

# GARDENS on Spring Creek

2014 Annual Report



*Take Root. Grow. Flourish.*

## From the Director, Michelle Provaznik

Ten years? That's the question we heard over and over throughout 2014 as the Gardens on Spring Creek celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Many simply could not believe it had been ten years since we opened our doors. My, how time flies! Highlights of our anniversary campaign included:

- We selected the purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) as the official flower of the year using it to create a stunning anniversary logo.
- Our history was documented and a pictorial timeline created.
- We handed out 5,000 packets of *Echinacea* seeds at all of our community events.
- Elementary students from across Poudre School District submitted artwork as part of the celebration.
- Our 10-year volunteers shared their favorite memories of The Gardens over the years.
- To cap off the year, we unveiled a new coneflower sculpture at Garden of Lights.

We are honored to have served the Fort Collins community as its botanic garden for the past decade—a special thank you to all of the members, volunteers, Friends of the Gardens Board Members, and staff for all of their efforts to make The Gardens a gem in our community. After a year of record visitation, volunteerism and revenue growth, we look forward to what the next 10 years will bring as we work to complete our Master Plan.



## Friends of the Gardens on Spring Creek

The Friends of the Gardens on Spring Creek is the non-profit partner of the Gardens on Spring Creek, a City of Fort Collins facility. The Friends is a member-based organization led by a volunteer board of directors. Its mission is to cultivate a world-class botanic garden through fundraising and advocacy. Over the years, their support and hard work have been essential to establishing and growing The Gardens. In 2014, the Friends Board was instrumental in securing funding for capital expansion of our gardens and the endowment fund, ensuring long-term sustainability for The Gardens programs and operations.

Thanks to the following people for serving on the 2014 Board of Directors: Randy Morgan, Dulcie Willis, Jessica Hunter, Barbara Jehu, Sally Guthart, Roger Warren, Jesse Eastman, Marcia Petrun and John Papile.



## Horticulture

Our Horticulture team was busy with many projects while keeping our gardens looking beautiful. Our greenhouse and hoop house were used extensively this year, growing 4,300 plants for the Parks Department. In addition we grew thousands of plants for our Spring Plant Sale—the most successful ever. Plants sold during the Plant Sale generated over \$57,000 in proceeds shared with the Horticulture Departments at Front Range Community College and Colorado State University.

We completed the Turf Demonstration Site which features five different types of turf watered at three different rates to educate homeowners about how much water their lawn needs. We also expanded the plantings along Centre Avenue to improve our visual impact along this busy street. Thanks to grant from the Colorado Garden Show, we added thousands of bulbs to many of our gardens enhancing our spring and early summer displays while increasing the number of genus and species in our plant collection.



# Education Programs

Adult and youth education programs are at the heart of our mission of enriching the lives of people and fostering environmental stewardship through horticulture.

Adult education classes kicked off in January with a series of gardening classes. Summer cooking classes were a huge success this year. Overall, we conducted 33 adult education classes with 532 attendees. In addition, the annual High Plains Landscape Workshop educated 350 people about sustainable gardening practices for Front Range gardeners while raising over \$15,000 for The Gardens programs.

Youth programs saw a significant increase in participation due to more Summer Camp attendees and School Tour participants. A new partnership with our Natural Areas Department for a combined field trip proved very popular with our local elementary schools. Halloween Enchanted Garden saw nearly 600 costumed kids doing crafts, playing games, checking out creepy-crawly insects and chatting with the Talking Pumpkin.

## Special Events

Special Events continued to be a significant driver for visitation and revenue. All of our major events experienced significant growth in 2014 resulting in net revenue of \$148,250 for Gardens programs and operations.

Over 20,000 people enjoyed Garden of Lights. New displays including the Purple Coneflower Trio, farm tractor, and carrots were a huge hit. The Sugar Plum Furries, local choirs and Santa continue to draw crowds from across northern Colorado.

The NOCO Urban Homestead Tour, our newest fundraising event, was a tremendous success. The collaborative event between Loveland Youth Gardeners and The Gardens featured six urban homesteads—three in Loveland and three in Fort Collins. Over 250 people attended the inaugural event, raising nearly \$6,000 for both organizations.

