



Collections of Interest for 2012

Preparations are already under way for another exciting year of displays at the Gardens. Our blue & yellow theme was a huge hit in 2011 and this year, our primary color theme in the entrance garden will revolve around whites and silvers with some speckling of blue, pink & lime for additional interest. We've not tried this combination in the past and are looking forward to the final results!

We will also have a moss rose (*Portulaca*) collection in the display beds west of the arboretum. The reception garden will have a strong blue presence and the lower larch wall planting will focus on a full range of oranges. We will continue to display, trial and evaluate plants for All-America Selections, American Garden Award, Fleuroselect, Ball Seed, PanAmerican Seed and Takii Seed.



The Smelly Garden (in the Nancy Yahr Memorial Children's Garden) will be planted again with a wide range of fragrant annuals and don't miss the 1,000+ lilies that were planted this past fall in that space for summer fragrance.

While the theme for this garden is the same as in 2011, the design of the garden and plant content will be quite different.

There will also be some exciting educational and social activities associated with this space

over the summer. We will expand our Ornamental Edible & Compact Vegetable display near the arboretum to include a wider range of plantings, innovative container ideas and a "Grains of the World" display that will feature some of the most nutritious grains.

"Year of the Perennial"

While the Gardens are known for dynamic annual displays and a wide range of plantings, we will be focusing quite specifically on augmenting our perennial collections throughout the Gardens. While we currently have over 2,500 varieties of perennials including large collections of hostas, daylilies and ferns, we are hoping to add another 1,000 varieties in 2012.



All of the new perennials will be installed with new labels courtesy of our new laser engraver. Significant perennial additions will be seen in the gazebo garden, woodland walk garden, English cottage garden and sunken garden. The focus will not be on all the new "eye candy" but the best, lower-maintenance selections for our climate, soils and general garden conditions.

To accomplish this planting goal, we will be soliciting for donations of plants and would not turn down any financial support for this.

2011 Holiday Light Show Success

Thank you to all who helped make the 2011 Holiday Light Show a very successful event!

- 10,500 attendees
- \$5,691 sold in concessions
- \$1,063 sold in quilt raffle
- \$797 sold in train raffle
- Over 300,000 lights
- Over 200 decorated trees
- \$15,000 grant from the State Department of Tourism in their Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Grant Program

Upcoming Events and Opportunities

All events subject to change or cancellation.

- **Evening Garden Seminars**
6:30 pm to 8 pm
Feb. 15 - Orchids
Mar. 7 - Hostalicious!
Apr. 18 - Healthy Soil, Plants & People
- **Healthy Mind and Body**
Basket Weaving
9:30 am to 3:30 pm
Feb. 4
Not Your Kids Crayons
1 to 3 pm
Mar. 4
Basket Weaving
1 am to 4 pm
Apr. 28
- **Volunteer Soup & Social**
5 pm
Feb. 28
Mar. 27
- **Story and Stroll**
10 am to 11 am
Feb. 1 - Groundhogs
Mar. 7 - Spring
Apr. 4 - Birds
- **WPT Garden Expo**
Feb. 10-12
- **Wet-Felt a Landscape Workshop**
10 am to 1 pm
Feb. 18
- **Leap Year Family**
3 to 6 pm
Feb. 29
- **Spring Symposium**
Sneak Peak-Market Mingle
4 to 8 pm
Mar. 23
- **8th Annual Garden Symposium**
8 am to 4 pm
Mar. 24
- **Secretly Healthful**
Cooking for Your Kids
1 to 2:30 pm
Apr. 15
- **RBG & Golden K Tree Sale**
8 am to 3 pm
Apr. 20 & 21
- **Earth Day Event**
10 am to 3 pm
Apr. 20 & 21

Grow and Learn in 2012 with Our Dynamic Educational Programs

One part of my job that I like best is the bi-yearly program planning. It's an exciting (and busy!) time of brainstorming, scheduling, and finding awesome instructors who are as passionate about their fields as I am about Education.

