

Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens

Strategic Plan for Programmatic Development

BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE 16 JULY 2009
FOR THE PERIOD 1 JULY 2008 – 30 JUNE 2009

Vision

Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens' vision is to make Birmingham Botanical Gardens one of the nation's preeminent botanical gardens.

Mission

Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens promotes public knowledge of plants, gardens and the environment and receives, raises and administers resources for these purposes.

Educational Programs

Core programs include botany, horticulture, landscape design and environmental science. Plants and nature serve as context for classes in art, science, travel, crafts, food and cooking, and human wellness.

Purpose

Friends of Birmingham Botanical Gardens (FOBBG) provides education and educational resources for all ages and all sectors of the community, principally by stimulating interest in plants and nature, human dependence on them, and the need both to manage and to protect them.

Educational Resources

The Library at Birmingham Botanical Gardens (BBG), Gerlach Plant Information Center (GPIC), Adventure and Exploration Classrooms, Arrington Plant Adventure Zone, Enabling Garden, the Conservatory and the BBG grounds are available for all educational programs. Outreach programs may be conducted off-site and larger classes, such as conferences and seminars, may be held in other Garden Center rooms, including the Strange Auditorium, Linn Henley Lecture Hall, and the Ireland and Hodges Rooms.

Special Note on Funding

General funding for all education programs and activities is provided by private donations from numerous individuals and businesses, and revenue from events such as the Spring and Fall Plant Sales and Antiques at The Gardens. Program-specific funding sources are listed below after the program(s) funded. Because of this generous support, of the 15,000+ children who attended BBG programs in 2008-09, 97% did so for free. (For the most recent complete listing of donors, please see our *2008 Annual Report* or the most recent issue of our newsletter, *Garden Dirt*.)

Volunteer Support

Delivering our education programs would not be possible without the dedicated support we receive from volunteers. In 2008, 234 individuals gave 7,062 hours to support education and library programs and activities.

In 2008, four volunteers and one volunteer group were selected for special recognition. Dr. Robert "Bob" Wendorf was named the Ida C. Burns Volunteer of the Year. Dr. Wendorf is a member of the Bonsai Society, on the board of the Japan-America Society of Alabama and president of the Japanese Garden Society of Alabama. In our Japanese Gardens, Bob is a docent, pruning specialist and fence-builder. Marcia Mancill, former Horticultural Therapy Coordinator at The Gardens, was named our Educator of the Year. The retired elementary school teacher is now an education docent who also volunteers in The Library at BBG every Thursday.

Plantsperson of the Year, usually given to an individual, was awarded to husband-and-wife-team of Ralph and Sarah Johnston. Ralph is a past-president of the Birmingham Fern Society and both are current members, helping to coordinate fern lectures, shows and sales. The pair also volunteers in the Fern Glade at The Gardens on a weekly basis. Volunteer Partner of the Year was presented to the Birmingham Rose Society and accepted by Past-President Bob Eskew. The Birmingham Rose Society helps to maintain our two rose gardens, provides seasoned docents and coordinates rose selections at our plant sales.

Education Staff

Susan Grimes	Horticulture Therapy Coordinator
Ellen Hardy	Education Program Coordinator
Henry Hughes	Director of Education
Steven Kennedy	2009 RCSV Summer Intern
Phyllis Sutton	Education Activities Specialist

Library Staff

Elizabeth Drewry	Senior Librarian
Jason Kirby	Library Assistant
Hope Long	Director of Library Services

Volunteer Staff

Carolyn Snow	Volunteer Coordinator
--------------	-----------------------

Note: Education program reporting is based on an academic calendar from 1 July – 30 June; Library programs and activities and Volunteer metrics are reported based on a complete calendar year.

The Library at Birmingham Botanical Gardens

The Library at Birmingham Botanical Gardens is a member of the Jefferson County Library Cooperative (JCLC), operating as both a full-service branch library and a specialty library. Items from any library in the JCLC system can be ordered, picked up and dropped off here; an on-line reservation system may also be used: go to <http://www.bbgardens.org/library.php> for a link to reserve an item or to search our catalog.

Our circulating collection of over 7,000 books, videos, CDs and DVDs focuses on horticulture, botany, home gardening, garden design, and various environmental topics including natural resource conservation. Our reference collection features taxonomic works representing important plant collections at BBG, as well as floras from across the world. More than 50 periodicals represent the latest in garden design and horticultural trends, and publications from plant societies both regional and national. Special collections have been developed for children and teachers, and free computer and internet use are provided to the public. By appointment, library patrons can also access the BBG Archives and Rare Book Room. The Library at BBG is open Monday-Friday 9:00am – 4:00pm; Saturday 10:00am-4:00pm and Sunday 2:00-5:00pm.

