

GARDENS on Spring Creek

2015 Annual Report



Take Root. Grow. Flourish.

the
GARDENS
on Spring Creek

From the Director, Michelle Provaznik

In partnership with the Friends of the Gardens on Spring Creek Board of Directors, we officially launched a \$6.0 million capital campaign to complete The Gardens! The campaign has three phases: garden completion - \$2.5 million; Visitor's Center expansion/completion - \$3.0 million; and endowment fund - \$500,000.

This has been a huge undertaking for a small organization, and we have had much success in a short amount of time:

- Voters approved BOB 2.0, securing \$2 million for completion of the Visitor's Center
- Lead gifts from Bohemian Foundation and Woodward Charitable Trust totaling \$1 million - includes \$500,000 in challenge matching grants.
- Raised over \$75,000 for the endowment fund securing a \$25,000 matching grant from the Community Foundation of Northern Colorado.
- Had the largest Colorado Gives Day and Annual Campaign donations ever! All monies were designated towards securing the challenge matching grants above.



While 2015 was a lot of work behind the scenes regarding future development, The Gardens itself was a very busy place with education programs, volunteers, community events and beautiful gardens to be explored. I invite you to read on for information about this exciting year.



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

Volunteers

Our volunteers continue to amaze us with their passion, dedication and willingness to do just about anything we can dream up. They assist with gardening and greenhouse work, education programs and tours, special events, facility maintenance, gift shop and office tasks, and they serve on our Friends Board of Directors. There is nothing that isn't touched in some way by our volunteers. Their support is both humbling and inspiring.

In 2015, there were 1,400 volunteers who donated 11,377 hours of their time! This is nearly a 10% increase

over 2014 and is valued at \$262,473. We were pleased to honor the following volunteers at our annual appreciation event:

- Phoebe Slingman** – Volunteer of the Year
Ron Chappell – Compost King
Nancy Gescheidt – Helping Hand
Ken Dunnington – Helping Hand

A special thank you to all of our volunteers. We simply couldn't do it without them.



Friends of the Gardens

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. Over the years, their support and hard work have been essential to establishing and growing The Gardens. In 2015, the Friends Board, led by Randy Morgan, was instrumental in securing funding for capital expansion of our gardens, Visitor's Center and the endowment fund, ensuring long-term sustainability for The Gardens programs and operations.

Thanks to the following people for serving on the 2015 Board of Directors:

Jesse Eastman | Sally Guthart | Jessica Hunter | Randy Morgan
John Papile | Marcia Petrun | Roger Warren | Dulcie Willis

We also wish to extend a special welcome to new board members:
Jeffrey Cullers | Nathaniel Budd

We wish to extend extra thanks to:
Randy Morgan who is also serving as the capital campaign chairman.



Board Members Left to Right: John Papile, Jesse Eastman, Dulcie Willis and Jessica Hunter.

Education

Adult and youth education programs are at the heart of our mission of enriching the lives of people and fostering environmental stewardship through horticulture.

While wet spring weather caused many cancellations of school tours, we had a 12 percent increase in children participating in Gardens youth programs. New all-day summer camps proved to be popular with both parents and kids. A 40 percent increase in scholarships utilized ensures our programming is available to all.

Adult education classes kicked off in January with a series of gardening and art classes and continued throughout the year. Overall, we conducted 35 adult education classes with 559 attendees. In addition, the annual High Plains Landscape Workshop educated 350 people about sustainable gardening practices for Front Range gardeners while raising over \$15,000 for The Gardens Horticulture and Education programs.



Horticulture

Yes, it rained and snowed again at the Spring Plant Sale. And yet, we were amazed at the number of people who came out to buy plants and support The Gardens and our Horticulture partners at Colorado State University and Front Range Community College. It was the best plant sale ever—who would have thought? The horticulture staff and all of the volunteers did an outstanding job.

Although we didn't add any new gardens in 2015, our horticulturists and volunteers were busy getting our plant collection entered into a new plant database program. In the fall, we were excited to launch the program "Garden Explorer" so that virtual visitors can explore our plants. There is still much work to be done, but a huge step towards cataloging our collection was accomplished.



