

# DIG iN

FALL 2022  
NEWSLETTER



FRIENDS OF  
**THE GARDENS**  
ON SPRING CREEK



# UPCOMING CALENDAR

## November .....

- 1 Garden of Lights tickets on sale
- 1 New membership levels available
- 11 School's Out! Day Camp
- 24 Thanksgiving Day, Gardens closed
- + Adult Education Classes
- + Read and Seed (English & Español)

## December .....

- 6 Colorado Gives Day
- 9-24 Garden of Lights
- 25 Christmas Day, Gardens closed
- 26 Gardens closed
- 31 New Year's Eve, Gardens closed

## January 2023 .....

- 1 New Year's Day, Gardens closed
- 10 Spring Break Camp registration opens
- 16 Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Gardens open!
- + Adult Education Classes
- + Read and Seed (English & Español)

## February .....

- 20 President's Day, Gardens open!
- + Adult Education Classes
- + Read and Seed (English & Español)

## March.....

- 1 Summer Camp registration opens
- 4 High Plains Landscape Workshop
- 13-17 Spring Break Camp
- + Adult Education Classes
- + Read and Seed (English & Español)

## April.....

- 21 School's Out! Day Camp



# BOARD PRESIDENT LETTER

Greetings Members of the Friends,

Just as The Gardens has experienced growth and maturation over the last several years, Friends of The Gardens has responded in kind on several fronts. Two years ago, we committed to several strategic goals, and despite the challenges of the COVID pandemic, I am proud to report that we have met and are on track to our stated goals which included:

- **Board Development and Recruitment:** We committed to increase Board membership to eight members by December 2021, 10 by December 2022 and 12 by December 2023, and I am excited to announce that we have met our 2021 and 2022 goals! We are grateful to those who have recently joined our organization.
- **Membership:** Membership has increased fivefold since 2019, and in May of 2022 we reached 3,000 active Members! Keep reading for more exciting news regarding our membership program, and thank you for being a Member!
- **Fundraising:** After two successful seasons of Date Night at The Gardens, the return of Garden a'Fare was even better! And thanks to your support of those events and our annual appeals, The Friends has been able to contribute an additional \$90,000 towards Gardens operations in the last two years. Be on the lookout for another major announcement in 2023!

- **Financial:** As we have grown our numbers and increased the scope of our work, we set out to update our financial policies and procedures. In the last two years, we have made revenue and expense management systems transparent to all board members and senior Gardens staff and completed an external financial review.
- **Administration:** To improve board performance, we moved most Board documentation to Google Drive. Committing to a central repository means that all members of The Friends and other appropriate personnel have access to meeting minutes, annual reports, bylaws, and our ongoing Memorandum of Understanding with the City of Fort Collins among other items. The result has been more streamlined and coordinated decision-making.

Serving on The Friends board has been a privilege and rewarding experience, and I want to thank my fellow board members for their hard work and dedication through it all. As we look ahead to the 2023 growing season, we have exciting announcements in the works. And thanks to your support, the Gardens continues to bloom.

Thank you,



*Friends of The Gardens  
Board President*  
**TOM SATTERLY**

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER



As the growing season winds down and fall is fully upon us, it is time to reflect and give thanks for the good thing that 2022 has bestowed:

For an employee team who have worked tirelessly while being short-staffed and enduring an extremely warm summer.

To the hundreds of volunteers that are setting records for volunteer hours this year, it has been truly astonishing, and we couldn't do it without you.

For our Members who support us in many ways beyond their gift of membership. Your support of our events, classes and fundraisers is outstanding. And we love how you share your love of The Gardens with your friends and neighbors.

To our Friends Board who continues to increase their financial support of our Gardens operations. Your passion for our shared vision shows in your support of so many of our endeavors.

For our partners at Butterfly Pavilion and Lincoln Center who make it possible for us to bring one-of-a-kind programming to Fort Collins and all of Northern Colorado.

To our donors and sponsors who make so many things possible. Your support of The Gardens enhances all our offerings for the community.

And lastly, for the waning the Covid-19 pandemic so that we all may find joy in the things we missed over the past years.



