

SUMMER 2020 NEWSLETTER

Dig in



FRIENDS OF
THE GARDENS
ON SPRING CREEK



A MESSAGE FROM THE GARDENS

*Summer is here and The Gardens
on Spring Creek has sprung to life!*

As you will see in the following pages, the diligent and tireless work of Gardens staff during our closure paves the way for an exciting next few months. It wasn't always easy, but through it all, we remain committed to bringing light and life to this community and are proud to once again offer our Members the world-class visitor experience you have come to expect. From the debut of Date Night at The Gardens, to the Color Walk and Welcome Garden installations, to the resumption of Yoga in The Gardens and other exciting classes, we are thrilled to once again play host to anyone to visit, learn, celebrate or rest.

The nationwide pandemic makes donor support more important than ever. Like many other organizations, The Gardens is making hard decisions as it navigates the effects of the economic downturn, having lost nearly \$100,000 to date in earned revenue from school tours, adult classes, admission and ticketed events that cannot be replaced.

The Friends of the Gardens on Spring Creek is committed to supporting educational, operational and horticultural operations at The Gardens. Tax deductible donations made to The Friends help strengthen the long-term financial health of this wonderful organization, and we invite you to join us in this effort. Please visit our new website at friendsgosc.org/donate for more information on all the ways you can support The Gardens.

Have a great summer, and
welcome back to The Gardens!

Tom Satterly
Board Chair
The Friends of the
Gardens on Spring Creek



Michelle Provaznik
Executive Director
The Gardens on Spring Creek



Friends of The Gardens on Spring Creek is the nonprofit partner of The Gardens on Spring Creek, a City of Fort Collins cultural services facility.





GARDEN A'FARE TRANSFORMS TO DATE NIGHT AT THE GARDENS

In the April edition of *Dig In*, we promised a reimagined Garden A'Fare for 2020, but our focus on the safety of our guests, staff, and volunteers amidst the COVID-19 pandemic sent us back to the drawing board. Now, after two months of planning, The Friends of the Gardens on Spring Creek are incredibly excited to announce a twice re-imagined Garden A'Fare called "Date Night at The Gardens!"

In the same way this year's Garden A'Fare was supposed to blend popular elements from previous events, Date Night will merge the original Garden A'Fare concept with...live music from the Everitt Pavilion!

Guests to Date Night at The Gardens will enjoy dinner, drinks, and an intimate live music experience from the Bohemian and Woodward-sponsored Great Lawn complete with full access to the outdoor gardens. Enjoy a truly unique night out with your partner, family members, best friends or yourself all at safe physical distances between you and other guests.

Tickets go on sale at the end of July and are expected to quickly sell out. Be on the lookout for our emails with band announcements and ways to purchase tickets.

We hope to see you later this summer for Date Night at The Gardens!

DETAILS

Tickets

\$65 Member

\$75 non-Member

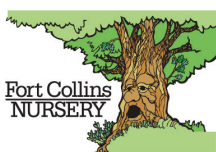
Friday Dates

August 21 & 28

September 18 & 25

Age

21+



**SPECIAL THANKS
TO OUR OFFICIAL
SPONSORS**

THE GARDENS NEW COLOR WALK



*Rita Jokerst, Horticulturist
The Gardens on Spring Creek*

WE TAKE THE FIRST STEPS

As part of The Gardens' recent expansion, The Color Walk is a showpiece in all seasons, lining the newest parts of The Gardens, including the Theme Gardens, Café Grove, Everitt Pavilion and Great Lawn.

The Color Walk at the Gardens on Spring Creek is comprised of foundational plantings of small shrubs, grasses, and perennials while also highlighting spring and summer bulbs. It will be complemented by seasonal annual displays. These prominent areas line the main expansion sidewalk and include the Café Grove and Shade Terraces. A reference display in the terraced beds in front of the Everitt Pavilion is also being installed to create

a comprehensive piece. Concert and event goers can enjoy an immersive feel in the Color Walk when claiming their spot on the Great Lawn.