2008 Accomplishments

- Opened the Archives and Rare Book Room officially on August 22.
- Developed a graphic brand for the library, working with local artists, John and Breane Trest.
- Produced GPIC displays: Backyard Beekeeping; Houseplants; Wildflowers; Growing Tomatoes; and Community, Home & Victory Gardens.
- Library became a free WiFi Hot Spot.
- Library became a full voting member of the Jefferson County Library Cooperative.
- Five art openings were held in the main gallery, with Friday evening artists' receptions.
- Circulation is an important statistic for libraries, with a goal being to circulate more total items than in your collection. Once again, in 2008, the Library at BBG achieved this goal, circulating 9,431 items, an increase of 11% over 2007.
- Additional metrics on patronage and activities are included in the summary at the end of this report.

2009 Plans & Goals

- Participate in the first state-wide "Big Read".
- Reprint brochures for the Bruno Vegetable and Kaul Wildflower Gardens.
- Co-publish *Wildflowers of Alabama* (early 2010).
- Produce GPIC Displays: Growing Fruit, Trees for the Landscape (additional planned).
- Host 4-5 art openings in the main gallery.
- Expand WiFi coverage to entire Garden Center.

Funding

Specific funding for the Library at BBG was provided the Ida C. Burns Fund at the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham, and by collections development grants from the Redmont Neighborhood Association of the city of Birmingham. The Beeson Charitable Trust, managed by Regions Bank, is used for certain approved expenses (including technology and equipment purchases), according to the terms of the trust.

Children's Education Programs

DISCOVERY FIELD TRIPS

Our award-winning, flagship program is designed to meet the Alabama State Course of Study in six elementary school (K-6) science themes: plant propagation, nutrient cycling (George Washington Carver), Native Americans, tropical rainforests, interdependence (Barber Alabama Woodlands), and trees. These programs are offered free to schools and students and are led by trained docents.

2008/09 Accomplishments

- Educated 10,152 students, up 4% over prior period
 - Birmingham City Schools: increased 9%
 - Bessemer City Schools: increased 36%

2009/10 Plans & Goals

- Strengthen relationships with Birmingham City Schools and Bessemer City Schools.

Funding

Many docents were provided by the Junior League of Birmingham, which also provides materials reimbursement and transportation funding for Birmingham City Schools; Vulcan Materials Foundation funds transportation costs for Bessemer City Schools and other specific expenses. Other funding was received from the cities of Mountain Brook and Vestavia Hills, and the Hugh Kaul Foundation.

GARDEN EXPLORATIONS

Designed for elementary children ages 6-12 enrolled in the city of Birmingham Park and Recreation Center programs. Docents teach soil formation, nutrient cycling, plant propagation and plant care.

- 320 participants (a 42% increase over 2008, due to scheduling in June 09, as opposed to July 08, thereby avoiding hotter temperatures.)

Funding

This program has been funded for 10 years by generous gifts from Mrs. Jimmie Hess, through the Hess Foundation. Transportation is provided by the Birmingham Parks & Recreation Department.

CHILDREN'S SUMMER WORKSHOPS

A fee-based program led by experienced and certified teachers. Week-long topics include: cooking with fresh herbs and vegetables harvested from The Gardens, yoga (both introduced in summer 2008 by popular request), nature explorations and art in the gardens.

- 300 children attended June/July 2008; approximately equal to 2007 (2009 program still in progress.)

HOLLYDAY MAGIC

The original BBG education program, now fee-based, in which children make crafts from natural and recycled materials to give as gifts, is facilitated by BBG adult and teen volunteers.

- 200 children attended (maximum participation goal)

OUTREACH EDUCATION

Free on- and off-site programs including: Birmingham Cultural Alliance Partnership (BCAP), Better Basics, Christmas Tree Lighting at Linn Park, Discovery Cart, Earth Day at The Gardens, Fishing Rodeo, Fresh Air Family activities, Girl Scout badge project and Urban Forestry Fair.

2008/09 Accomplishments

- Outreach participation remained steady reaching over 3,000 participants through education activities.
- An informal partnership with Fresh Air Family began in 2009 that included twelve Saturday morning family hikes, based on Discovery Field Trips; the Young Ambassadors Program, a writing program for early teens that met every other Sunday afternoon at BBG; and a week-long Summer Camp for Writing and Photography. The idea was to increase the use of idle classrooms to maximize educational opportunities.
- Advanced Placement Biology labs (plant physiology and environmental science) were not conducted at BBG this year because of an apparent misunderstanding about budget cuts in the City of Birmingham high schools.

