



**THE GARDENS**  
ON SPRING CREEK  
2019 ANNUAL REPORT



**Vision:** To be a world-class botanic garden that is community oriented, educational, experiential and sustainable.

**Mission:** To enrich the lives of people and foster environmental stewardship through horticulture.

## FROM THE DIRECTOR MICHELLE PROVAŽNIK

When I started at The Gardens twelve years ago, I never would have believed we would complete the original Master Plan during my tenure. Not to mention butterflies – they weren't even a passing thought. We did it!

For The Gardens, 2019 was transformational in every way – new gardens, new building spaces, new team members, new operational partnership, new processes and procedures. It was an odd year that included a full closure during the winter; the Visitor's Center closed for eleven months; staff relocating to the Evelyn Clark Classroom, education programs held offsite; renovation projects in our closed gardens; thousands of plants added to the new gardens; and months of researching, creating and implementing new programs and policies.

We added 2.5 full-time positions – a Conservatory and Greenhouse Horticulturist, a Development Officer and a .5 Horticulturist. We also created a new Guest Services Team, adding five part time staff to help welcome visitors and manage the expanded gift shop. In addition, we welcomed three new members to the family from the Butterfly Pavilion. While they are Butterfly Pavilion employees, they fit right into The Gardens team.

On November 16, 2019, we held our Grand Re-opening. It was so exciting to welcome back the one thing that had been missing throughout the year – people. It's been full steam ahead ever since.

I am so proud of all the people who made this historic milestone a reality. My deepest appreciation to the amazing Gardens Staff, dedicated Friends of the Garden Board of Directors, and an outstanding Volunteer Corps. Special thanks to the architects and contractors who were a part of the project. Without the support of our donors, Fort Collins voters, and City of Fort Collins leaders none of this would have been possible. It has been my honor and privilege to work with each of you.



## FRIENDS OF THE GARDENS ON SPRING CREEK

The Friends of the Gardens on Spring Creek is the non-profit partner of the Gardens on Spring Creek, a City of Fort Collins facility. The Friends is a member-based organization led by a volunteer Board of Directors. Its mission is to cultivate a world-class botanic garden through fundraising and advocacy.

It was a very busy year for the Friends Board. Highlights include: completed fundraising for the capital campaign, launched a new membership program, began raising funds for the Gardens for All program, and negotiated a new partnership agreement with the City of Fort Collins.

## MEMBERSHIP AND FUNDRAISING

2019 was a year of great change for the fundraising and development operations at The Gardens. In June, The Gardens welcomed its first full-time Development Officer. In September, embarked on its first ever Membership Campaign. And in December, launched a first-of-its-kind equity and access program called Gardens for All. In between, the existing Membership program was rethought, revamped, and relaunched, and the entire roster of Corporate Partnership opportunities – Official Sponsors, Corporate Members, Event Sponsors – received an overhaul.

On August 30, 2019, The Gardens had 572 active Member Households. By the end of the year, after three separate Membership development drives, that number increased to 1,792.

Through the closure, The Gardens was fortunate to retain all Official Sponsors, however, the 2019 event roster was severely impacted by the construction schedule. The popular Garden A-Fare events and the Halloween Enchanted were cancelled, and Blossoms and Butterflies was moved to a disadvantageous time in the calendar due to a scheduling conflict. Three events that were not affected – High Plains Landscape Workshop, Urban Homestead Tour, and Garden of Lights – performed very well. The Gardens and Friends raised \$47,000 in cash Sponsorships for 2019.

In December 2019, The Gardens launched its equity and access program called Gardens for All and dedicated its Annual Campaign appeal and CO Gives Day efforts towards its roll out. Overall, The Friends of the Gardens raised \$25,021 for its Annual Campaign and CO Gives day in 2019.







## **EDUCATION**

While closed most of 2019, The Gardens held an abbreviated spring adult class series at the Carnegie Center for Creativity (CCC) reaching 204 participants. Gardens Educators also led 4 weeks of Summer Camp at the CCC educating 82 students and reached an additional 67 students through new High School Programs. Working with many community partners, Gardens Educators implemented a strong outreach program reaching almost 1,500 youth and adults.

Throughout the closure, the Education Team restructured the Read and Seed program and curriculum; aligned School Tours to the new state science standards; and shared a newly created collection of school programs leading to a sold-out 2020 spring season.