The Color Walk was made possible through the generous support of the Colorado Garden Foundation. The foundation's grant allowed us to expand our plant collection, create a showstopping display, and once established, educate the public about exciting plants grown with success in northern Colorado.

WALK THROUGH THE TIMELINE

Preparation for the Color Walk began in the fall 2019 with the stirrings of inspirations and some tentative plant ordering. In early spring 2020, weeks of soil preparation for the annual areas began in earnest. The areas' soil properties were anything but ideal, so yards of compost and sand were added to lighten the texture, improve drainage and build up organic matter.



The first round of annuals—a beautiful combination of Matrix® pansies (*Viola x wittrockiana*)—were installed in late April and brought the calming shades of purples, pinks, and yellows. In late May, the second round of annuals was interplanted with the pansies. This second round was composed of frost-tender annuals that can thrive in peak Colorado summers, and as they fill in, the fading pansies are being removed to allow for better growth, air circulation and more pleasing aesthetics.

While the whole Color Walk annual display shares the same color combinations as a theme, the annuals in the various areas are different. The nearly ever-sunny stage beds have more drought-tolerant annuals such as *Dorotheanthus* 'Mezoo Trailing Red,' *Tradescantia pallida* and various landscape lantanas and gazanias. The shadier Café Grove boasts a lovely *Scaevola* while the Shade Terraces show off two very different but equally beautiful petunias.

The installation of the perennials, shrubs, and grasses for the Color Walk began in late May as well and continued for about a month. With the return of our spectacular volunteers following our pandemic-related closure, and kind coworkers, most of the foundational plantings are completed. As with the annuals, all areas share some overlap in color, form, and plant selection, but each area has some of its own plants, best suited for that particular area. Again, the stage highlights exciting drought-tolerant options such as *Yuccas*, *Oenotheras* and *Helianthemums*. The Café Grove showcases some nearly-all-season interest shrubs such as *Euonymus fortunei* 'Emerald 'n Gold' and *Berberis thunbergii* 'Rose Glow,' and the Shade Terraces demonstrate the simple beauty of yellow variegated irises and a couple different types of chartreuse *Spireas*.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

In the fall, the Color Walk will see both another round of pansies (which we hope to overwinter into spring 2021) and an impressive bulb collection primarily composed of tulips, daffodils and crocuses. The bulbs were carefully chosen for their longer life or ability to naturalize, extraordinary display and suitability to the sites. The bulbs, along with the foundational plantings, provide a versatile palette of pinks, yellows, whites and greens. This color combination provides flexibility for the annuals displays in years to come. The area can stay more muted and cooler in color by adding blue and purple annuals to the sites, or it can be amped up with fiery red and orange annuals. Even a monochromatic annual display in the area would be possible with the simple and airy background of the perennials, shrubs, bulbs and grasses.



How to Create A Color Walk

IT'S EASIER THAN YOU THINK!

1

Identify your walk's location and take note of its features (soil type, exposure, slope, irrigation or lack thereof, etc.) as these affect what types of plants are most suitable for your display.

2

Visit The Gardens on Spring Creek to gain inspiration and identify some favorite plants in areas similar to your site. Take photos!

3

Once armed with photos of your faves, sift through your photos and determine your base color palette. Cooler tones? A hot zone? Remember, simpler is better here. Although it's tempting to put on a rainbow display, the results can sometimes look a little haphazard.

4

With your color combination and foundational plantings determined, have some fun picking hardy bulbs to add surprises to your garden. Always use a reputable seller, and remember size does matter when it comes to bulbs.

5

Next, dream up a complementing display of annuals to add instant color and pizzazz as your foundational plantings take a year or two to fill in.

6

Finally, when it comes to installation, keep in mind plants' mature size and provide enough room for them to grow freely. That's it—enjoy your display for years to come!