2009-10 Plans & Goals

- Continue to fine-tune efforts to provide quality programs and activities (not merely participation numbers) and strengthen meaningful relationships with external groups (e.g., Fresh Air Family).
- Reinstitute Advanced Placement Biology labs.

Adult Education Programs

ADULT CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

Fee-based activities with topics including Gardening & Horticulture, Cooking and Crafts, Art & Photography, Naturalist & Family, and Wellness Programs.

2008/09 Accomplishments

- Participation held steady in 2008/09 for traditional classes, and increased dramatically with new offerings.
- In recognition of a new state-wide Medicinal Plant Grower's Association, promoted through the Alabama Agricultural Extension System, an all-day class in Medicinal Plants was held in Spring 09, conducted by an herbalist from California.
- Began the Southern Institute of Photography in January 09 for nearly 200 students. Sixteen 6-week classes were offered in spring, drawing 146 students. Seven classes were offered in summer, drawing 48 students for multiple classes. Classes met nights and weekends, using idle classrooms and netting \$10,000+ in revenue.

09/10 Plans

- Health & Wellness Topics (Tai Chi & Yoga, Cooking with Vegetables & Herbs) to be introduced fall 2009. These will be taught as a series of classes within which students can build their skill level.
- New Art Programs highlighting The Gardens will be introduced in Fall 2009
- Increase number and diversity of fall photography classes, with the goal of netting another \$10,000 by year-end of 09. Possible international trip to Peru to photograph orchids in 2010 or 2011.
- Host the first nature photography exhibition in a new gallery, located in the hallway of the Mary M. Blount Educational Complex, in fall 2009.

LOCAL AND REGIONAL MEETINGS & SEMINARS

Fee-based meetings of professional societies and other public offerings.

08/09 Accomplishments

- Hosted the two-day Central South Native Plant Conference, drawing 52 attendees.
- Hosted the three-day MS-AL annual meeting of the American Society of Landscape Architects, drawing 60+ participants; hosted six lunch-and-learn seminars, each drawing 25+ local landscape architects.
- Hosted the one-day GA-AL Chapter meeting of the American Horticultural Therapy Association with 40+ attendees.
- Hosted Earth Day at The Gardens 2009, drawing over 3,000 participants.

09/10 Plans

- Host the two-day fall 09 Energy Conservation Conference in October.
- Host the 40th anniversary of Earth Day, with a “re-imagined” Earth Day at The Gardens on 25 April 2010.

LECTURES

Educational lectures or BBG tours of at least one-half hour by BBG staff for garden clubs, professional societies, etc. See metrics at the end of this report.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Participation in Birmingham-area community service.

- Began a five-year project with the Little and Red Mountain Garden Clubs to plant trees in Birmingham’s George Ward Park. Seedlings were grown in a BBG greenhouse from seed collected from native, on-site trees, which were alive in 1925 when the park opened.

Funding

A generous donation from Leaf & Petal helped to offset expenses associated with all Adult Education Programs.

COLLEGE INTERNSHIP

- Hosted the second Rotary Club of Shades Valley Summer College Internship. Steven Kennedy, a graduate of Miles College with a major in Pre-med Biology, was chosen from five finalists from Miles, UA, UAB, Birmingham-Southern and Samford. He will be attending graduate school in Plant Science at Tennessee State University in fall 2009. (2008 Summer Intern, Meghan McDonald, Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Birmingham-Southern, begins graduate school in landscape architecture at Mississippi State in fall 2009.) Work included: plant labeling in the Kaul Wildflower and Jemison Lily Gardens, and the BBG parking lot; cutting and seedling propagation; rose and tree pruning; weeding, watering, plant collecting in the field; assisting with programs; public speaking; and researching medicinal plants in BBG’s collections.

Funding

Funding for the 10-week internship was provided by the Rotary Club of Shades Valley.

Horticultural Therapy

Clients Served

Fee-based and free client sessions, both at BBG and off-site.

08/09 Accomplishments

- Serviced 2,420 clients, a 125% increase over 2007/08 (1,099 children; 1,321 adults)
- Developed important community partnerships with UAB departments, including: psychology, sociology, public health, social work, and disability services that enhance programs. Developed partnerships for student internships with the departments of nursing and education and UAB’s service-learning program for undergraduates.
- Received a \$5,000 grant from CAWACO to develop the intergenerational P.L.A.N.T. Program matching two “invisible populations,” the special needs students at Hewitt-Trussville High School and the elderly residents of The Oaks on Parkwood in Bessemer.
- Began the redesign of the Plant Adventure Zone to supplement the Enabling Garden using landscape architect Gary Smith as a consultant.
- Visited Chicago Botanical Garden to meet with Gene Rothert, a national expert on horticultural therapy programs and facilities. Hosted a visit by Mr. Rothert to BBG for consultation.

