

DIG & GROW

JANUARY—APRIL 2023
85TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

norfolk
botanical
garden



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From the PRESIDENT

The wait is finally over! For months we have been preparing for *The Garden of Tomorrow* construction to begin and it is now a reality. The timing couldn't be more perfect as we begin celebrating our 85th anniversary in 2023. The hard work and support of so many people—from the 220 African American workers who first planted our azaleas, past and current staff, NBG Members, volunteers, to the thousands of supporters along the way—have made all of this possible. THANK YOU!

The Garden of Tomorrow will profoundly impact our community through education, conservation and environmental action. The new Brock Entry Pavilion and Brock Parking Garden will have guests experiencing the Garden in a new immersive and enjoyable way the second they step out of their vehicles. The Perry Conservatory will house and protect some of the rarest and most threatened plants in the world. In partnership with other botanical gardens across the globe, we will lead in conservation efforts and be a Noah's Ark for those plants.

Norfolk Botanical Garden is a garden for everyone. It is my hope to connect even more people to nature through the world of plants. Please join us in building and planting *The Garden of Tomorrow*. You can donate to the project and follow our construction progress at GardenofTomorrow.org.



THE MISSION OF NORFOLK BOTANICAL GARDEN:

IMMERSE VISITORS IN A WORLD OF BEAUTY

LEAD THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

INSPIRE THROUGH EDUCATION AND CONNECTION TO NATURE



Printed on paper deemed to be responsibly managed by the Forest Stewardship Council.



NBG is powered 100% by renewable energy.

On the cover: close-up photo of the statue "Andante" (*Dancing Girls*) by Mario Korbel (American, 1882—1952) located in the Camellia Allée connecting Renaissance Court and the Sarah Lee Baker Perennial Garden.



Save the Date:

Sunday, April 16, 2023

15TH Anniversary of the
WPA Garden Heritage
Celebration

The Garden of Tomorrow

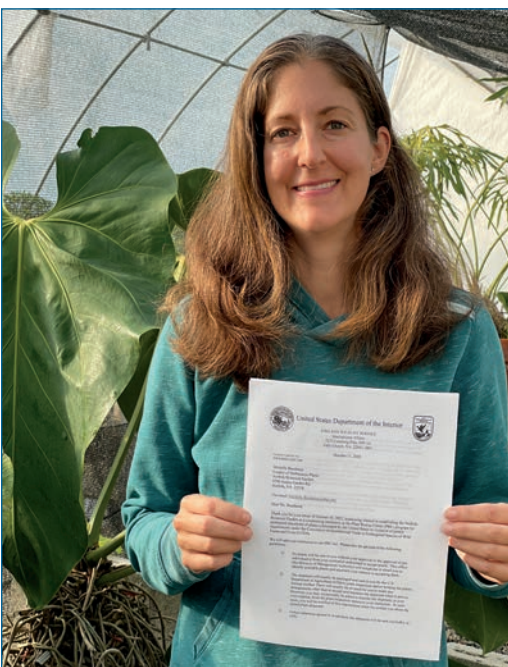
While we have been eagerly waiting to begin the Garden of Tomorrow expansion, we have also been working diligently behind the scenes. Our team has conducted research and collaborated with colleagues from other botanical gardens across the United States to increase our conservation efforts by protecting the most threatened plants in the world. This past year we acquired two excellent examples: *Musa haekkinenii*, a newly discovered species of banana from Vietnam that was generously donated to us in partnership with the Fairchild Botanical Garden and the *Brighamia insignis*, now believed to be extinct in the wild due to the devastating loss of its only pollinator, the Green Spinx moth of Kauai. These rare and threatened plants are amongst others that will soon have a safe home in the new 26,000 sq. ft. Perry Conservatory.

To increase our collection efforts, Michelle Baudanza, Curator of Herbaceous Plants, recently requested that Norfolk Botanical Garden be listed as a cooperating institution in the Plant Rescue Center (PRC) Program through the United States Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service. This fall we received notice that we are officially certified along with dozens of other botanical gardens, arboretums, zoos and research institutions throughout the country. This will allow us to obtain confiscated plants illegally imported into the US and use them as an educational opportunity or to propagate for conservation. This certification also allows us to work more easily with other botanical gardens to acquire and share rare and endangered plant specimens.



(Above) President and CEO Michael P. Desplaines with an ancient cacti in Apache Valley, Arizona.