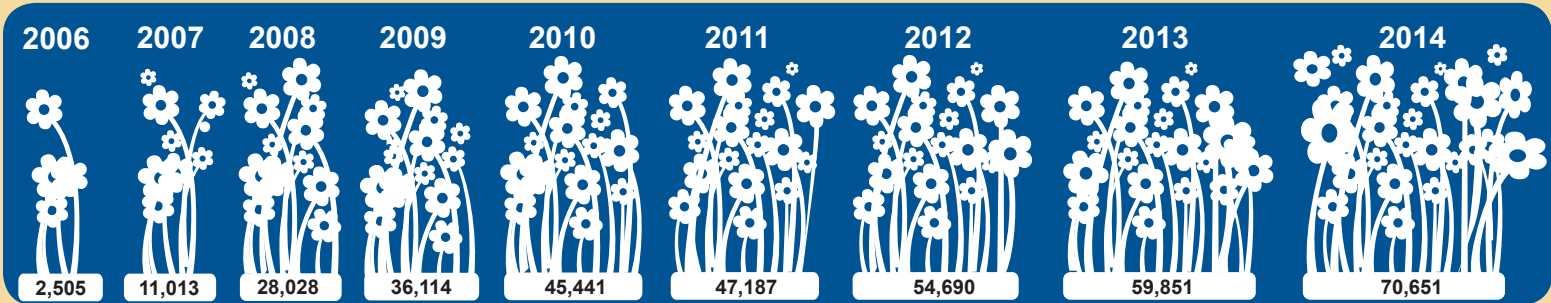
The Garden a’Fare Wine Night and Beer Tour was enjoyed by 400 guests. These signature events connect guests to local restaurants, local beverages and local produce grown in the Garden of Eatin’. Garden a’Fare netted \$9,500 for Gardens programs.

Lastly, The Gardens was honored to co-host the American Public Garden Association’s annual conference with our regional partner gardens—Denver Botanic Garden, Cheyenne Botanic Garden and Betty Fort Alpine Garden. It was exciting to show off our garden to colleagues from around the country.



*Trellis Garden Ale was brewed by Odell Brewing Company featuring coriander, cilantro, pineapple mint, lavender and rose petals grown at The Gardens. \$1 from each bottle of Trellis Garden Ale sold will be donated to the Gardens on Spring Creek in 2015.*

## Visitation



## Community Partnerships

- **AIR and Beet Street:** host interns and partner on ARTiculture Fine Arts Festival
- **Boys and Girls Club:** Partner, youth cooking program
- **City of Fort Collins departments:** **Utilities** - High Plains Landscape Workshop and other classes; **Parks Department's Botanical Team and Safety Committee;** **Lincoln Center** - ARTiculture Fine Arts Festival; **Parks, Park Planning, Neighborhood Services, and Social Sustainability** - build community gardens in parks; the **Natural Areas Department** - co-host school field trips; **FC Bikes** - host Bike to Work station
- **Colorado State University** – Departments of Horticulture; Entomology; Human Development and Family Studies; Kendall Andersen Nutrition Center; Ram's Point Winery; Gillette Entomology Club – partner on events, host internships, Service Learning, and Key Cluster and club volunteer opportunities for students
- **Early Childhood Council of Larimer County** – expand youth programs through information and outreach
- **Food Bank for Larimer County** – 7,268 pounds of produce grown at The Gardens was donated to the Food Bank; 37,690 pounds donated by **local gardeners** through Plant it Forward
- **Food for Life** - Partner, youth cooking program
- **Foothills Gateway** – The Gardens serves as a community integration site for their clients to learn socialization and basic work skills
- **Fort Collins Coloradoan** – staff writes weekly “In the Garden” columns to educate and promote The Gardens
- **Front Range Community College** – Spring Plant Sale partnership with **Horticulture Department**; intern host; volunteer site for service learning projects
- **Front Range Growers Association** – Hosted a workshop to promote sustainable horticulture practices along the Front Range
- **The Gabriel Foundation** – provide youth and family presentations
- **Garden Clubs** - Northern Colorado Railroad Gardeners, Northern Colorado Daylily Club, Rocky Mountain Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society, and Colorado Dahlia Society
- **Girl Scouts of Colorado** – complete service learning projects as part of scout badge programs
- **Healthy Kids Club** - Partner on youth cooking program
- **High Plains Environmental Center** – partner on education programs
- **Larimer County Cooperative Extension** – co-host Twilight Garden Series, High Plains Landscape Workshop, and provide Master Gardeners to teach classes
- **Larimer County Department of Natural Resources** – co-sponsor of NoCo Nature Festival
- **Larimer County Workforce Center** – host internships
- **Larimer County Youth Conservation Corps** – AgriCorps projects in the Garden of Eatin’
- **Let’s Move! Museums and Gardens** – part of a national campaign to prevent childhood obesity through gardening and cooking programs
- **Loveland Youth Gardeners** – cohosted the NOCO Urban Homestead Tour fundraiser
- **National Charity League** – mother/daughter volunteers assisted with youth programs, garden projects and special events throughout the year
- **Northern CO Astronomical Society** – youth programs
- **Northern CO Beekeepers Association** – youth programs and special events
- **Plant Select®** – host a Plant Select® demonstration site
- **Poudre School District** – school field trips and service learning projects; School Garden Committee; provide community garden plots for **Linton and Riffenburgh Elementary Schools**
- **Regional botanic gardens** – Denver Botanic Gardens, Cheyenne Botanic Garden, and Betty Ford Alpine Gardens to host the American Public Garden Association Annual Conference
- **Rocky Mountain Raptor Program** – youth programs
- **Rock Mountain Bird Observatory** – youth programs
- **SER Jobs for Progress** – host interns
- **Sproutin’ Up** – Community garden partner
- **United Way** – volunteer site, Make a Difference Day; and part of DOVIA (Directors of Volunteers In Agencies). United Way helped with volunteer recruitment/pairing assistance for The Gardens
- **University of Colorado Health** – cooking classes
- **U.S. Forest Service** – school field trip planning and grant collaboration
- **Volunteers of America** – host site for the RSVP program