*Gardens on Spring Creek*

*Executive Director*

**MICHELLE  
PROVAŽNIK**

# MEMBER MORNINGS

More than 250 Members attended Member Mornings this summer which, for the first time, included Gardens Ambassadors on site to answer questions about The Gardens. Be on the lookout for more new additions when Member Mornings returns in 2023!



## GIVE THE GIFT OF THE GARDENS THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

### PATHWAY BRICKS

Since we relaunched this program at the end of 2020, we have laid more than 50 bricks in The Garden Friends Pathway. Commemorative bricks make a fantastic gift and are a great way to honor someone special, but we are hitting pause on the program after December 31, 2022. Bricks ordered before the end of the year will be installed the following Spring in May or June, depending on the weather, so hurry and get yours today! Visit [fcgov.com/gardens/brick-by-brick](https://fcgov.com/gardens/brick-by-brick) for more information, or email Ann at [aachilli@fcgov.com](mailto:aachilli@fcgov.com).

### MEMBERSHIPS MAKE GREAT GIFTS!

The only thing better than a great holiday gift is one that can be enjoyed all year long! Gift memberships start at \$50 (\$30 for students) and come with free daily admission to The Gardens and Butterfly House, reciprocal free admission to more than 325 other botanic gardens in North America, discounts on education classes, children's camps, event tickets and gift shop merchandise, as well as invites to Member-only events. To learn more and give the gift of The Gardens to the nature lovers in your life this holiday season, visit [friendsgosc.org/membership](https://friendsgosc.org/membership).

### GIFT CERTIFICATES

Want to start by introducing someone to The Gardens? We also have gift certificates, good for admission, gift shop merchandise and classes available, as well as two for \$20 admissions passes! Stop by The Gardens or call our Guest Services team at 970-416-2486 to learn more.



## VOLUNTEERS SURVEY LOCAL BUTTERFLY AND BIRD BIODIVERSITY

We love gardens for their vibrant and subtle beauties. Gardens also play an important role in urban environments by providing resources and shelter for urban wildlife. Volunteers called Biodiversity Monitors for the City of Fort Collins Nature in the City program spend the summer doing bird and butterfly surveys to help quantify the importance of these oasis for wildlife in the city.

Since 2016, volunteers have performed bird and butterfly surveys at the Gardens on Spring Creek. The Gardens are consistently high in diversity of both bird and butterfly species compared to other urban sites surveyed—likely due to the abundance of floral resources, seeds and berries available in the gardens. Additionally, its proximity to Spring Creek, an important wildlife corridor through our city, also plays an important role.

Using data from The Gardens and dozens of other sites, researchers at Colorado State University and the Wildlife Conservation Society found lands in Fort Collins managed with wildlife in mind host more diversity of bird and butterfly species. This is good news for all of us. It means the efforts of the Gardens on Spring Creek and the Nature in the City program to diversify and beautify spaces is working. It means efforts you make in your space also helps wildlife. Lastly, it means the wildlife we see in our city can have a place to live and thrive.

To learn more about how you can support wildlife, create a beautiful garden, or get involved in another way, visit the Nature in the City website at [fcgov.com/natureinthecity](https://fcgov.com/natureinthecity).

# THAT'S A WRAP!

## SUMMER EVENT RECAP



### LIVE AT THE GARDENS SUMMER CONCERT SERIES

Music lovers got a glimpse of what Live at The Gardens would become when music legend Herbie Hancock brought down the house last fall. COVID restrictions eased at the beginning of 2022 and the first full season of Live at The Gardens was given the green light. Over the course of seven performances from June-September, The Gardens welcomed Grammy-award winners, rock 'n roll legends and the Fort Collins Symphony for very special performances.

More than 8,500 tickets were sold in 2022, and we look forward to hosting our 2023 season! Renew your membership and get your tickets before the general public at [friendsgosc.org/membership](https://friendsgosc.org/membership)!

Many thanks to our sponsors who made the first full season of Live at The Gardens a memorable one: BMW of Loveland and Mini of Loveland, Soukup Bush & Associates, Odell Brewing Company, Fossil Creek Nursery, Downtown Ace Hardware and Poudre Pet and Feed.