(Below) Horticulturist Michelle Baudanza earned certification through the U.S. Department of the Interior to collect endangered species for protection in The Garden of Tomorrow's Perry Conservatory.



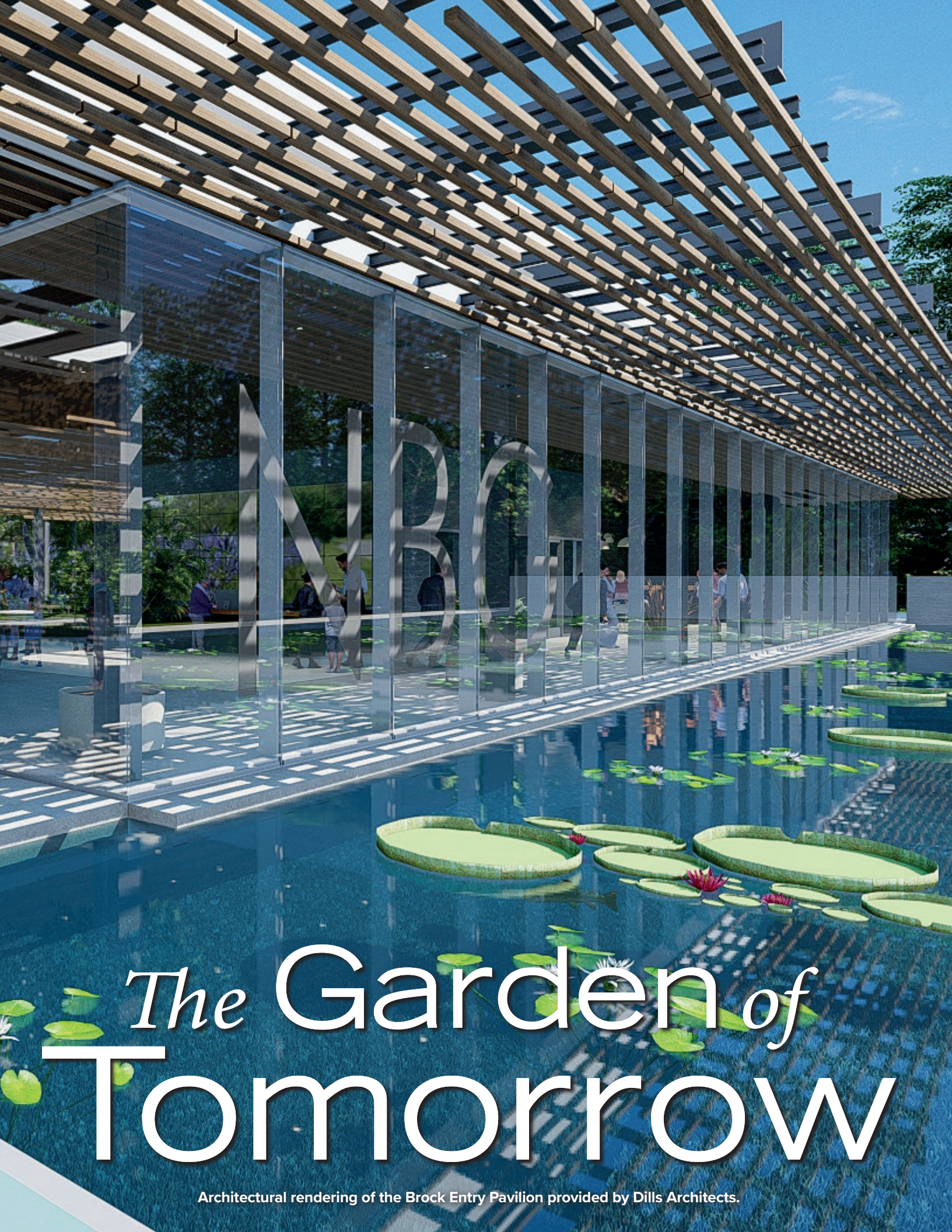
Architectural rendering of the Perry Conservatory side entrance including the second-story Skywalk funded by Kay and Al Abiouness. For a complete list of donors and current naming opportunities, visit TheGardenofTomorrow.org.



NBG President & CEO Michael P. Desplaines was thrilled to sign the contract on November 17, 2022 to begin construction of The Garden of Tomorrow.



Scan the QR code for construction updates.



The Garden of
Tomorrow

Architectural rendering of the Brock Entry Pavilion provided by Dills Architects.