# Community Garden Outreach Program

The Garden of Eatin' continues to be a beautiful and bountiful garden. With the help of over 90 volunteers, 7,268 pounds of produce was grown and donated to the Food Bank for Larimer County. An additional 790 pounds was grown for gardens programs.

A grant from the Bohemian Foundation combined with the creative and resourceful staffs from The Gardens and the Food Bank led to an astounding 245% increase in donations through Plant it Forward. With the help of 15 Neighborhood Champions and countless gardeners, an astonishing 37,690 pounds of garden fresh produce was donated to the Food Bank.

During the first full growing season for the four new community gardens in parks and the community garden at The Gardens on Spring Creek, all 89 plots were rented and there was a waitlist of 44. In the four community gardens in parks, 1-2 plots were reserved for groups and organizations providing direct education programming. Partnerships were developed and fostered with Linton and Riffenburgh Elementary Schools, a group growing food for the FoCo Café and a local non-profit, Sproutin' Up, for its youth apprentice program.

The Gardens hosted five Garden Network meetings throughout 2014, with attendance more than doubling from 2013. Meetings were attended by a broad range of non-profit, health, service and community organizations, businesses, faculty, staff and students from CSU and Poudre School District, as well as gardeners and community members. The meetings provide opportunities to build partnerships, collaborations, network and share resources.



*Each of our Plant it Forward Champions received a garden fork for all of their efforts.*

## Volunteers

Just when we think our volunteers can do no more, they surprise us with a record year of time and talent. In 2014, 175 regular volunteers and 493 one-day volunteers contributed a total of 10,261 hours of their time to The Gardens. This is a 44% increase over 2013, valued at \$253,780 and equal to almost five full time positions!

We were pleased to recognize the following volunteers at our Volunteer Awards Dinner:

Volunteer of the Year: Jean Muirhead

Outstanding New Volunteer: Edward Stearns

Helping Hand Award: Mary Hanson

Our volunteers are an amazing group of people that make The Gardens a truly special place in our community. Everyone on The Gardens staff extends our heartfelt appreciation to each of them for their hard work and dedication to our mission.



*We celebrated our 10-year volunteers including Nan Daniels, Diane Crews, Beth Nelson, and Dot Tomlinson. Other 10-year volunteers included Jean Dietemann, Linda Hadlow, Elaine Spencer and Michelle Worthington. 10-year staff and staff/volunteers include Gail McKee, Michelle Provaznik and Ted Schaaf.*

*Mission:* To enrich the lives of people and foster environmental stewardship through horticulture.