Many of the new opportunities you see here are based on your suggestions. Hope to see you at upcoming programs!

Through the generosity of a grant from the Caxambus Foundation, RBG will continue to be able to offer high quality early childhood programming at no cost to attendees! In February and March, Story & Stroll will skip the "stroll" and add songs, dancing or other fun indoor activities. Join us in April for our first stroll of the year after silly stories and activities that focus on our fine feathered friends.

On Wednesday, February 29, celebrate Leap Year with an afternoon of family fun! From 3-6 pm, bring school-age kids down to RBG for a "hopping" good time featuring music, movement and Make & Take goodies.

Appropriate for kids in grades pre-k through 5th. \$2 materials fee per child/adults-free. No pre-registration required.

Not going anywhere during April school vacation? On several days during the week of April 2-5, we will have a number of activities for children of different ages. Keep checking the website for frequent updates or contact Kris Koch for more info. Has a picky eater (young or old) ever frustrated you at mealtimes? Join us on for an adults-only demo and tasting as we

investigate Secretly Healthful Cooking for your Kids & Family, Sunday, April 15, 1 to 2:30pm. \$10 RBG Friends Members/\$12 general public (includes materials fees)

Sponsored by Basics Cooperative, Janesville, WI. Pre-registration required.

Continue to expand your horticultural knowledge at our monthly Evening Garden Seminars for adults. Pre-registration is encouraged but not required, walk-ins welcome.

Important Note:

We have changed the program start time from 6:00pm to 6:30pm to better accommodate our audience and have also adjusted our pricing to cover programming costs.

Give yourself the gift of a new skill and recharge your creative batteries at one of our hands-on workshops (Friendship Basket, Saturday, February 4, and a gorgeous Garden Basket, Saturday, April 28 or wet-

felted, Saturday, February 18). Pre-registration required.

Don't forget about dropping by the Spring Market Mingle (Friday, March 23, 4 to 8 pm, \$5 per person, includes 1 free drink ticket, no pre-registration required) that precedes our sensational Spring

Symposium (Saturday, March 24-see related section below), and amazing Earth Day activities (Friday-Saturday, April 20 & 21, also see below).

To register for any of the above programs, or for more program information, go to our website (www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org) or call Kris Koch, RBG Education Coordinator at (608)752-3885, ext. 17.



Spring Garden Symposium: Create an Engaging Garden

Join your fellow floraphiles for a jam-packed day of learning and fun at the **8th Annual Spring Garden Symposium, March 24, 8 am to 4:30 pm.** Our stellar line-up includes:



Tim Gruner, Garden Curator for Anderson Japanese Gardens in Rockford, IL-ranked the #1 Japanese Garden in North America, will speak on patterns and rhythms in nature that inspire a sense of peace and tranquility.

Evelyn Hadden, a Garden Writer from the Twin Cities, whose book, *Beautiful No-Mow Yards*, will be published by Timber Press in February, will speak on creating Story Gardens-garden spaces that memorialize a loved one; pass along family/cultural traditions; mark personal journeys; and much more. There will also

be a book signing that day. Norm Lownds, Curator for the 4H Children's Garden at Michigan State University in E. Lansing, MI, will remind us of the important garden-child (of all ages) connection and speak about designing with whimsy in all the right places.

Mark Dwyer, Horticulture Director at Rotary Botanical Gardens, will speak on sensory gardens; showcasing plants that engage our five senses to create a more immersive, interactive experience for gardeners, which studies have shown to be of great therapeutic value.

The fee (\$65 RBG Friends Members/\$75 general public) includes admission to the symposium, a gourmet lunch, light refreshments throughout the day and all resource materials. We will also be holding a raffle and silent auction. For the comfort and enjoyment of all attendees, we will be limiting enrollment. Please register early to ensure your spot.

To register, go to the RBG website and download the registration form, or call Kris Koch, RBG Education Coordinator at (608)752-3885, ext. 17.