### URBAN HOMESTEAD TOUR

2022 was a record year for the 7th annual NoCo Urban Homestead Tour as the event sold more tickets (500) and featured more households (7) than previous events. Thanks to Fort Collins Nursery, Ace Hardware of Fort Collins, Poudre Pet and Feed, Loveland Garden Center, SavATree, Northern Water Conservancy, Soukup Bush & Associates and First Bank for making this year's event a huge success!

The Urban Homestead Tour will take a break in 2023 as we pursue a special opportunity with The Garden Conservancy's Open Days, coming to Fort Collins next fall!



### GARDEN A'FARE

A sold-out crowd of 500 festive patrons joined us this August for the new and re-imagined Garden a'Fare. For the first time since re-opening our doors in 2019, the entire Garden site was activated—from the Children's Garden to the Everitt Pavilion. Guests enjoyed music from Liz Barnez and Yarrow Band, Odell Brewing Company beer and wine, a signature cocktail crafted by CopperMuse, and a gourmet catered dinner. To top it all off, the Wine and Whiskey Pull sold out and every piece of art in our plein air silent auction was purchased! Overall, the event raised more than \$44,000 for Friends of the Gardens on Spring Creek.

Special thanks to our Garden a'Fare sponsors: Dellenbach Motors, Odell Brewing Company, Fiona's Deli, Alpine Gardens/Fossil Creek Nursery, Outpost Sunsport, Bohemian Foundation, Fish's Liquor, and CopperMuse Distillery for the financial support of the event. We also thank the five artists who donated their time and talents to our art auction: Marilyn Brandenberger, Lisa Cameron, Bob Coonts, Diane Findley and Karen Ramsay.

Garden a'Fare will return in 2023, and remember that Members receive 10 percent off tickets! Thank you for supporting Garden a'Fare and Friends of The Gardens!



## GROWING OUR COMMITMENT TO THE COMMUNITY

With 12 acres of botanic beauty and a tropical Butterfly House, something is always in bloom at The Gardens—2022 is no exception.

In just the last year alone, we started a paid intern program for students, piloted a horticulture therapy program for seniors and added a new teen education initiative. We also hosted our second temporary art installation, *Bird House Villages*, our first full season of summer concerts and signed on as one of the first participants in an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access cohort with the American Public Gardens Association. To top it all off, we are hosting a Día de Muertos celebration and will refresh interpretive signage across the entire gardens.

In short, we are deepening our commitment to curating a garden where all feel welcome and able to participate.

This is our legacy. It is a legacy we planted together with you and your financial support. It is a legacy that changes as we continue to meet the needs of our community, and it is a legacy we seek to build upon in 2023 and beyond.

Colorado Gives Day is December 6. If you are in a position to make a gift this holiday season, we ask you to consider a donation to Friends of The Gardens on Spring Creek in your year-end giving plans.

Your donation will ensure butterflies continue to inspire children, our waterwise gardening techniques will educate adults and our planted spaces will offer seniors tranquility. It also ensures The Gardens' legacy, the collective sum of thousands giving since 2004 and before, lives on for generations. Visit [coloradogives.org](https://coloradogives.org) to learn more or donate online at any time at [friendsgosc.org/donate](https://friendsgosc.org/donate).

Thank you for supporting the Gardens on Spring Creek and have a wonderful holiday season!





# BUCKETS OF BULBS! 4,000 BULBS COMING TO THE GARDENS!

Bryan Fischer  
Curator and Horticulturist



Gardening in the middle of one of the world's four great steppes is no feat for the weary. Triple digit highs, subzero lows, intense sun and desiccating wind are not only normal, but are expected annually in Northern Colorado. Particularly intolerant of such poor treatment, woody plants treat

the region much like how I would treat a choir concert in spring of 2019; they've made themselves dang scarce. As a result, gardeners in our region tend to use such plants sparingly, and in less diversity than others. It's not uncommon, in fact, to hear the Front Range referred to as an "herbaceous region" due to the emphasis we place on plants that spring from their roots each year, looking fresh no matter what they may have endured in the previous season.