## **NEW ADMISSION PROGRAM AND GARDENS FOR ALL**

During the closure, Gardens Staff and Friends Board Members researched various admission and membership programs. The team benchmarked sister gardens in Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah and Idaho and museums and zoos from Fort Collins to Colorado Springs. This information was used to create a new admission and membership structure of rates, types and benefits while aligning to the new operating budget. The operating partnership with Butterfly Pavilion was also considered as there are fixed costs and a portion of daily admission owed for their services.

Gardens for All is a multi-faceted equity and access program created to increase our community's access to the benefits and experiences available at The Gardens on Spring Creek. The program was developed and released simultaneously with the new admission and membership model that launched with The Gardens re-opening. Gardens for All is primarily grant and donor funded with some additional support provided by the City of Fort Collins. During the 6 weeks The Gardens was open in 2019, 488 community members were served through the Gardens for All program.



## VOLUNTEERS

The Gardens volunteers continue to amaze and inspire. Despite the closure and most events and programs on hiatus, 538 volunteers contributed 6,717 hours of time at The Gardens. Most hours were contributed at the Spring Plant Sale, planting and maintenance in the new gardens, Garden of Lights and through the new Butterfly House Brigade. Thank you to the many individuals and groups who spend their time with The Gardens. The following businesses and organizations volunteered in 2019:

- Associates in Family Medicine
- Boy Scouts of America
- City of Fort Collins Utilities
- CSU Business School
- FRCC Horticulture
- Garden Art Landscaping
- Larimer County Workforce Center
- National Charity League
- Northern Colorado Daylily Club
- Otero
- Otterbox
- Starbucks
- The Center for Family Outreach
- United Way
- Volunteers of American RSVP
- WaterPik
- Wipfli CPA and Consultants
- Young Men's Service League

## HORTICULTURE

The horticulture team had the unbelievable challenge of getting 5 new acres of gardens ready for opening, in addition to renovation projects in existing gardens, and securing and planting plants in the new Butterfly House. The team exceeded all expectations.

Over 10,000 plants were added to the new gardens. The Foothills and Prairie Gardens and Undaunted Garden were priorities with the majority installed. The themed gardens and other areas around the stage were also planted. Yards of wood mulch and tons of rock mulch were laid. Plant signage began with more to come for 2020.

To take advantage of the closure, several projects were completed in the existing gardens. The Children's Garden had the watering can relocated and a new group entrance installed; replacement of the green roof shelter roof; a makeover of the model train garden, and a renovation of the Secret Garden and areas around the pond. The Garden of Eatin' had concrete edging added to the pathways; one of the raised beds re-built; the Continental US Garden renovated; and soil building efforts in several of the garden beds. The entrance gardens were either renovated or prepped for new plantings in 2020.

And last, but certainly not least, plants from around the country were transported to Fort Collins and planted in the new Butterfly House. A new living wall was designed, planted and installed creating a unique showpiece in our community.

## GRAND OPENING

The Gardens on Spring Creek emerged from its two-year metamorphosis Saturday, November 16 to celebrate its long-awaited Grand Opening! Brisk air and sunny skies welcomed community members to the official ribbon cutting ceremony where Director Michelle Provaznik, Friends Board President Nate Budd, and City of Fort Collins Mayor Wade Troxell provided remarks. Over 1,000 community members visited during opening weekend to catch a glimpse of the much-anticipated butterflies and explore the new garden areas.







## REVENUE

City of Fort Collins: \$955,234

Memberships: \$128,838

Earned Revenue: \$265,125

Donations: \$154,494

Capital Donations: \$159,154

In-Kind Donations: \$99,981



## COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

The strength of The Gardens stands solidly with our active partners in the community. Thank you to the following for their continued dedication to a shared vision and mission in 2019.

**Ability in Motion** – Community Gardens in Parks

**Alliance for Suicide Prevention** – Gardens for All

**Alternatives to Violence** – Gardens for All

**Audubon Rockies** – program and event support

**Bird Conservancy of the Rockies** – program and event support

**Boys and Girls Club** – outreach programming

**Butterfly Pavilion** – operating partner

**Cargill**– STEM in the Gardens

**ChildSafe** – Gardens for All

**City of Fort Collins departments**

Utilities – co-host High Plains Landscape

Workshop, program and event support, NoCo Bloom

Museum of Discovery – program and event support

Natural Areas – program and event support

Wellness – subsidizing adult education for employees



## **Colorado State University**

Entomology - Bug Zoo outreach  
College of Natural Sciences - Curriculum Development  
College of Natural Resources - program and event support  
School of Nutrition - interns and curriculum development  
Extension: Twilight Garden Series, co-host High Plains  
Workshop, and adult education program support, NoCo Bloom  
Horticulture Department - Adult education programming support,  
Twilight Garden Series, Spring Plant Sale, NoCo Bloom, interns  
Human Development and Family Studies - interns  
School of Social Work - interns  
Occupational Therapy - research partners  
Sociology - research partners