Spring Tree Sale

Rotary Botanical Gardens and the Golden "K" Blackhawk Kiwanis Club will be working together for the second year to offer a spring tree sale on April 20 and 21 from 8 am until 3 pm each day at the Horticulture Center. These days also correspond to Earth Day activities at the Parker Education Center and out in the gardens (details soon).

All tree seedlings will be \$1.85 each although quantities over 50 will receive a 10% discount. The sale in 2011 was very well received and we've expanded tree offerings to include Eastern arborvitae, concolor fir, white pine, Black Hills spruce, Colorado blue spruce and Norway spruce. In addition, this sale will be offering sugar maple, red oak and swamp white oak seedlings. All seedlings are 15" or taller (sold bare root but bagged) and have good root systems (ready for direct planting).



Bagged compost will also be available for the duration of the sale. The RBG Friend Member discount (10%) does not apply toward the trees but is valid for bagged compost. There will be further details regarding this event on our website at www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org. We will also be looking for volunteer assistance with sale preparations and sales.

Earth Day Will Soar to New Heights in 2012

Earth Day festivities at RBG (Friday & Saturday, April 20-21, 10am-3pm) will be soaring to new heights as we focus on aspects of conservation that affect local birds, especially birds of prey. Both days admission is free and will feature live raptor shows presented by Northern Illinois Raptor Rehab & Education, who will also be bringing their considerable collection of interpretive materials to tell the story about current factors that impact the ecology, conservation, and habitats of these amazing birds and other wildlife.

We'll also have other demonstrations, activities and information relating to environmentally-friendly vehicles; easy, home energy conservation measures; alternative energy; local organizations that support flora and fauna; and more.

Kids can create art and music with recycled or repurposed products and families can participate in the "Reduce, Reuse, & Recycle" scavenger hunt and investigate different topics using our new Discovery Backpacks--self-guided programming with age-appropriate activities and sleuthing tools.

More information coming soon! Check our website frequently for updates or call Kris Koch, RBG Education Coordinator at (608)752-3885, ext. 17.



Electronic or Paper?

Help us lower the production costs of the Grapevine. You can elect to have your newsletter e-mailed rather than receive a mailed copy. If you wish to receive the next issue electronically send Lori Ebnetter an e-mail at lori.ebnetter@rotarygardens.org

Photography Initiatives



Keep an eye on our website (www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org/) in the coming weeks for information on a photography contest that will be organized with the intent of using “winning” photos for the 2013 RBG Calendar. Details will be finalized by mid February.

In regards to photography, Mark Dwyer, RBG Director of Horticulture has been accumulating and organizing a wide range of historical and scenic photos of the Gardens in a digital format. If anyone has any digital images or “hard copy” images of the Gardens to share, please contact Mark. Of specific interest would be photos or slides from the earliest years of the Gardens.

If you have scenic shots, please share those too. Our photo library will be of immense value for garden promotions, presentations, historical reference and for future generations of RBG staff, volunteers and supporters. We can make arrangements to return items as needed and photo credit will be given as needed.

Follow the RBG Garden Blog and Facebook

If you have the time, check out the RBG Garden Blog at www.rotarygardens.blogspot.com. Mark Dwyer, RBG Director of Horticulture has been making entries (over 1,000 now) for the past three years and this “online diary” features photos, events, plants, activities, volunteers and other “happenings” at the Gardens.

If you are a FACEBOOK participant, be sure to “Like” Rotary Botanical Gardens and to follow our daily updates there.

There is a link to the Garden blog and the RBG Facebook page on our website (www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org).

Parking Lot Improvements

The Gardens just received an Urban Forestry Grant from the Wisconsin DNR that will allow for the replanting of urban tolerant trees in the parking lot islands.

Last fall, 15 struggling trees were removed from the parking lot islands. Dr. Edward Hasselkus, Professor Emeritus, Dept. of Horticulture from UW-Madison suggests 10 specific trees for the tough parking lot locations and all of these new additions will have signage regarding the merits of these trees in the landscape. With Emerald Ash Borer concerns in WI (and in many other States), these selections are promoted as ash-alternatives in the landscape. This grant will also fund a public awareness component of this tree planting.