Community Garden Outreach Program

The Community Garden Outreach Program continues to provide significant impact for many in our community. In spite of weeks of rain during planting season, under the tremendous care of staff and volunteers the Garden of Eatin' produced 7,010 pounds of fruits and vegetables for the Food Bank for Larimer County and 227 pounds for classes, special events and programs.

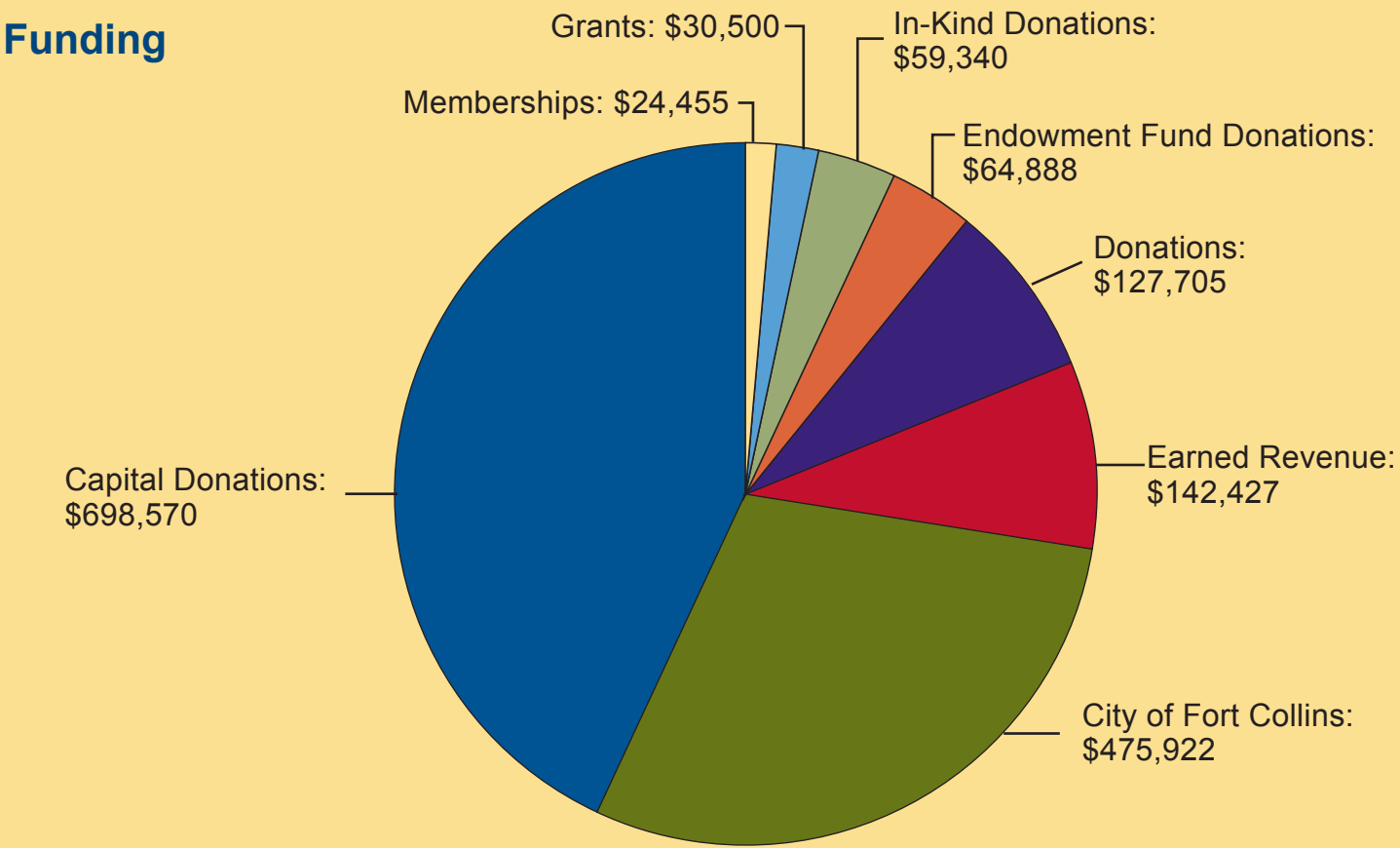
The Plant it Forward program collected 31,632 pounds of garden fresh produce from community members, organizations, businesses and 15 neighborhood

champions. The Food Bank used the produce in its Food Share, Food Link and Kids Café programs.