JEANNETTE FRENCH: WHY I'M A MEMBER

In 2004, Jeannette French began popping by The Gardens while visiting her son and family. When she and her husband, Jerry, moved to Fort Collins in 2012, they became supporters within just a few years.

"I love gardens and gardening, having been inspired by my mother at an early age," says Jeannette. "When I retired from the education field in 2014, I knew I wanted to fill my calendar with something that gave back to the community."

Jeannette began volunteering in the Children's Garden in the spring of 2015 and continues to enjoy helping while listening to the visiting children's voices and laughter. Today, her involvement with The Gardens includes guest services and administrative support, working in the Butterfly House and more.

She also played an important role during The Gardens' recent construction closure and expansion.

"It will always remain a special memory of working with the staff during 2019," she says. "Everyone was in the classroom, with phones, computers and desks almost on top of each other. The cooperation and community among everyone was inspiring as we all worked together to achieve the grand opening."

Like many volunteers and Members, Jeannette is already back at The Gardens helping to maintain the Children's Garden and reaping the benefits of the work that went into the expansion.

"Contributing and connecting with others are very important aspects of my retired life," she says. "I enjoy every minute I contribute to the Gardens and the connections I made with staff and other volunteers is invaluable."



URBAN AGRICULTURE RESILIENCE PROGRAM AWARDS US \$15,000

The Friends of The Gardens on Spring Creek recently received \$15,000 from the U.S. Botanic Garden and American Public Gardens Association in COVID-19 relief funding through their Urban Agriculture Resilience Program.

Overall, the two organizations gave \$378,000 to 28 public gardens across the US to help sustain urban agriculture and community food growing during this challenging time. Our award is slated to support the below programming, especially seasonal staffing.

The Gardens is proud to offer a variety of programming qualifying for these relief funds:

- Planting and maintaining of the Garden of Eatin' which grows more than 7,000 pounds of food annually for the Food Bank for Larimer County
- Coordinating the Community Garden program, which includes eight locations and more than 150 plots throughout Fort Collins
- Offering adult education classes on growing fruits and vegetables and preserving the harvest, with many classes offered virtually
- Serving as a collection site for Plant It Forward, a partnership with the Food Bank for Larimer County which invites local gardeners to plant an extra row and donate produce to support low-income, youth, senior and other vulnerable populations. Gardeners may drop off their produce to us, especially on weekends when the Food Bank is not open.



MOSAIC BENCHES DEBUT IN OUR NEW WELCOME GARDEN

The relationship between art and gardens goes back millennia. At The Gardens on Spring Creek, we incorporated art into our landscapes since first opening our doors in 2004. This partnership continues today.

Many of you are familiar with the new Butterfly Bouquet sculpture in front of the glasshouse. Designed by local artist, Joe McGrane, this beautiful composition of metal butterflies and colored plexiglass invites all to enjoy our new Butterfly House.

What you probably did not know is this sculpture has a second component—flowers! Over the last several months, Joe built five custom concrete benches inlaid with a tile mosaic depicting local flowers such as columbine, blanket flower and more. The Gardens staff had a great time selecting flowers best representing our botanic garden. The beautiful benches provide respite in the new Welcome Garden just inside the main entrance. The benches were installed the beginning of July.

Butterfly Bouquet was made possible by the City of Fort Collins Art in Public Places program (APP). APP takes 1% of any capital project over \$200,000 and facilitates art installations complementing the project. The Gardens hosts two other APP funded sculptures including “Passing the Baton” in the front entrance and “Flow” in the Children’s Garden.



NOW OPEN DAILY!

TICKETS REQUIRED

The Gardens on Spring Creek is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with the final Butterfly House tour at 4:15 p.m. Timed admission tickets are required for all guests, including Members. For more information, please visit fcgov.com/gardens/admissions.

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YOGA + TAI CHI

IN THE GARDENS

Relax and embrace the natural setting of our botanical gardens in our Yoga in The Gardens and Tai Chi in The Gardens summer series.

Classes are for adults and families. Learn more at fcgov.com/gardens.