Additional planting improvements will be incorporated throughout the two primary parking lot islands to improve appearance while lessening maintenance needs.

Cottage Garden Gallery

The Cottage Garden Gallery enjoyed above average sales in December, spurred by the record attendance at the Holiday Light Show.

In July, the gift shop was transformed into a gallery displaying work by Wisconsin artists on a consignment basis. Following adoption of the new format, sales have ranged from \$3,300 to \$9,800 and averaged \$7,400.

The Gallery sells work by about 40 artists and customers have been favorably impressed with our support for local artists. The top-selling categories have been yard décor and jewelry. Several new artists will be added in the spring.



A Beautiful New Entrance Sign



Sponsorship Opportunities

An exceptional variety of events and programs provide opportunities for sponsors at various levels. These opportunities not only help to support Rotary Botanical Gardens – an educational resource and major attraction, they help to support our mission. Current RBG sponsorship opportunities:

- Home Garden Tour
- Spring Garden Symposium
 - (1) \$1,500 lunch sponsor
 - (4) \$500 speaker sponsors
 - (2) \$300 break sponsors

For more information contact Amanda Moucha, RBG Development and Events Coordinator at (608) 752-3885, ext. 19.

Volunteer Opportunities

We are always in need of education volunteers. If you or someone you know is a retired, displaced educator or you just enjoy kids we would love to put those skills to good use.

We have many programs that can use helping hands and are always eager for fresh ideas and perspectives. Year round or seasonal help is needed.

Please also join us for our Volunteer Soup and Social nights February 28 and March 27 starting at 5 pm. Please feel free to bring a guest who is interested in volunteering or that someone special in your life so they can see why you spend so much time with us!

We will be needing volunteers for Earth Day, our Electronics drive and Golden K Tree Sale. See your 2012 RBG calendar for dates!

Volunteer Workdays

We have selected our Saturday volunteer work day dates for 2012. All work days are scheduled for 8 am until 12 noon with a nice donut/coffee break for participants. Please dress for the weather, bring gardening gloves and meet in front of the Parker Education Center.

Call Mark with any questions prior to the work day. The volunteer workdays will be May 19, May 26, June 2, June 9, June 16, September 22 and October 20.

The first five work days will involve some serious planting as we install 150,000+ annuals! Children under 16 should be accompanied by an adult unless other arrangements are made in advance. We welcome service groups and clubs to be involved as well.

A Special Message From the Volunteer Coordinator

As we start out on a shiny brand new year I would like to take a moment to look back at all that we at Rotary Botanical Gardens have accomplished over the past year. We had many events, sales and projects in 2011 and almost without fail they were a rousing success. There is one thing that all our accomplishments have had in common. Volunteers were involved.

Rotary Botanical Gardens is the direct result of countless hours of selfless volunteer involvement. Without our volunteers there would be no Gardens. Our volunteers not only tended beautiful gardens, crafted incredible items,

answered phones and greeted thousands of guests...we educated people of all ages. A gift that can last a life time. To encourage a person to connect with nature no matter what their age can be life altering. It is good for the pupil as

well as the earth. I would like to say "thank you" to all our volunteers for sharing your time and talents with us. With your help we will continue to do amazing things and create a place for all to come and enjoy. Thank you for your never ending support and always answering my call for help! Lori



Assigned Garden Volunteers

As the weather gets warmer in late March and early April, we'd like to invite our current assigned garden volunteers to come back to the Gardens for spring clean-up efforts. Please touch base with Mark prior to March to confirm your interest and commitment to your area and discuss plans for 2012. Thank all of you for a great 2011!

If anyone has potential interest in taking care of their own "piece of real estate" out in the Gardens, call Mark at (608)754-1779 to discuss some opportunities. Surprisingly, only about 20% of the Gardens are maintained by assigned gardeners which leaves many opportunities for others to join in the fun. Mark will then arrange a time to go on a "mini-tour" of the Gardens to examine some of the available gardens and talk about the obligations and expectations for those areas.