Celebrating Our
Anniversary
1938—2023



Scan to learn more



GREEN Scene

Longleaf Cooperators Group

Norfolk Botanical Garden (NBG) is now a member of the Longleaf Cooperators Group of Virginia, a multi-stakeholder effort dedicated to the restoration of longleaf pine, *Pinus palustris*, a.k.a. "the tree that built Tidewater." If you haven't seen our longleaf pine plantings yet, swing by the Virginia Native Plant Garden located near Tram Stop 8 and the Pollinator Garden a few steps away from the Butterfly House. Their historic impact on our immediate area coupled with their unique life history makes a fascinating story.



(L-R) Cayden Braswell, Ryleigh Greeves, Kaitlyn Lorah, William Videll, Flora Urmy, and Sebastian Rosario.

Virginia Beach City Public Schools Environmental Studies Program

We are thrilled to work with another group of seniors enrolled in the Environmental Studies Program with the Virginia Beach Public Schools. This experiential learning program links students with community partners to provide hands-on experience related to environmental and sustainability issues. At NBG, students explore the important role environmental stewardship plays in public horticulture.



New Solar Panels Installed

This past August, Convert Solar installed a 212.400 kW system on the roof of the Baker Hall Visitor Center/Education Building. Comprised of 472 panels, this system is expected to offset 83% of that building's energy needs. NBG invested \$500,000 into this green project with an expected pay-off in five years.



(L-R) NBG Vice President of Education Theresa Augustin and NBG Horticulturists Mary Lu Hudgins, Tyler Greenwell, and Chrissie Harney.

Atlantic White Cedar Planting in The Great Dismal Swamp

NBG staff helped plant 1,000 Atlantic White Cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*) plugs in an effort to restore this vital ecosystem which had been decimated by two previous fires in 2008 and 2011. Longtime Tidewater residents might recall the 2011 fire which burned over 6,000 acres and produced heavy smoke as it burned four to five feet down into the peat for several weeks before Hurricane Irene's deluge of rain helped firefighters turn the corner.

SAVE THE DATE · ONLINE SPRING PLANT SALE

Perennials, Annuals, Edibles, Shrubs and MORE!



April 21
Member-Exclusive
Shopping



April 22–23
Open to
the Public



Nearly 16,000 plants were sold during our 2022 Fall Online Plant Sale. Thank you for supporting NBG as a non-profit and helping to create a greener community.

Community CONNECTIONS



Horticulturist Steve Saunders (pictured) and Horticulturist II Kent Lewark (taking the picture), represented NBG at The Arbor Day celebration in Norfolk's Lafayette Park. While answering questions related to trees and gardening, they gave away several one-gallon longleaf pine trees.



Community Engagement Manager Taylor Lyons and Director of Horticulture Les Parks chatted with gardening enthusiasts from all over Hampton Roads at the Virginia Beach Master Gardeners' Fall Festival.



Vice President of Education Theresa Augustin, Teens With a Purpose summer intern Daquan Garnett and Director of Adult Education Alex Cantwell attended the Annual Teens With a Purpose Gala at the Chrysler Museum.



Greenhouse Manager Meredith Simmons (right) speaks to a group of Tidewater Community College students about how we propagate plants inside the Garden's greenhouse.



Board President Clenise Platt accepts the Giving Back Award presented by Coastal Virginia Magazine.



We were thrilled to host 40 students - third, fourth, and fifth graders from YELLOWHAB school who came out to NBG to learn about wetlands and watersheds. They explored the WOW Children's Garden and connected with nature through our Day of Nature Scholarship Fund.



FALL IN LOVE WITH CAMELLIAS

By NBG Senior Horticulturist Scott Blair



I have spent much of my time with the horticultural trades in Ohio, where camellias are rarely encountered and exist only to cause jealousy. But I must admit, when returning here to my home town, I was overwhelmed by the use of camellias in the landscape. As with many of the other broadleaf evergreens that grow in our climate, my first thoughts were that they are overused. But over time, I started to look more at the plant itself and thus began my infatuation. This love has been a slow build, but they have a way of winning over even the most reluctant.



Probably the biggest selling point for camellias is their bloom. The pun is intended as the showy flowers are usually large, with a prolific bloom set. Bloom time varies slightly depending on the species, but it always occurs around the winter months. Varying in structure from simple single flowers to amazingly geometric formal doubles and robust peony-types, their beauty, coupled with the bloom timing, makes for a much-needed therapeutic display during the gray cold of winter. There is a deep history between this plant and humans, but one of the most widespread uses is tea production. I love growing plants that have significance to our daily lives because it reminds me of how connected we are to the landscape.



