



# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A lot can happen in a year, or a decade, or in our case two decades. Twenty years ago, on December 1st, 2000, a dream became a reality as we officially opened the Florida Botanical Gardens. A dream that started 20 years earlier, when this site became the home of the University of Florida/IFAS Extension Service and their horticulture staff immediately began to transform the landscape into a demonstration of their teachings. Under the leadership of the then Director, Judy Yates, this mere dabbling in the landscape became the Florida Botanical Gardens.

We are happy to look back on those 20 years, and now look forward to the next 20. During the early days of the Gardens, the staff and Master Gardeners of the Extension Service provided all the maintenance and programming for the Gardens. As a brand-new garden, there were lots of growing pains— not only for the plants, but everyone involved. We learned what it meant to run a Botanical Garden, and all of the nuances associated with a venture of this nature (pun intended). In the early days, we also shared the campus with the Gulf Coast Museum of Art, whose outdoor art collection blended with the horticulture in a way that made this site unique and without comparison.

When the great recession hit our country, it also hit the Gardens, resulting in loss of staff and eventual integration into the Pinellas County Parks system. During those lean and troubling years, the FBG Foundation provided significant leadership to the maintenance and programming of the Gardens. In the ensuing years, the Parks Department has worked to reinvigorate the maintenance, and the Gardens have never looked better.

As we look forward to the next 20 years, we hope you will join us. We have a lot of work to do, including: creating a Children's Discovery Garden, implementing various aspects of our updated master plan, creating a rich palette of educational programs and events for our members and the general public, and continuing to work with the Parks Department to keep our Gardens growing.



Vernon Bryant Executive Director





## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is with great pride that I report on several of the Foundation's accomplishments during the past year and our endeavors for 2020. The event calendar is full with activities and programs to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Gardens. We plan to build upon the success of Holiday Lights, Pumpkinfest, several garden tours and our Annual Meeting to provide a variety of opportunities for the Pinellas community to enjoy our Garden.

In 2020, we will be working to advance the Children's Discovery Garden approval and commence fundraising, with the goal of starting construction by year end. This is a signature project intended to engage and excite the next generation of Garden stewards. We will need your support, whether it be financial, as an advocate and/or the planning and execution of programs.

The Children's Discovery Garden, coupled with the Foundation's work and financial support for the County to address deferred maintenance needs, will ensure the Florida Botanical Gardens continues to be a gem in the County Park system. We hope you will join us, and contribute. We need all three W's: work, wisdom and wealth.



John Thomas President

Sunset on the Snowflake Bridge, Holiday Lights in the Gardens 2019.



Patrons purchase plants, crafts and gifts at our annual Gift & Plant Sale.



Local breweries served craft beer to guests at Hops Night in the Gardens.

## 20 EVENTS FOR 20TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2020

- **1.** Saturday, January 4th: **Anniversary Kick-off at Holiday Lights in the Gardens**
- 2. Saturday, January 25th: Project wild classes
- Friday, February 14th: Valentine's Celebration w/ "Curated Craft Experiences"
- 4. Saturday, February 8th, 15th, 22nd: Yoga in the Gardens with Salty Souls Yoga
- 5. Thursday, February 20th: Annual Membership Meeting
- Thursday, March 5th: Duncan McClellan/Don Gialanella Exhibit Reception
- 7. March: PAVA Plein Aire in the Gardens
- 8. Saturday, March 14th: FWCOS Orchid Repotting & Plant Sale
- 9. Thursday, March, 19th: Duncan McClellan/Don Gialanella
  "Artist Conversation"
- 10. Thursday, April 2nd: Bus Tour
- **11.** Saturday, April 18th: Earth Day 50th Anniversary Celebration
- 12. Sunday, May 3rd: Tour of Public & Private Gardens
- Saturday, May 16th: Wine Walk, Sponsored by Tampa Bay Newspapers
- 14. July Sept: Summer Lecture Series, TBD
- 15. August: Potting for Kids, TBD
- 16. August: Bus Tour, TBD
- 17. Sunday, October 25th: Pumpkin Fest
- 18. Friday, November 20th: Hops Night in the Gardens
- **19.** Monday, November 23th: **Member's Preview of Holiday Lights in the Gardens**
- 20. Tuesday, December 1st: 20th Anniversary Celebration

### FOUNDATION INITIATIVES

### Provide Support for Garden Stewardship

We will continue to support Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources (PCR) with financial contributions and additional funds to supplement the County budget for the Gardens. Our goal is to collaborate with PCR to ensure a high level of stewardship. This goal is aligned with our mission, "to create and sustain a world-class botanical garden."

### Engage Our Visitors with Educational Programs

The Florida Botanical Garden serves as a platform to educate the Pinellas community and its visitors about tropical plants and sustainable principles in a garden. We plan to provide facilities and programs for young people to connect directly with soil, water and plant material. For adults, our Garden is frequently described as an "Oasis", a place removed from the hustle and bustle of our urban environment. It is referred to as peaceful, beautiful and refreshing of the spirit– while at the same time, providing visitors with vision and guidance to take home to their personal gardens.