Spring Plant Sale

Put Saturday, May 12 and Sunday, May 13 on your calendar for our annual Spring Plant Sale from 9 am until 4 pm, both days. If you are a RBG Friend Member, you are invited to the Members Only pre-sale on Friday, May 11 from 9 am until 4 pm. The sale will be held at the Horticulture Center and signs along Palmer Drive will direct you right to all the action.

What a great way to celebrate the Mother's Day weekend. The Gardens will also be quite colorful with plenty of bulbs blooming at peak.

We will again be offering a wide variety of vegetable plants, herbs, perennials and bagged mushroom compost. Vegetable varieties will include a wide range of heirloom and hybrid tomatoes, bell peppers, hot peppers, eggplants, etc. There will also be a special selection of compact vegetable varieties that were quite popular in 2011 and are perfect for a small area, container, balcony or windowbox. Herbs will include all the standard culinary varieties (lots of basil!) and ornamental varieties as well. A descriptive listing of all vegetable and herb offerings will be included on our website (www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org) by the end of March. There will also be a nice selection of perennials available for a wide range of garden situations.

In order to set-up and facilitate this sale, we'll need significant volunteer assistance. Volunteers will be needed to help tag plants on May 8, 9 and 10 (8 am – noon) at the Horticulture Center. We will also need volunteers to run cash registers and assist customers during all listed hours of

the sale. As we get closer to April, please contact our volunteer coordinator, Lori, at (608)752-3885 (ext. 20) to sign up and help. Call Mark at (608)754-1779 with any questions concerning the sale. If you are able to help promote this event by distributing posters, etc., let Mark know.



Spring Compost Sale

The Gardens will again sell bagged compost every Saturday in April and May from 8 am until 12 noon at the Horticulture Center. Bags are 1.5 cubic feet and roughly 45 lbs. in weight. This material, called blended compost, includes mushroom compost (aged horse manure, peat moss, etc) blended with bark fines.

We use over 200 cubic yards of this material every year out in the Gardens and the benefits are apparent as this material has value as a soil amendment and mulch for "topdressing" around plantings. Each bag will be \$5.50 plus tax although RBG Friends Members receive a 10% discount.



WPT Garden Expo

Visit the RBG booth at the annual WPT Garden Expo at the Exhibition Hall of the Alliant Energy Center (Madison). Sponsored by Wisconsin Public Television and the UW-Extension /Cooperative Extension Horticulture Team, this popular event will be held on Friday, February 10, 4 to 9 pm), Saturday, February 11 (9 am to 6 pm) and Sunday, February 12 (10 am – 4 pm).

Not only will we have a booth but Mark Dwyer, RBG Director of Horticulture will be presenting talks on "Annuals of Interest", "Gardening Vertically" and "Eat Your Landscape".

The educational offerings at the expo are amazing and there are a wide range of vendors and informational booths there to help with your transition to warmer spring weather. Visit www.wigardenexpo.com for more event details including lecture schedules and ticket pricing. RBG will be selling advance tickets from the gift shop while supplies last.

2012 Garden Art Project

Rotary Botanical Gardens announces its 2012 Garden Art Project to encourage community participation at RBG, promote local artists and raise funds for support and development of the Gardens.

We encourage local artists and enthusiastic people of all skill levels to artistically interpret a leaf design created by the volunteer RBG Grumpies from plywood. When completed, the leaf is clear



coated for preservation by Utzig's Carstar Auto Body. RBG staff will position and install the finished pieces throughout the Gardens from Mother's Day to Labor Day for all to enjoy. A map noting final locations will be developed.

The project will kick-off with 40 leaves available for pickup (while supplies last) at the Parker Education Center on February 1 during regular business hours. Completed leaves must be returned to the Parker Education Center by April 1. Please do not drop off completed leaves at the Horticultural Center. Visit the Gardens website (www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org) for complete details.

