OLBRICH GARDENNEWS NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2020



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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR



Greetings Olbrich Members and Friends,

People ask me how Olbrich is doing during the pandemic, so I want to give you an update as we near the end of 2020 and are preparing budgets and programs for 2021. My response is always a somewhat cautious, Olbrich Gardens is doing great – considering all that our community faces every day. Here is more detailed information.

As many of you know, Olbrich Botanical Society (OBS), the non-profit that supports the Gardens, partners with the City of Madison to fund and operate Olbrich Botanical Gardens.

Over the past seven months, OBS' ability to raise funds to support the gardens has been impacted – not a surprise. The OBS Board of Directors has been closely monitoring the non-profit's financial stability. Revenue from programs and exhibitions, the gift shop, and education classes is reduced for the foreseeable future due to capacity and gathering restrictions.

Staff revised the 2020 OBS budget projections at mid-year to account for expected reduced revenue and we cut expenses where possible for both the partners. At this point OBS is facing a budget deficit of at least \$100,000 in 2020. The deficit would be much larger without the one-time Payroll Protection Program loan received in 2020. We expect that loan to be fully forgiven.

Staff retention is a priority for the OBS Board of Directors and the City of Madison. All current regular staff remain employed, though vacancies for both organizations may not be filled through 2021.

Staff are working through the OBS 2021 budgeting process; we don't anticipate a full return to normal in 2021 and are planning accordingly, knowing that a larger budget deficit will be a reality next year. Fortunately, years of careful financial stewardship by the OBS Board mean that, although things will be tight and vacant positions may not be filled, Olbrich Botanical Society should be able to survive 2021 with a deficit of \$350,000 to \$600,000. The City of Madison's budget should be approved this month – which largely preserved funding for Olbrich and the Parks Division.

If you're able to renew your membership or give a donation, know that it has significant and direct impact on our organization. Any contribution, no matter the amount, helps minimize the impact on the Gardens and Bolz Conservatory and reduces the 2020 and 2021 budget deficits – deficits that will impact the Gardens for years to come.

OBG is committed to being a safe place for our community to visit taking guidelines from Public Health very seriously. I've written about 'Vitamin G' and its health benefits in previous issues of our newsletter and it's more important than ever to connect with nature to reduce stress. Have you ever strolled the Gardens after a snowfall, or seen the Thai Pavilion glowing as the winter's sun is setting? Make this the year you visit the Outdoor Gardens throughout the winter – they're open daily and most paths are cleared of snow. If warm weather is more your thing, take your own mini tropical getaway in the Bolz Conservatory.

The Outdoor Gardens and Bolz Conservatory are open daily and we're working hard to keep everyone safe. Masks are required when indoors (even in the Bolz Conservatory) and we're operating at less than 25% capacity. We've implemented streamlined processes for fewer touchpoints and essential amenities such as restrooms are cleaned multiple times each day.

We would love to see you in person, but if that's not for you, please connect with us in other ways – find us on Facebook and Instagram, and if you're not receiving our monthly emails, you can sign up at olbrich.org. Watch for more virtual programming in 2021 – staff are working hard to keep you connected!

With gratitude,

ROBERTA SLADKY Director, Olbrich Botanical Gardens

Members Get More



Bolz Conservatory

To keep everyone safe and healthy, we closed the Bolz Conservatory earlier this year, and we know many of you are eager to enjoy it again. The Bolz Conservatory is open daily – and members can visit for free! With many changes in membership benefits this year, we are happy to offer members free admission into the Conservatory.

Here are important things to note before you visit:

- Conservatory hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. daily.
- Admission is \$6 for visitors 6 years old and older. Members receive free admission.
- A limited number of visitors will be admitted into the Conservatory to ensure appropriate social distancing.
- Face coverings are required for visitors 6 years and older.
- Admission is on a first-come, first-served basis.

We look forward to seeing you in the Bolz Conservatory!

Give the Gift of Membership this Holiday Season

You can support Olbrich while giving a thoughtful gift to a loved one by purchasing a 12-month gift membership to the Gardens. Membership includes reciprocal admission to over 320 gardens nationwide.

Memberships can be purchased online at olbrich.org, in the Growing Gifts Shop, or by calling Membership & Development Associate Elizabeth Spry at 608-246-4724.

For delivery by December 25, please make your gift by December 4. Please allow 10 business days for processing.







Upcoming Member Benefits

BOLZ CONSERVATORY

10 a.m.-4 p.m. daily Members receive FREE admission!

GROWING GIFTS SHOP

Shop in-store or online at **shop.olbrich.org** Members receive a discount based on their member level!