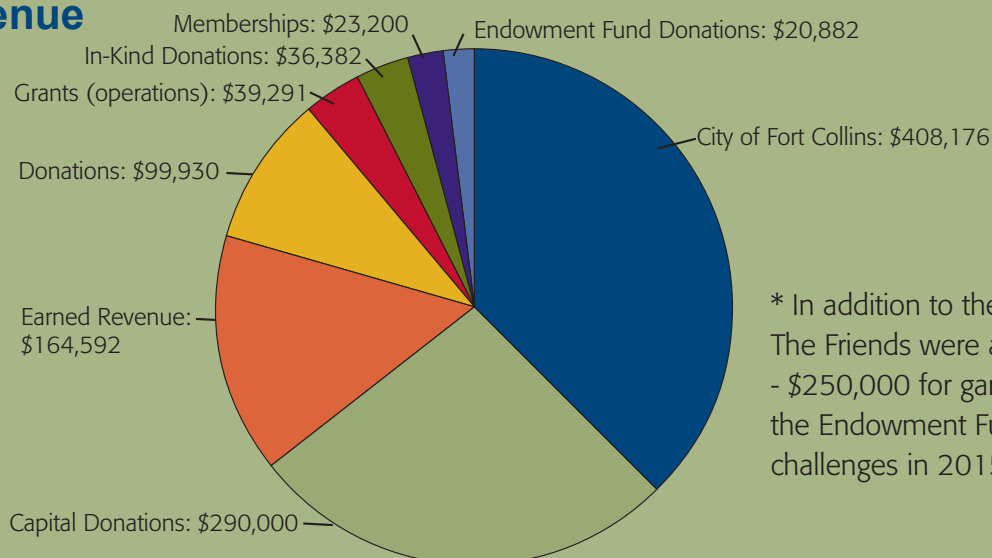
*Vision: To be a world-class botanic garden that is community oriented, educational, experiential and sustainable.*

## Corporate and Foundation Support

The Gardens on Spring Creek and the Friends of the Garden Board are grateful to the many local businesses and foundations that provide in-kind services and cash donations to our organization. Their support is critical to the success of our special events and overall operations. Corporate and Foundation supporters in 2014 included:

Advanced Energy	Ed Carroll Motors	KUNC FM	Sawtooth Art
Agrium Advanced Technologies	Eye Center of Northern Colorado	Larimer County Natural Resources	Seasonal Soups
Bath Nursery	Fiona's Delicatessen & Catering	LaPorte Avenue Nursery	Serendipity
Beet Street	Florafelt Vertical Gardening Systems	Loveland Water & Power	Spoons Soups and Salads
Bohemian Foundation	Fort Collins Landscaping	Midtown Arts Center	Society of American Foresters
Botanical Interests	Fort Collins Nursery	Mini of Loveland	Starbucks
Canyon Chop House	Fort Collins Tours	Miramont Lifestyle Center	Summit Lawn and Landscape
Cargill	Fort Collins Wholesale Nursery	Moot House	Sustainscapes
CDOT-Bustang	Fort Fun	Natural Grocers	Swingle
City of Fort Collins, Fort Fund	Gallegos Sanitation	Northern Colorado Daylily Club	Target
City of Fort Collins, Utilities	Garden Art Landscaping	Northern Colorado Rehabilitation Hospital	Throgmorton Plant Management
Clay's Ace Hardware	Garden Thyme	Odell Brewing Company	University of Colorado Health
Colorado Creative Industries	Gulley Greenhouse	Old Town Spice Shop	Urban Overalls
Colorado Garden Foundation	Happy Lucky's Tea House	OtterCares	Walmart
Colorado Health Foundation	Harlequin's Gardens	Outpost Sunsport	Waterwise Land & Waterscapes
Colorado Mountain Winefest	Heidi Muller Photography	Patio Plants Unlimited	Whole Foods Market
Colorado State University Athletics	Jax Fish House	Pinot's Palette	Wilbur's Total Beverage
Coloradoan	Kaiser Permanente	Pringles	Wild Birds Unlimited
Comcast Spotlight	King Soopers	Radius Tool Company	Wild Iris Living
Cornerstone Home Lending		Ram's Point Winery	Zak George Landscaping
Co's BMW Center		Restaurant 415	
Davey Tree		Savory Spice Shop	
DeAnge Stone			
Earthborn Landscape Design			

## Revenue



\* In addition to the chart numbers, The Gardens and The Friends were awarded matching challenge grants - \$250,000 for garden construction and \$25,000 for the Endowment Fund. We expect to complete these challenges in 2015.