Camellias are generally easy to grow but can be susceptible to a few diseases and pests. With good horticultural practices you can keep these issues from developing into anything serious. Pruning is a big help in reducing the potential for the spread of fungal diseases and insect pests. With good branching structure comes better airflow, which leads to less localized humidity and a reduced concern for fungal growth. Improved branching also limits the ability for crawling insects to move from branch-to-branch and plant-to-plant. Just make sure that you do any structural pruning immediately after flowering so next year's bud development is not disrupted.



Seasonal clean-up, such as raking fallen leaves and spent flowers, can also drastically reduce the spread of fungal pathogens. Most camellia pests are sucking insects and if their populations reach a point that necessitates chemical intervention, horticultural oils or insecticidal soaps applied at correct times can be enough to keep them under control. So for those who are not sold on the idea of planting a camellia, here are a few incentives: they are great structural accent plants, usually have a good form, hold lustrous dark green leaves all year and have wonderful winter blooms.

Camellias prefer a lightly shaded location in well-draining soil that receives moderate moisture and is slightly acidic. If you need a beautiful plant to fill a spot in filtered light, I'm sure that there is a camellia you will fall in love with. If you have any questions about camellias, or any other plant, feel free to reach out to us here at askaplantquestion@nbg.org.



Read all about it! Catch articles like this in the *Virginian-Pilot* once a month. Look for the Wild Green Yonder green logo.

HORTICULTURE Highlights



Photo by F.D. Richards. (CC BY-SA 2.0)

As a group, Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum*) are renowned for their graceful habit and colorful foliage, both spring and fall. However, there is one particular cultivar that is famous for its winter color. The branches of ‘Sango-kaku’, a.k.a. "the coral bark maple," turn a rich shade of coral red once cold weather comes. This is not the only Japanese maple with colorful winter bark, ‘Bihou’ has muted gold stems and ‘Ukon’ has bright green stems, but ‘Sango-kaku’ is the most famous and is the easiest to find in local garden centers. It also has a couple of other traits that have made it popular. Its fall foliage is always a rich golden yellow and, for a Japanese maple, it has a pretty tough constitution, being more drought tolerant than other cultivars. The best place to see them at NBG is in our Japanese Garden and in Le Jardin.

Unfortunately, many visitors to NBG never step foot off of the paved pathways. Worse yet, some only see the Garden from the seat of a tram and miss many of our hidden gems, like The Glade or The Winter Garden. Here you will find woodland treasures growing from all over the world underneath our native canopy. One plant in particular that shines in winter is the unusual *Sarcandra glabra* with its bright orange-red fruit set above glossy evergreen foliage. Native to East Asia, it has a long-storied use in Chinese folk medicine, but it has also been studied extensively by modern medicine for the myriad of chemical compounds found in its tissues. Regardless, we like it for the bright winter color, its low growing habit, and for the fact it can tolerate very deep shade. It's worth the walk to see for yourself!



The Garden is home to many dramatic trees, and one of the showiest is the early stachyurus (*Stachyurus praecox*) when it is in full bloom in the Matson Garden. The tree, actually a very large shrub, is covered with buttery yellow flowers that hang down ribbon-like from the bare branches. The way the flower clusters (technically racemes) hang from the branches is reminiscent of tinsel on a Christmas tree or fringe on a leather jacket. Stachyurus are native to Japan and are still relatively rare in this country, which is a shame; they are truly spectacular plants. Fortunately, they are becoming more available to gardeners, mainly through ecommerce.

Golden ragwort (*Packera aurea*) is a wonderful perennial, native to Coastal Virginia and beyond. Its thick, mat-like, evergreen habit makes it a great solution for gardeners with troubling spots. It will grow in sun or shade, deer and rabbits leave it alone, it is great for beneficial pollinators and it forms a groundcover so thick that weeds will not come up through it. If that's not enough, its bright yellow daisy-like flowers are quite beautiful, and once the seeds are ripe, birds will eat them. Golden ragwort naturally grows along the edge of forests, in ravines and along roadside ditches. In a garden setting they tend to do best in partial sun with moist soil. Here at NBG you can see them in several spots, but our Holly Garden is probably the best place.