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Moonlight Meadow G_{arder}

PLANT SALE WITH THE PROS - ONLINE Featuring NEW Curated Perennial Trays

This spring, Olbrich Botanical Gardens will continue to host an online plant sale featuring a variety of tried and true perennials. We hope to resume our traditional, in-person Plant Sale with the Pros fundraiser in 2022.

In addition to offering a nice selection of mature perennials, our horticulturists have carefully curated three unique perennial plant collections inspired by Olbrich's Wildflower Garden, the Moonlight Meadow, and our beloved Gravel Gardens! These curated flats will be are currently available online, with curbside pick-ups at the Gardens scheduled for early May. Visit olbrich. org for more details, including a complete plant list for each tray option plus additional plant offerings of bare root fruit trees and veggie bundles.

Shady Woodland Carpet Tray Mix

A lush green tapestry of native shade-loving groundcovers provides textural counterpoint to sparkling early and late-season woodland wildflowers.

Featured perennials - Carex plantaginea, Eurybia divaricata (Aster), and Polystichum acrostichoides.

Moonlight Meadow Tray Mix

A sea of white fragrant flowers grown in Olbrich's own Moonlight Meadow, including meadow-inspired perennials and grasses that playfully bounce and sway in the wind.

Featured perennials - Anemone 'Honorine Jobert', Echinacea 'Swan White', and Calamintha nepeta ssp. nepeta.

Hot Spot/Gravel Garden Tray Mix

A vibrant mix of sun-loving perennials provides a bright pop of warm colors! We chose our favorite plants from Olbrich's Gravel Gardens for you to start a gravel garden or create a well-drained, full-sun pollinator garden.

Featured perennials - *Sporobolus heterolepis, Allium* 'Summer Beauty', and *Calamintha nepeta* ssp. *nepeta*.

* 32-plant plug tray, *mix subject to substitutions as needed*

The Power of Legacy Giving

Philanthropy can sound like an intimidating word. But, at its truest definition of "a desire to help others," we could say **each of us gives back in such a sentiment, every day.** We give care and water to our gardens, shelter and food to our pets, and financial support to businesses, charities, and one another. We are all givers. We are all philanthropists within our community!

If we have been blessed with property, cash, stocks, or various insurance policies, **planning ahead for uncertain times** (hello 2020!) and unknown future circumstances is not only smart – it is how we care for our many communities and ourselves.

Planned giving (creating a formal will and plan for your lifetime estate) isn't as scary as it can seem to be! If you are lucky enough to hold a 401k plan or stock options through your employers, who are you leaving it to when you pass away? Loved ones? Your favorite charities?



Gifts that are left to Olbrich upon someone's passing are held at the Olbrich Botanical Society Foundation, which is 20 years old this year (Happy Birthday!). The Foundation provides significant support to the Society's annual operating budget: more than \$250,000 annually, including the endowment of certain programs.

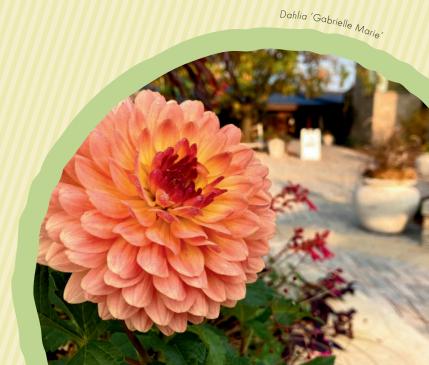
Over the years, the Foundation has grown through sound investment strategies and from incredibly thoughtful planned gifts. It's a tremendous honor when someone leaves a legacy gift to Olbrich, and it's one of the many reasons that Olbrich will remain forever.

Olbrich staff is here to help:

Contact the Development department to notify or ask about how you can plan your charitable future, and other ways to support the Gardens!

Joe Vande Slunt, Director of Development 608-246-4583 | jvandeslunt@cityofmadison.com

Jake Immel, Donor Engagement Manager 608-243-0153 | jimmel@cityofmadison.com



OLBRICH BOTANICAL SOCIETY FINANCIAL UPDATE

How are the Society's finances holding up during the pandemic?

Additional \$100,000+ needed by December 31 to close budget shortfall

Since the Gardens re-opened in June, over **40,000 visitors have experienced hope, joy, and inspiration** in a time of great uncertainty. The smiling faces and kind comments we receive from guests confirm what we already know – **the Gardens are a treasured place for them and our community**.