- Presented a poster at the American Gerontological Society annual meeting in Birmingham; poster selected for inclusion at the national annual meeting of the American Horticultural Therapy Association (AHTA.)
- Hosted “Designing Exceptional Places and Programs,” the one-day annual meeting of the Georgia-Alabama Chapter of AHTA, featuring Gene Rothert and Gary Smith.

09/10 Plans

- Apply for grants (CAWACO, et al.) to conduct a P.L.A.N.T. Program at Putnam Middle School in conjunction with St. Martins-in-the-Pines.
- Nominated for the John Walker Community Service Award to be presented October 09 by AHTA.

Funding

HT-specific funding was provided by grants from CAWACO and Publix Supermarket Charities, Inc.

Volunteer Coordination

Volunteers impact every aspect of FOBBG’s operations and are essential to delivering education programs.

2008 Accomplishments

- Overall, 1,378 volunteers gave 20,294 hours, down 3% from 2007
- 258 volunteers gave 4,413 hours to education programs; 36 volunteers gave 2,649 hours to the BBG library.
- Increased recruitment and training of HT volunteers to accommodate program expansion, maintenance of HT Enabling Garden, containers, and greenhouse.
- Coordinated renewed garden work from Daylily Group
- Docents: 11 new; incorporated more botany into docent training

2009 Plans & Goals

- Develop new garden tour manuals: Dunn Formal and Ireland Old-Fashioned Rose Gardens, Japanese Gardens, Kaul Wildflower Garden, Conservatory, General BBG Tour.
- Expand Volunteer recruitment efforts.

**BIRMINGHAM BOTANICAL GARDENS
EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

compiled 16 July 09

SIX-YEAR SUMMARY

ACADEMIC YEARS: 1 July - 30 June	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	7,767	9,289	11,695	15,488	14,765	15,237
ADULT PROGRAMS	9,593	11,735	15,529	18,653	27,143	26,793
TOTAL ALL PROGRAMS - ALL AGES	17,360	21,024	27,224	34,141	41,908	42,030

DISCOVERY FIELD TRIPS - SCHOOL TYPES	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Urban Schools	3,232	4,813	4,706	6,707	6,143	6,614
Suburban Schools (including OTM schools)	2,226	1,447	1,198	1,062	1,487	1,051
Out-of County Schools	244	623	627	1,967	1,237	1,817
Other, Private, Parochial and Home Schools	351	236	978	1,496	905	670
SUBTOTAL - DISCOVERY FIELD TRIPS	6,053	7,119	7,509	11,232	9,772	10,152
OTHER ON-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Horticultural Therapy	*	*	*	*	379	1,099
Better Basics M.O.R.E. Luncheons	***	***	***	400	400	500
Family Discovery Cart	*	50	50	744	750	325
Earth Day at The Gardens	100	200	200	275	550	881
Garden Explorations	225	225	225	225	225	320
Children's Summer Workshops	264	270	334	350	320	300
"Plants: Try It!" Girl Scout Project	*	*	*	*	242	240
HollyDay Magic	100	200	200	205	200	200
Family Fun Day	75	75	100	120	370	200
<i>Fresh Air Family Events</i>	*	*	*	**	**	94
Birmingham Cultural Alliance Partnership	30	30	30	40	40	50
Alabama Spring Fest	*	*	*	*	300	**
Advanced Placement Biology Labs	**	**	**	132	132	*
Alabama School of Fine Arts	**	**	**	**	40	*
Enchanted Garden Fairy Tea	*	*	166	*	*	*
Legacy EnviroBowl	120	120	120	120	120	*
SUB-TOTAL OTHER ON-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	914	1,170	1,425	2,611	4,068	4,209
TOTAL ON-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	6,967	8,289	8,934	13,843	13,840	14,361
OFF-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Urban Forestry Fair	600	600	600	500	500	400
Stokin' the Fire	*	*	350	200	200	**
Fishing Rodeo	**	**	**	**	**	250
Christmas Tree Lighting at Linn Park	200	*	100	65	125	186
Salamander Festival	**	**	**	**	**	40
Clover Crawl	*	*	*	*	100	**
A Clean Air Affair	*	400	45	**	**	**
Auntie Litter Earth Day	**	**	1,546	500	**	**
Clay Elementary School Birdfest	*	*	90	**	**	**
Education Day at Parisian	*	*	30	**	*	*
Festival at Moss Rock Preserve	*	**	**	350	**	**
Keep Birmingham Beautiful Commission Event	**	**	**	30	**	**
TOTAL OFF-SITE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	800	1,000	2,761	1,645	925	876

