accumulated depreciation)	\$ 126,705	TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Furniture and Fixtures (less accumulated depreciation)	\$ 490,695		\$ 13,917,102
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 9,397,776		
Other Assets			
Beneficial Interest in Harrigan Trust	\$ 2,140,158		
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 13,917,102		





reGeneration Fair, Oct. 12, 2019



Bug Ball, Oct. 12, 2019



Americorps Team



reGeneration Fair, Oct. 12, 2019



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, Oct. 4, 2019



Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, Oct. 4, 2019



Sacred Heart Madrigals, Dec., 2019



Avish Culinary Series



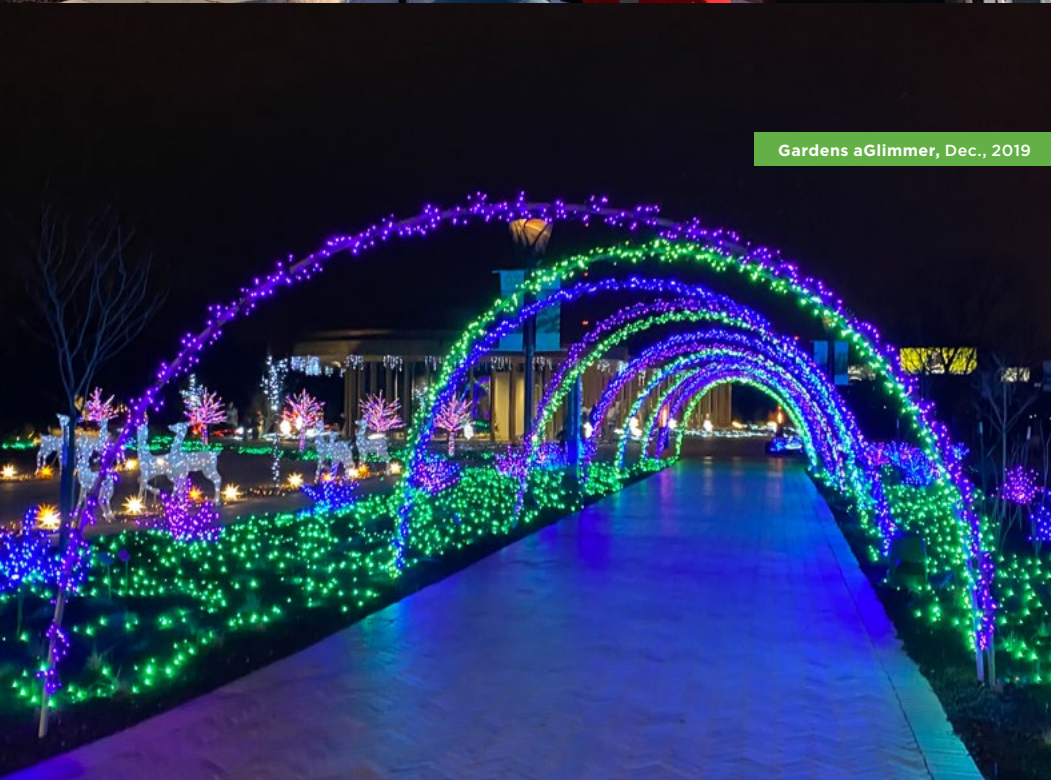
Canoe Tour



Yoga



Night of a Thousand Flowers Gala, Delfeayo Marsalis Quintet, Oct. 12, 2019



Gardens aGlimmer, Dec., 2019



reGeneration Fair, Oct. 12, 2019

2019 EVENTS

VOLUNTEERS



The October grand opening of the Graeser Family Education Center

The successful grand opening of the Graeser Family Education Center required hundreds of volunteer hours throughout the year. In addition to our usual participation in community outreach events, a dedicated group of volunteers tended to our new plants

out at the Avish and at Hidden Hill Nursery, plants that would one day find a home at the main WBG site.

Another crew of about 60 individuals were on call nearly the whole month of September to help us get all the plants in the ground in time for the ribbon-cutting ceremony on October 4.

In addition to our regular 250 active volunteers, 2019 saw the creation of our Garden Guide program. These volunteers have undergone many hours

of instruction on all topics WBG - from site history, to the people of the project, to the current construction and future plans, to the state of the soil and plants in the garden. Outside of the core training, there are also supplemental classes on more specific topics of interest. Armed with this knowledge, Garden Guides are on hand during our visiting hours to welcome guests and answer any questions that they have about the project. In 2019, two classes of 60+ Garden Guides graduated from the program.

Conceived in January 2016, the **Waterfront Botanical Gardens Cultivators** is a young professionals group for earth-lovers who are interested in connecting with other like-minded friends on the principles of environmental education, sustainability, and strengthening cultural life in our hometown.

The Cultivators are the young professionals' group of Waterfront Botanical Gardens. They seek to advocate for WBG in the community, draw individuals within a younger age demographic into the project, and collaborate with like-minded organizations on green projects in the city. In 2019, the Cultivators hosted several trivia nights, represented WBG at community fairs and festivals,

participated in tree plantings and greenspace clean ups, organized garden tours, and hosted their 3rd annual Sips & Seeds event.



THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

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Ellen T. Leslie

\$500,000-\$999,999

Commonwealth of Kentucky

\$100,000-\$499,999

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The Gheens Foundation, Inc.
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Robert W. Rounsavall, Jr. Family Foundation

\$50,000-\$99,999

Anonymous
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Sally and Charlie Moyer
Ogle Foundation
Barbara Schwartz, in memory of Betty and Robert Bronner

\$25,000-\$49,999

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