Thank You RBG In Kind Donors

- K&W Greenery
- L.P. Tree Service
- Central Vending
- Rollie & Audrey McClellan
- Blain's Farm & Fleet
- Dave's Ace Hardware (Milton)

Welcome to Our Newest Friends Members

Mary Atkinson
 Tim and Stacy Duffy
 Marleen Gonstead
 Robert Hardwick
 Ross Hassinger
 Kathleen Hinaus
 Bonita Hoffman
 Ron Johnson
 John and Cindy Lindstedt
 Shawn and Jessica Lynes

Tammy McCaslin Krebs
 Sandra Niemann
 Sara Reinardy
 Steve and Julie Servantez
 Connie Shehan
 Dee Smith
 Mike and Debra Smrekar
 Doug and Ann Squire
 Myron White

Coming Soon! Discovery Backpacks for Youth and Families

Youth Education volunteers are hard at work on an exciting new program for school-age children and their families... and students and their teachers...and scouts and their leaders...and other youth groups and their chaperones. What is it you ask? Discovery Backpacks! Discovery Backpacks are self-guided educational experiences that can be checked out at the Cottage Gallery Gift Shop with a photo ID. Use of the backpacks is included with the regular price of admission, when applicable. So what is a Discovery Backpack and how do they work?

I'm glad you asked. Discovery Backpacks are designed not only to get children outdoors and enjoying nature, but to also encourage physical activity while they learn. Instead of CSI, it's NWI: Natural World Investigation. Visitors become the detectives who must use components

of the scientific method to crack each case by collecting clues throughout the gardens. Within each backpack, there will be investigative tools such as binoculars, field guides, photo reference cards or other resources that students will use to try to solve a mystery outlined in the themed activity packet.

Activities are based on state educational standards, and reinforce problem-solving skills and working as part of a team. The first topics on deck for development are "Birds" and "Trees", appropriate for 3rd-5th graders and 6th-8th graders. Expect to see the new Discovery Backpacks some time in April, 2012.

Keep checking our website for the latest information about this program and others. www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org or contact Kris Koch, RBG Education Coordinator at (608)752-3885, ext. 17.

Wish List

	Estimated Cost
Utility cart	\$7,000
Walkie-talkie upgrade (15 units).....	\$6,000
Laptop computer - education department ..	\$1,500
Echo gas-powered backpack blower.....	\$400
Lawnmowers (2), self propelled	\$600
Felco 5 hand pruners (10)	\$250
Gardening gloves	\$200
Steel post pounder	\$100
Reference library contributions	Any amount
Gas cards	Any denomination appreciated
Heavy duty pencil sharpener	\$25
Small CD boom box	\$20
Laser pointers (2)	\$14
Music CD'S for youth ed	\$75
Hot glue guns/sticks	\$100
Embossing guns	\$100
Step stools for youth ed.....	\$40

Your contributions to Rotary Botanical Gardens help to keep the Gardens growing and beautiful, and support our mission to educate.

To learn more contact Gary Smith at (608) 752-3885, ext. 11 or director@rotarygardens.org



1455 Palmer Drive
Janesville, WI 53545
608-752-3885
www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org

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Shhh!

Secretly Healthful Cooking for your Kids & Family

Adult Workshop

April 15, 1 to 2:30 PM

\$10 Friends Members
\$12 General Public
(includes materials fees)
Register by 4/9/12

www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org

Rotary Botanical Gardens

Spring Garden Symposium

Create an Engaging Garden

March 24

Reserve Your Spot Today!

Speakers include: Tim Gruner,
Anderson Japanese Gardens;
Evelyn Hadden, Garden Writer;
Norm Lownds, 4H Children's
Garden at MSU; and Mark Dwyer,
Horticulture Director at Rotary
Botanical Gardens

www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org

Healthy Mind and Body Series

Melted Crayon Art

Adult Workshop

March 4, 1 to 3 pm

\$35 Friends Members
\$40 General Public
Register by 3/25/12

www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org