At the same time, another type of plant has evolved to thrive in steppes and adjacent climates, like the Mediterranean: geophytes. Meaning "earth lover," which describes their seasonal disappearance below an insulating blanket of soil to simply wait out unfavorable weather, geophytes consist of bulbs (made of modified leaves), corms (modified stems) and tubers (modified rhizomes, a type of stem), among a few other botanical designations. It's common for us to refer to these all as bulbs, as they are used similarly and appear alike to the casual observer. At the Gardens on Spring Creek, as part of our emphasis on gardening in synchronization with our climate, soils and place, we use a lot of bulbs! This year, our order was a big one and will be arriving any day.

In coming weeks, our horticulture staff will be slamming —er—gently placing these 4,000 geophytes in their new homes. Bought in bulk from specialty growers, this year's bulb order will increase spring interest across the grounds at a time when most herbaceous plants remain dormant. Additionally, the new bulbs will diversify our collections by adding several new cultivars and species to the overall landscape. Some will be grown for sale as holiday plants in our gift shop by late November, so keep your eyes peeled for both paperwhites and amaryllis.

At the south end of our site, horticulturist Jessica Clarke will be planting fall, not spring, blooming crocus by the cultivar name of 'Oxonian'. A last flash before chilly weather sets in, these saffron relatives present with large, intensely colored, cup-shaped blooms and contrasting, tendril-like orange stamens in the center. Elsewhere in the Children's Garden, watch for other fall blooming Crocus, like the refined white *Crocus orchroleucus*.

Anything but refined, I've opted to pop visitor's eyeballs out by adding 400 flaming hot *Tulipa kolpakowskiana* to the Rock Garden. A personal favorite, this species tulip is as flashy as its name is terrifying, with golden centers and three contrasting apricot-colored sepals on the outside. I will be



contrasting and undulating ribbon of the plant with the much mellower, cool-blue *Muscari neglectum* 'Baby's Breath' in similar numbers. Softer yellow and earlier-blooming, masses of *Crocus chysanthus* 'Cream Beauty' will add a gentle accent in other parts of the garden.

The Undaunted Garden is also set to receive another massive round of bulb planting, with 1,950 bulbs earmarked for its beds by mid-November. Complimenting the already substantial and tasteful collection of geophytes in the space, visitors should watch for growing numbers of a few taxa already in the garden, like the elegant, icy blue 'Valerie Finnis' grape hyacinth (*Muscari*), greater numbers of fall-blooming crocus—quite striking when interplanted into fall-reddening sedum—and numerous species tulips. Mostly *Tulipa batalinii*, they will present in pastel yellows, apricots and salmons with low-growing, narrow foliage.

A stone's throw from the Undaunted Garden, I installed—with lots of help—a "*Camassia* river" last year in the Prairie Garden. Beginning around a bench at the southern edge, the river takes a gently sinuous route down the garden's length, terminating near the Wetland's boardwalk. Currently, cobalt blues comprise most of the display, and aren't as effective visually in a monochrome as they would be if studded with light blues and whites. So, to compliment the 700 cobalt-blue *Camassia* in the space, I'll be adding (hopefully once again with lots of help) 550 more, this time in sky-blues and whites. One of the few bulbs native to prairies of the United States, these taxa are serving to help improve early-season interest in this garden's otherwise sluggish spring display.

With so many bulbs set to be planted in so little time, there is virtually no chance the Gardens will see a sluggish fall. Of course, these plantings will take place in addition to our annual holiday light display setup, including displays for Pumpkins on Parade and Día de Muertos. So, whether you might be more entertained by seeing what a 4,000-bulb display or its installation might look like, or something else entirely, don't hesitate to stop by the Gardens.





**NEW MEMBERSHIP LEVELS COMING NOVEMBER 1**

A lot has changed since we launched our new membership program in 2019. Based on your constructive feedback, we're excited to announce even more changes are coming November 1. You asked, so we listened!

For starters, we're adding three new membership levels: **Family Plus**, **Sustaining** and **Leadership**. We're also making it possible to add people to a membership account, like additional children, a grandparent or a caretaker. And, finally, we're changing what types of people are covered under a membership account.