We opened another community garden at the Senior Center and now have 107 garden plots at six locations available across Fort Collins with many gardeners still on waitlists. We implemented a new community garden application process and plan to open another garden in 2016. Additionally, we piloted a new education/work day component providing gardeners opportunities for learning while meeting their community garden requirements.

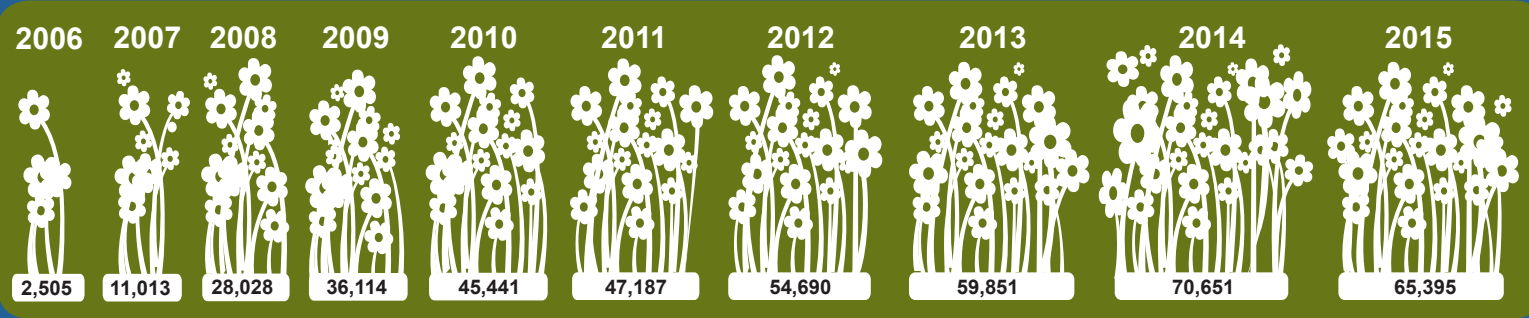


Funding



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

Visitation



Special Events

The Gardens Special Events continue to be important drivers of visitation and revenue while providing mission-oriented programming. Garden of Lights, the Spring Plant Sale and Halloween Enchanted Gardens were the most popular events of 2015. Our net revenue from events and sponsors was \$176,784. This revenue directly supports our horticulture, education and community programs.

We mixed things up with the Harvest Festival by partnering with City of Fort Collins Natural Areas and Larimer County to create Nature’s Harvest Fest—a

mashup of our Harvest Festival and the Nature Festival. The first event was a huge success—and the live butterfly release was magical.

The Gardens was surprised and honored to have Garden of Lights named the number 2 Holiday Display in the state of Colorado just behind the Denver Zoo by *OnlyInYourState.com*. It was exciting to have our handmade and homegrown display get some outstanding recognition.

Community Partnerships

Audubon Rockies – Nature’s Harvest Fest and Habitat Hero programs

City of Fort Collins departments – work with Utilities to present the High Plains Landscape Workshop, REPS program and other classes; work with the Parks Department’s Botanical Team and Safety Committee; partnered with Parks, Park Planning, and Neighborhood Services to build community gardens in parks; co-host school field trips and planned Nature’s Harvest Fest with the Natural Areas Department, work with Wellness team on classes for City employees

Branch Out Cider – Nature’s Harvest Fest

Colorado Parks and Wildlife – Nature’s Harvest Fest

Colorado State University – Departments of Horticulture; Entomology; Human Development and Family Studies; School of Business Marketing Department; Gillette Entomology Club – partner on events, host internships, Service Learning, and Key Cluster, SLiCE and club volunteer opportunities for students

Early Childhood Council of Larimer County – helping to expand youth programs through information and outreach

Food Bank for Larimer County – 7,010 pounds of produce grown at The Gardens was donated to the Food Bank; 31,632 pounds donated by local gardeners through Plant it Forward