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The fact remains **our non-profit can't do what it typically does** to raise funds supporting the Gardens. No large-scale exhibitions like GLEAM or Blooming Butterflies. No school groups visiting the new Frautschi Family Learning Center. Although some in-person and online classes have returned, and the Growing Gifts store is open (including online at shop.olbrich.org), Olbrich will always be an on-site destination and attraction. <u>Our budget deficit will be at least \$100,000 by the end of 2020, and will grow as the pandemic continues.</u>

Would you make a gift today, to keep hope blooming?

Every donation, whether \$5 or \$500, provides critical support to the Gardens.

HOW YOU CAN HELP CLOSE THE GAP

Gifts via Donor Advised Funds, IRA Distributions

Gifts to Olbrich Botanical Society from a donor advised fund or IRA distribution help a great cause while reducing tax liabilities.

Monthly Giving, Sustaining Support

Provide sustaining support to the Gardens by becoming a monthly giver to the Gardens. Sign up today using the attached envelope, or contact Olbrich's development office.



DID YOU KNOW? CARES Act Legislation

Encourages Charitable Giving

The CARES Act legislation allows taxpayers who do not itemize their deductions to claim a charitable deduction of up to \$300 for cash donations made in 2020.

Memberships and donations are tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.



Over the years, **you have invested in our organization, its quality community programming, and its top-notch horticulturists and educators.** Your gift today <u>sustains our mission and keeps hope alive.</u> We'll continue to care for the Gardens, work hard to expand our virtual education options, and prepare to return to our larger community programs as soon as we're able.

Please stay safe and continue to take care. Our team will hang in there, resilient like these Gardens. Because of you, Olbrich will get through this, closer each day to a better tomorrow.

Questions about your gift? Contact Director of Development Joe Vande Slunt at 608-246-4583 or jvandeslunt@cityofmadison.com

Olbrich Botanical Society is a 501(c)3 organization. Federal Tax ID 39-1357247. Gifts can be sent to Olbrich Botanical Society, 3330 Atwood Ave, Madison, WI 53704.

Gifts of Stock or Mutual Funds

Make an impact by donating stocks or mutual funds to the Gardens, while receiving tax benefits. To give a stock or mutual fund, contact Olbrich's broker at Merrill for more information:

Gina McGinn, Registered Senior Client Associate, Merrill 608-283-2738 | regina_mcginn@ml.com

Select a gift from Olbrich's Wish List

Olbrich needs specific items to help with operations. See the wish list on p. 8 for more information.



OLBRICH BOTANICAL GARDENS' WISH LIST

Our growing public garden has many needs! Here are some ideas on how you can help. For more information, contact Olbrich's Director of Development, Joe Vande Slunt, at 608-246-4583 or jvandeslunt@cityofmadison.com.



Building a Better Box, One Donation at a Time

Olbrich's on-site donation boxes have seen increased donations since the Gardens re-opened in June. But, the current boxes are old and do not communicate the urgent need for support. Help us build better donation boxes that are eye-catching, easy to read, and will compel visitors to give as generously as they can. - \$1,500



Turning Over a New Leaf

Olbrich's Tribute Trellis is an outdoor, custom-designed trellis which features engraved plaques. This popular way of honoring or remembering loved ones is running out of room, and a new leaf is needed ASAP! Keep our metalsmith welding through the winter so the new leaf can be installed in the

spring. - \$4,000



Keep the Growing Gifts Store Online

Olbrich's Growing Gifts Store is open 24/7 at shop.olbrich.org. Help us maintain our online gift store by covering the costs associated with doing business online. - \$1,000



It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year?

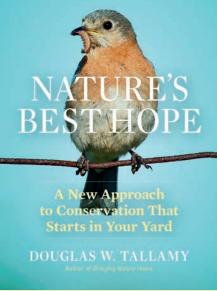
Olbrich Botanical Society undergoes a yearly audit from Baker Tilly as part of efforts to adhere to financial best practices and standards, and be good stewards of our supporter's donations. Love a good audit as much as we do? Show your audit enthusiasm by chipping in to offset costs. - \$2,500



Timed Ticketing System

Even though many of our programs and exhibitions are currently at a greatly reduced

capacity or on hold, the "new normal" will require us to do things differently in terms of visitor services and crowd management. Help us cover the costs of a timed ticketing system for future 2021 programs like GLEAM, so visitors can have a better, safer experience. - \$3,600



Winter Book Club Series

Olbrich's Schumacher Library is partnering with UW Arboretum and UW-Madison's Steenbock Library to host a four month winter book discussion series. For the first book of the year the group will read Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation that Starts in Your Yard by Doug Tallamy.