**FAMILY PLUS**  
MEMBERSHIP LEVEL \$145

Our new **Family Plus** membership level is perfect for families who have adult children over the age of 18 (like college students) mixed with kids (ages two to 17) or grandparents who have recently moved to the area. Unlike the traditional **Family** membership, **Family Plus** allows up to four additional family members of any age, rather than children under age 18. **The Family Plus** membership level is intended for

extended nuclear families only—aunts, uncles and cousins are not eligible for inclusion.

**+6 SUSTAINING**  
MEMBERSHIP LEVEL \$500

**+8 LEADERSHIP**  
MEMBERSHIP LEVEL \$1,000

For those who want a premier Gardens experience, we created the **Sustaining** and **Leadership** membership levels. Members at these levels receive benefits accorded only to our philanthropic partners and include a complimentary tour of The Gardens, a free gift membership to gift to someone special and even earlier access to ticketing to our Spring Plant Sale and summer concert series. Plus, they can bring whoever they like - friends, family, colleagues - each time they visit The Gardens! Visit The Friends website at [www.friendsgosc.org/membership](http://www.friendsgosc.org/membership) or contact Michael Coleman at 970.224.6106 or [mcoleman@fcgov.com](mailto:mcoleman@fcgov.com) for more information.

**+ ADD-ONS**  
TO FAMILY AND FAMILY PLUS  
MEMBERSHIP LEVELS \$10

Add an additional child, caregiver or grandparent to your membership for just \$10. This is the perfect option for large families with more than four children, families who utilize a caregiver / babysitter or large extended nuclear families with adult children and grandparents living in town. These add-ons are for Family and Family Plus membership levels only, and some restrictions apply. Visit [www.friendsgosc.org/membership](http://www.friendsgosc.org/membership) or call our Guest Services team at 970.416.2486 to learn more.

**WHO CAN I BRING?**

There are no changes for **Student, Individual, Individual Plus** or **Family** Memberships. However,

**Family Plus** Members can now bring up to four additional family members (moms, dads, children 2-17, adult children 18+ and grandparents) each time they visit The Gardens.

In addition, **Contributing** memberships now include two named Members and four guests; **Sustaining** memberships include two named Members and six guests; and **Leadership** Memberships include two named Members and eight guests. For these memberships, guests can be any combination of friends, family, colleagues for each visit.

We greatly value our Members and want to thank those who provided feedback on how we could improve our membership program. We take this feedback seriously and hope that you enjoy the new options.

Thank you for being a Member!

**GREENHOUSE FILLS WITH HOLIDAY CHEER**

In preparation for the season, Gardens horticulture staff are as busy as Santa's elves—hanging lights and growing a variety of holiday favorites. Plants are beginning to fill the greenhouse and will soon be available for purchase in the Gift Shop.

An annual tradition, this year's poinsettia offerings will include 'Autumn Leaves,' a cultivar with warm orange bracts, speckled 'Candy Cane,' and deep red varieties 'Christmas Feelings™ Merlot,' 'FabYULEous' and 'Ferrara.'

In addition, paperwhites, amaryllis varieties, cyclamen and holiday cactus will also be for sale starting the week of Thanksgiving. Prices for all plants range from \$8 to \$16 and come with care instructions.



## WINTER HOURS BEGIN DECEMBER 1

Beginning December 1, the Gardens on Spring Creek will shift to Winter Hours and Rates. The Gardens will close daily at 4 p.m. and admissions rates will be half off through February 28. The final entrance to the Butterfly House will be at 3:15 daily. For more information, please visit [fcgov.com/gardens](http://fcgov.com/gardens).

### CONTACT US

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# Garden of Lights

**DECEMBER 9 - 24**  
TICKETS ON SALE NOVEMBER 1

Join us for Garden of Lights presented by Ent Credit Union—one of Northern Colorado's favorite holiday traditions!

Stroll through a whimsical, twinkling winter wonderland. Enjoy hundreds of color blossoms illuminating the Great Lawn in multi-colored motion, a holiday village, and a half-mile loop of towering flowerbeds, glowing grapevines and other imaginative displays.

**Members receive 20 percent off tickets!**  
Learn more at [fcgov.com/lights](http://fcgov.com/lights)