**Dementia-Friendly Communities** – Gardens for All

**Denver Botanic Garden** – Regional botanic garden partner

**FOCO Cafe** – programs and event support

**Food Bank for Larimer County**– Plant it Forward,  
Community Gardens in Parks

**Foster and Adoptive Program** – Gardens for All

**Foothills Gateway** – Gardens for All

**Front Range Community College** – Horticulture  
Department - Spring Plant Sale

**Footwaters Institute** – Adult Programming

**Healing Warriors Program**– Gardens for All

**High Plains Environmental Center** – program and event support

**La Familia** – Gardens for All

## **Larimer County**

Dept of Natural Resources: Program and event support  
Economic and Workforce Development: Gardens for All

**Loveland Youth Gardeners** – NoCo Urban Homestead Tour

**Matthew's House** - Gardens for All

**Natural Resources Research Center** - parking partnership

**Northern Colorado Daylily Club** - Daylily garden

**Partners Mentoring Youth** - Gardens for All

**Poudre River Library District** - Gardens for All, Seed Library



## (COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS CONT.)

### **Poudre School District**

Youth education and learning programs,  
curriculum support, Gardens for All

Head Start: Youth programming agreement and community nights

**Ramsstrength** - Gardens for All

**Respite Care** - Gardens for All

**Schools and Outdoor Learning Environments**

**(SOLE)** - youth programming support

**Summitstone Behavioral Health** - Gardens for All

**Sunshine House** - parking partnership

**Trees, Water and People** - program and event support

**TriHydro** - Community Gardens in Parks

**UC Health** - Healthy Family Initiative

**Vegetable Connection** - Community Gardens in Parks

**Veterans for Food Bank** - Community Gardens in Parks

**Weld RE4 School District** - curriculum support

**Wild Birds Unlimited** - event and program support



## CORPORATE AND FOUNDATION SUPPORT

The Gardens on Spring Creek and the Friends of the Gardens Board are grateful to the many local businesses and foundations that provide in-kind services and cash donations to our organization. Their support is critical to the success of our special events and overall operations. Corporate and Foundation supporters in 2019 included:

Ace Hardware Downtown  
Ace Hardware of Fort Collins  
Associates in Family Medicine  
Audubon Rockies  
Bee Squared Apiaries  
Bohemian Foundation  
Brent and Becky's Bulbs  
Café Vino  
Cargill  
Center for ReSource Conservation  
City of Fort Collins, Fort Fund  
City of Fort Collins, Nature in the City  
City of Fort Collins, Utilities  
Coloradoan  
Colorado Rain Catcher  
Colorado State University -  
Horticulture  
Colorado State University Extension –  
Larimer County  
Community Foundation of Northern  
Colorado  
Co's BMW Center  
Estes Park Garden Club  
Eye Center of Northern Colorado  
Ewing Irrigation

Fiona's Delicatessen & Catering  
Fish's Liquor  
Fort Collins Nursery  
Fort Fund  
Front Range Community College  
Garden Art Landscaping  
Gulley Greenhouse  
Harrell's  
High Plains Environmental Center  
KUNC 91.5FM / KJAC Colorado Sound  
Loveland Ale Works  
Loveland Garden Center  
Moot House  
Northern Water Conservancy  
North Forty News  
Nutrien  
Odell Brewing Company  
OtterCares Foundation  
Outpost Sunsport  
Palmer Flowers  
People and Pollinators Action  
Network  
Plant Select  
Poudre Pet & Feed Supply  
Prairie Mountain Media  
Resource Central  
Rotary Club of Fort Collins  
Sandbox Solar  
Savory Spice Shop  
Serimus Foundation  
Sprouts  
Street Media  
Tim Foolery Magic  
ValPak  
Veriquest Ltd.  
Wild Birds Unlimited  
Wilkins Charitable Trust  
Woodward  
Zak George Landscaping  
Zebulon Solutions