### Synergy through Partnerships

One of the Foundation's priorities has been collaboration with our on-site partners at Pinewood Cultural Park, Heritage Village and Creative Pinellas, as well as other organizations including UF/IFAS Extension Services 4-H and Master Gardener Programs, Florida Farm Bureau, and local chapters of plant societies and garden clubs. These partnerships are essential pieces to making this park a premier destination for Pinellas residents and tourists. The opportunity to experience the beauty of nature, the arts and Florida history all at one location is unique. The Foundation will apply its resources wisely to advance programs and projects to make this park vibrant and exciting for generations to come.

### Volunteerism and Community Involvement

The Foundation's accomplishments are due to the hard work of a volunteer Board and the hundreds of volunteers that help run our events and programs. This level of effort indicates the aligned spirit and excitement for what happens at the Florida Botanical Gardens. Our Holiday Lights in the Gardens, a month-long event with nearly 100,000 visitors. Pumpkin Fest, a one day event with 600+ participants, and an annual Gift and Plant Sale have all been made possible through the passionate work of volunteers and partner organizations.



A Plein Aire painting displayed by a member of the Professional Association of Visual Artists.



Nielsen Media Research employees donate their time for Nielsen's Global Impact Day.





# CHILDREN'S DISCOVERY GARDEN

Pinellas County has a wonderful system of parks, comprised of beaches, lakes, streams, ponds, and woodlands that provide hiking, picnicking, active recreation and playgrounds for residents and tourists. However, there is only one botanic garden in the portfolio, centrally located within the County. The Florida Botanical Gardens is a favored place for parents with young children to visit for a walk, yet there are virtually no opportunities for engagement in unstructured play, getting one's hands dirty and active learning experiences. Therefore, the Foundation, is working with Pinellas County to develop a plan to provide a new area within the existing garden designed specifically to entice, engage and educate children through discovery and play.

The area proposed for the Children's Discovery Garden is divided into two parts: West and East, with the concrete walk being the division line. The West Garden features have hard surfaces of concrete and pavers, while the East is more open and natural in character with surfaces of stabilized soil, wood fiber and mulch. Both sides provide areas for play, engagement activities and seating. Connection with water is also an element that is provided in a variety of ways from a splash pad on the west side to a hand pump on the East. Shade is provided naturally throughout, under the canopy of oaks and maples. A screened cabin is shown on the east side, to provide the opportunity for group presentations and activities.

### WEST SIDE PROGRAM:

- 1. Big Leaf Trail: a network of small paths and a misting water feature.
- 2. **Music Forest:** a plaza of concrete pavers among tall oaks and a sycamore tree that provides space for play with musical instruments.
- 3. **Stump Jump:** a play area for climbing and jumping from tree trunks and stumps.
- 4. **Spiral Splash:** provides an opportunity to get wet amid a nautilus shaped sculpture.

### EAST SIDE PROGRAM:

- 1. **Hummingbird Hangout:** a play area with a crawl through tunnel, spiders web climbing net, climbing feature on trees and a hummingbird nest to explore.
- 2. **Spin Cycle:** a dock and spin cycle equipment provides connection with McKay Creek, as it will allow water to be pumped from the creek and returned via an entry channel.
- 3. Roots and Shoots: an area for active planting and work with soil.
- 4. Beetle Climber: a play structure for climbing.
- 5. **Magic Oaks:** will provide a shady hollow with stone work that will include an artificial cave.
- 6. **The Cabin;** [a primary structure of 600 sf with screens that will allow group meetings and educational programs to be held in an enclosed space not affected by sun and rain.



### BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

Join us as we work to sustain and grow the Florida Botanical Gardens. With your support, we can accomplish all of our goals for the years ahead.

#### MEMBERSHIP LEVELS:

- Individual: \$40.....One membership card
- Dual: \$60 .....Up to two membership cards
- Family: \$100.....Up to four membership cards
- Supporter: \$250.....Up to four membership cards
- Steward: \$500 ......Up to four membership cards
- Patron: \$1,000 .....Up to four membership cards

#### Enjoy the many benefits of membership to the gardens:

- The joy of being a supporter of these spectacular gardens
- 10% discount at select garden retailers
- 10% on the unique items at our gift shop, The Botanical Bounty
- 10% discount at our neighboring Heritage Village Gift Shop
- Discounts on FBG Foundation events
- Single-use passes to Holiday Lights in the Gardens for upper-level members
- Invitation to Members-Only events
- FBG Foundation Newsletters
- Admission to 300+ Gardens & Arboreta that participate in the American Horticultural Society Reciprocal Admission Program, throughout the U.S., Canada, Cayman and Virgin Islands

Donations, gifts, sponsorships, tributes/memorials and estate gifts are ways that individuals and businesses can financially support the work of the Florida Botanical Gardens Foundation. You can designate your gift for specific projects like the Children's Discovery Garden, for one of special events or simply to help us by supporting our general operations. To speak to someone about your giving plans please contact our office. You can also give by visiting our website and going to the donate link. All contributions to us are tax deductible to the extent of the law.

### For more information, visit: www.flbgfoundation.org/Membership.