In his most recent book Tallamy outlines his vision for a grassroots approach to conservation, providing homeowners with the blueprint they need to turn their yards into conservation corridors that provide wildlife habitats.

The first virtual Zoom discussion will held Sunday, January 24, 2021 from 1-2:30 p.m.

Please contact Amy O'Shea to check out the book and to RSVP for the virtual discussion group at: aoshea@cityofmadison.com or 608-246-5805

Books for February, March and April will be discussed at the meeting. Happy reading!



Winter Décor for Your Garden

With the holiday season just around the corner, consider pruning evergreens and other plant material for winter garden displays! Evergreen container displays, decorative wreaths, and door swags will help brighten those dreary days ahead. You can utilize many common plants from your garden including:

Evergreens: Boxwood, yew, juniper, spruce, and white and red pine

Branches: Japanese kerria, dogwood, birch, and willow

Seedheads: Allium, lotus, cardoon, and ornamental grasses

Berries: Crabapple, hawthorn, winterberry, and rose hips

Extra Accents: Pinecones, grapevine balls, holiday ornaments, and lights

Celebrate the season by combining a mix of fresh-cut boughs, bright branches, colorful berries, and interesting foliage to add winter interest around your home. Incorporate strong architectural forms so that your winter container display will stand out even when dusted with snow. Remember to use frost-proof pots with a drainage hole; it is best to store away your terra cotta containers for the winter as usual.

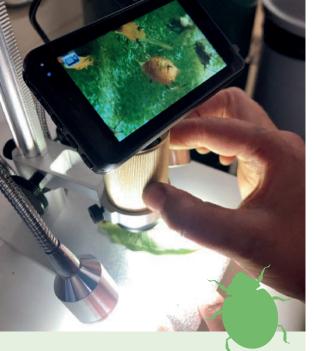
Already in hibernation? Not up for a DIY project? Support the gardens by purchasing one of our custom made, one-of-kind evergreen wreaths to embellish your front door. Visit olbrich.org to see available options starting in early December.



Holiday in the Tropics December 2020 • 10 a.m.-4 p.m. daily

The model trains won't be leaving the station this year, but Olbrich's Holiday Express Train Show will resume next year when it's safe to travel again! This holiday season we're taking a "vacation" to the tropics and spreading some holiday cheer in the Bolz Conservatory. Picture scenery of lush tropical greenery interspersed with bright bromeliad blooms that will get rid of your glooms! Enjoy a balmy breeze and light-splashed palm trees. Banana and pineapple stuffed stockings will have everyone talking. Drop a coin and a wish to the red and white koi fish. Move at a sloth's pace and just enjoy the warm space. Like a snow globe but with sand – it's guaranteed to be grand. So look high and look low, because wherever you wander you'll find things to ponder. Escape for a day and take the chill away with a Holiday in the Tropics!

Regular Conservatory admission applies – \$6 per person, Olbrich members and ages 5 & under are free.



Garden Scouts Update

In 2019, Horticulturists Katey Pratt and Samara Eisner created Olbrich's volunteer Garden Scout team to:

- Scout and identify existing beneficial insects and pests they control
- Release beneficial insects and monitor existing populations
- Plant perennials to attract and support beneficial insects
- Create new learning opportunities for all

With a season under their belts, staff received a 2020 Dane County Environmental Council grant to expand the program. Then, COVID-19 happened and plans for summer were adapted. With most volunteers suspended, the team was still able to:

- Purchase reference books and a digital microscope camera for insect identification
- Assist with pollinator signage in the gardens
- Add plants to the gardens that attract beneficial insects
- Develop a custom app volunteers will use to documents findings—no more hand-written notes! Thank you Volunteer Alnisa Allgood for your help!

In September, the Scouts met for an orientation to the app and discussion of future plans. They will log insect sightings through fall until the cold weather sends their subjects migrating south or entering diapause for the season!

FRAUTSCHI FAMILY LEARNING CENTER RECEIVES LEED PLATINUM CERTIFICATION

Olbrich Botanical Gardens, the City of Madison Engineering Division, and the City of Madison Parks Division are proud to announce that the **Frautschi Family Learning Center achieved a LEED® Platinum certification** from the U.S. Green Building Council.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is a scorecard of metrics for site design, building design, sustainability, renewable energy, and other measurable standards. On an annual basis, the Learning Center will use 67% less energy than a building built to minimum code standards. The building includes the following innovative design features:

- Urban recycling of ash trees used in interior window construction and trim.
- 9 kW photovoltaic solar panels on the roof, which provide approximately 20% of the Learning Center's electric use.
- In-floor heating and cooling on the first floor, requiring an air handling system that maintains tight control of humidity levels in the space.
- Large windows for daylighting and views to the surrounding gardens.
- Daylight sensors that automatically dim LED lighting.
- Occupancy and vacancy sensors for lighting and heating control.
- LED lighting throughout the building that greatly reduces electricity use and heating load.
- A high performance building envelope that significantly reduces air infiltration.