ALL CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
DISCOVERY FIELD TRIPS	6,053	7,119	7,509	11,232	9,772	10,152
OTHER ON-SITE PROGRAMS	914	1,170	1,425	2,611	4,068	4,209
OFF-SITE PROGRAMS	800	1,000	2,761	1,645	925	876
TOTAL CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS	7,767	9,289	11,695	15,488	14,765	15,237
LIBRARY PROGRAMS	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Patrons Served	5,200	6,500	8,995	11,149	18,247	18,201
Free Computer/Internet (subset of circulation)	975	1,150	2,012	2,158	2,683	2,702
Earth Day at The Gardens	**	**	**	**	200	556
Library Art Openings	*	*	*	*	201	155
Family Fun Day	**	**	**	**	200	150
<i>The Big Read: To Kill A Mockingbird</i>	*	*	*	*	130	*
SUB-TOTAL LIBRARY PROGRAMS	5,200	6,500	8,995	11,149	18,978	19,062
OTHER ON-SITE ADULT PROGRAMS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Discovery Field Trips	800	930	1,000	1,500	1,300	1,350
Horticultural Therapy	420	420	575	730	697	1,321
Adult Classes and Workshops	700+	871	968	774	738	1,252
Family Discovery Cart	*	***	***	1,242	1,250	430
Spencer Lecture	500	500	370	350	210	285
Junior League Provisional Retreat	*	*	*	*	100	200
Earth Day at The Gardens	***	***	150	125	175	175
Celebrity Lectures (includes Antiques' speakers)	650	200	420	45	85	175
Docent Training Program	42	46	51	58	70	142
HollyDay Magic	***	***	125	125	125	125
Teacher Workshops	250	250	821	831	831	93
"Plants: Try-It!" Girl Scout Project	*	*	*	*	88	80
Family Fun Day	***	***	***	30	30	50
Birmingham Cultural Alliance Partnership	***	***	90	36	36	40
Garden Explorations	***	***	***	40	40	40
<i>Fresh Air Family</i>	*	*	*	**	**	11
Alabama Spring Fest	*	*	*	*	75	**
Advanced Placement Biology Labs	*	*	*	16	16	*
Legacy EnviroBowl	50	50	50	50	50	*
Miscellaneous Discontinued Programs	700	650	460	284	*	*
SUB-TOTAL OTHER ON-SITE ADULT PROGRAMS	3,412	3,917	5,080	6,236	5,916	5,769
OFF-SITE ADULT PROGRAMS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
SUB-TOTAL OFF-SITE ADULT PROGRAMS	-	-	295	340	210	95

CONFERENCES & MEETINGS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
Botanical Gardens, Colleges & Universities	25	10	6	485	169	531
Environmental Orgs. & Professional Associations	305	52	165	40	211	481
Horticultural Orgs. & Societies, Master Gardeners	330	325	210	270	556	270
Garden Clubs	196	196	210	43	285	257
Civic Organizations & Government	105	200	263	90	300	247
Other	20	65	0	0	30	41
Environmental & Horticultural Conferences	0	470	305	0	488	40
SUBTOTAL CONF. & MEETINGS	981	1,318	1,159	928	2,039	1,867

ALL ADULT PROGRAMS	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09
LIBRARY PROGRAMS (<i>data for first calendar year</i>)	5,200	6,500	8,995	11,149	18,978	19,062
OTHER ON-SITE PROGRAMS	3,412	3,917	5,080	6,236	5,916	5,769
OFF-SITE PROGRAMS	-	-	295	340	210	95
CONFERENCES & MEETINGS	981	1,318	1,159	928	2,039	1,867
TOTAL ADULT PROGRAMS	9,593	11,735	15,529	18,653	27,143	26,793

VOLUNTEER PARTICIPATION	2006		2007		2008	
	#VOLS	HOURS	#VOLS	HOURS	#VOLS	HOURS
EDUCATION PROGRAMS	374	3,516	372	5,828	258	4,413
THE LIBRARY AT BBG	36	2,277	36	2,726	36	2,649
TOTALS	410	5,793	408	8,554	294	7,062

In 2007, the average education volunteer worked 15.7 hours.

In 2008, the average education volunteer worked 17.1 hours.

First-year programs appear in *italics*

* Event did not occur

** BBG did not participate

*** Adults not previously counted