Front Range Community College – Spring Plant Sale partnership with Horticulture Department; Environmental Education Department – youth programs; intern host; volunteer site for service learning projects

The Gabriel Foundation – provide youth and family presentations

Garden Clubs – including the Northern Colorado Railroad Gardeners, Northern Colorado Daylily Club, Rocky Mountain Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society, and Colorado Dahlia Society

Girl Scouts of Colorado – complete service learning projects as part of scout badge programs

High Plains Environmental Center – partner on education programs

Larimer County Cooperative Extension – co-host Twilight Garden Series, High Plains Landscape Workshop, and provide Master Gardeners to teach classes

Larimer County Department of Natural Resources – co-sponsor Nature’s Harvest Fest

Larimer County Workforce Center – host internships

Larimer County Conservation Corps – AgriCorps projects in the Garden of Eatin’

Let’s Move! Museums and Gardens – part of a national campaign to prevent childhood obesity through gardening and cooking programs

Little Shop of Physics – Partner at Halloween Enchanted Gardens

Loveland Youth Gardeners – co-hosted the NoCo Urban Homestead Tour fundraiser

National Charity League – mother/daughter volunteers assisted with youth programs, garden projects and special events throughout the year

Northern Colorado Beekeepers Association – youth programs and special events

Plant Select® – host a Plant Select® demonstration site

Poudre School District –host school field trips and service learning projects; serve on the School Garden Committee; provide community garden plots for Linton and Riffenburgh Elementary Schools; Summer Learning Institute for PSD employees

Regional botanic gardens – collaborated with staff of regional botanic gardens including Denver Botanic Gardens, Cheyenne Botanic Garden, and Betty Ford Alpine Gardens

Rocky Mountain Raptor Program – assist with youth programs and Nature’s Harvest Fest

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory – assist with youth programs

SER Jobs for Progress – host interns

Sproutin’ Up – Community garden partner

United Way – volunteer site for Make a Difference Day; and part of DOVIA (Directors of Volunteers In Agencies). United Way helped with volunteer recruitment/pairing assistance for The Gardens

U.S. Forest Service – Tree Trunks

Volunteers of America – host site for the RSVP program

Corporate and Foundation Support

The Gardens on Spring Creek and the Friends of the Garden 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 2015 included:

Advanced Energy Industries	Fort Collins Breakfast Rotary	OtterCares
Bath Garden Center & Nursery	Fort Collins Nursery	Outpost Sunsport
Black Bottle Brewing	Fort Collins Tours	Poudre Pet & Feed Supply
Bohemian Foundation	Fossil Creek Nursery	Renewableblue
Brent & Becky's Bulbs	Frameworks Timber	Restaurant 415
City of Fort Collins, Fort Fund	Funkwerks	Savory Spice Shop
City of Fort Collins, Utilities	Gallegos Sanitation	Screen Door Studios
Clay's Ace Hardware	Garden Art Landscaping	Seasonal Soups
Coloradoan	Garden Thyme	Serendipity
Colorado Gardener	Harlequin's Gardens	Spoons Soups and Salads
Colorado State University Extension	Horse & Dragon Brewery	Society of American Foresters
Colorado State University Horticulture and Landscape Architecture	Jax Fish House	Summit Lawn and Hardscape
Cornerstone Home Lending	Kaiser Permanente	Swingle
Co's BMW Center and MINI of Loveland	King Soopers	Target
Crunchy Grocer	KUNC FM	UC Health
DeAnge Stone	LaPorte Avenue Nursery	Urban Overalls
Earthborn Landscape Design	Loveland Water & Power	Walmart
Ed Carroll Motors	Madwire Media	Whole Foods Market
Equinox Brewing	Mainline	Wilbur's Total Beverage
Eye Center of Northern Colorado	Miramont Lifestyle Center	Wild Birds Unlimited
Fiona's Delicatessen & Catering	Moot House	Wild Iris Living
Firehouse Books	Natural Grocers	Zak George Landscaping
Flower Corner	Northern Colorado Daylily Club	Zwei Brewing
	Odell Brewing Company	