In addition, a 60,000-gallon underground cistern stores rainwater captured from the roof of the Learning Center. The harvested rainwater will provide about 75% of the annual water needs for the greenhouses, reducing potable water consumption, as well as salt and energy use from the reverse osmosis system needed to neutralize water from the aquifer.

"This third party certification of sustainable design excellence is a reflection not only of Olbrich's commitment to environmental stewardship but equally reflects their deeply engrained mission to provide a beloved community resource that prioritizes creating a unique sense of place, of beauty, of innovation, and of public education," said Chris Wingate, project architect from MSR Design.

The Frautschi Family Learning Center will enable Olbrich to better serve growing audiences for its variety of educational offerings, including school programs, summer writing camps, youth/family programs, and adult classes and workshops. The classroom layouts allow flexibility for small to large groups and events, with circulation space that allows for auxiliary uses. Each classroom also includes state-of-the-art audio and video systems. In addition, the building includes an outdoor classroom and a second level, outdoor rooftop seating area overlooking the gardens.



OLBRICH'S TRIBUTE TRELLIS

A wonderful way to support the Gardens and honor a loved one.

Olbrich's Tribute Trellis is an outdoor, custom-designed trellis which features engraved plaques. It's the perfect way to recognize a special occasion or honor or remember a loved one. Your personalized message will be inscribed on a plaque and placed on the leaf-shaped trellis for three to five years. At the end of that time, the plaque is renewed or returned to you or your designee as a lasting remembrance of your special connection to Olbrich Botanical Gardens.

Trellis plaques are installed twice a year, in the spring and fall. Donors and designees receive notification after purchasing their Trellis plaque and are notified when the plaque is installed.

Tax-deductible donations for plaques start at \$100. The deadline for the spring plaque order is April 1, 2021.

For more information and to place your order, look for the 'Tribute Trellis' button underneath the 'Donate' tab on www.olbrich.org, or visit http://olbrich.org/donate/ tribute.cfm.

Have questions or prefer to place your order over the phone? Contact Jake Immel, Donor Engagement Manager, at 608-243-0153 or jimmel@cityofmadison.com.

P.S. – Want to help the Tribute Trellis add a new leaf? See Olbrich's Wish List on p. 8 for more information!

Olbrich Garden News is published by the Olbrich Botanical Society as a benefit to members and supporters.

MISSION

Olbrich Botanical Gardens is operated as a public-private partnership between the City of Madison Parks Division and the non-profit Olbrich Botanical Society.

Olbrich Botanical Gardens enriches life by nourishing and sharing the beauty of the gardens, the joy of gardening, the knowledge of plants, and the diversity of our world.

Olbrich Botanical Gardens is dedicated to the creation, conservation, and interpretation of gardens and plant collections hardy to the American Midwest or native to the world's tropical forests for study, enjoyment, and public benefit.

VISION

Olbrich Botanical Gardens will be a locally treasured and globally renowned source of beauty and education celebrating the importance of plants in a sustainable world.

INCLUSION

Olbrich Botanical Gardens aspires to be a destination where all visitors, volunteers, and staff are valued and feel they belong. With conscious intent and continuous learning, OBG staff, volunteers, and board will address barriers to inclusion through education, operational changes, and partnerships with the community.

DESIGN, LAYOUT & PRINTING

American Printing Company

ORIGINAL DESIGN Huston Design

General Information	608-246-4550
Growing Gifts Shop	608-246-4710
Schumacher Library	608-246-5805
Membership	608-246-4724

If you need an interpreter, materials in alternative formats, or other accommodations to access Olbrich Gardens' services, activities, or programs, please contact 608-246-4550 or TDD 608-267-4980. Please do so within 48 hours of the scheduled program so that appropriate arrangements can be made in a timely fashion.

BOLZ CONSERVATORY

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. daily

OUTDOOR GARDENS 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. daily

GROWING GIFTS SHOP

10 a.m. – 12 p.m. by appointment 12–4 p.m. walk-in shopping

SCHUMACHER LIBRARY

Temporarily closed



visit www.olbrich.org

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Growing Gifts Shop

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