Looking for a specific plant in the Garden? Scan code to search our online plant database - Plant Explorer:



MEET Dee Hall

Newest Member of the President's Council on Inclusion & Diversity

The Garden is fortunate to have so many wonderful volunteers who generously give of their time and skills to make us the premier destination that we are. Dee Hall, a local business owner who shares our desire to promote sustainable practices, environmentally friendly resource use and community involvement, serves as a committee member of our President's Council on Inclusion and Diversity (PCID). She is the owner of Mermaid City Flowers and founding member of the Tidewater Flower Collective and the Black Flower Farmers. Dee got the idea for her business when she couldn't find locally grown cut flowers for her wedding. A woman of boundless energy, she started growing her own flowers and has expanded her efforts considerably now that the industry is starting to rebound from the impact of the pandemic. The florist industry imports about 80% of the flowers they use. Growing flowers locally for the fresh cut market supports the local economy as well as small farmers like Dee. Locally grown flowers also allow for use of flowers that do not hold up well when traveling long distances (like peonies & dahlias).



Since moving to Hampton Roads in 2009, Dee has become an expert in what grows well in our area and enjoys exploring all that the area has to offer. The WOW Children's Garden and Rose Garden were the two places that made the biggest impression on Dee when she first visited the Garden. She has come to know us well over the past thirteen years. Dee is a friend and neighbor of long-time Garden employee Jen Erving with whom she shares many interests. She credits Jen with introducing her to the PCID committee. She brings a fresh perspective of a woman of color who works in the horticulture industry and is intimately familiar with its rewards and challenges. "I feel lucky to be on board with one of the most established diversity, equity and inclusion councils in the industry," Hall said, adding "I love getting to be a voice directly from the field of floriculture and offering a perspective that other members may not have thought of."

Dee continues to look for ways to expand her business and involve the community in growing flowers sustainably. She manages nearly an acre of cultivated gardens across different sites, actively engages with other farmers and florists at conferences and online, and is currently formulating her strategy for the upcoming season. Although she keeps busy with her business and her family, Dee always makes time for things that are near and dear to her heart, like participating on the PCID committee. She also looks for opportunities to shop locally whenever possible and encourages others to do the same. As for the industry that is her passion, Dee offers advice to beginning growers wishing to pursue a career related to plants, and that's to utilize all available resources. "Reach out to peers—I have found farmers, florists, and gardeners to be among the most helpful and encouraging. We want to see each other win and it shows," Hall said.



Scholarship OPPORTUNITY

The President's Council on Inclusion and Diversity (PCID) at Norfolk Botanical Garden (NBG) is committed to celebrating and promoting diversity and has been working many years to create the PCID Scholarship. We are excited to announce the scholarship will be awarded this year for the educational pursuits of diverse students in green industries or related fields including—but not limited to—garden cultivation and management, horticulture, the environment and sustainability, agriculture, and landscape. Recipient(s) will receive a \$1,000 scholarship each academic year for up to four years of study. Eligible applicants must be accepted or currently enrolled in an educational program dedicated to a field of study in a green industry or related field. Scan code to learn more and download an application.



This year marks the 15TH Anniversary of the WPA Garden Heritage Celebration which is organized by the NBG President's Council on Inclusion and Diversity. This year's event is scheduled for Sunday, April 16 at 2:00 p.m.

Volunteer SPOTLIGHT

Donna Conaway



We love learning how our volunteers found us! Donna Conaway's connection to the Garden began when she attended our WPA Garden Heritage Celebration back in 2018. Learning of the 200 African American women and 20 African American men who cleared and planted our first 25 acres as a Works Progress Administration project back in 1938 inspired Donna to pursue becoming a volunteer. "In many ways, black men and women contributed so much in our historic past with little recognition, so I was moved by the Garden's recognition of the WPA workers and honoring of their surviving family members," Conaway said.

While she had little gardening experience, Donna has learned a lot during her time as a volunteer. She enjoys working with NBG Horticulturist Sarah Davis in the WOW Children's Garden, talking to the public about the Garden's history and the immediate satisfaction of cutting back plants. Donna refers to NBG as an "Oasis of Peace" and finds her time here soothing and peaceful. Thank you Donna for all of your hard work!

Interested in Volunteering at NBG?

Contact our Community Outreach Manager Taylor Lyons by email at Taylor.Lyons@nbg.org or by phone (757) 441-5830 ext. 364. Scan this code to learn more about volunteering at the Garden.



Daffodil DAZE

600,000+ blooms this March!



Congratulations to Our 2022 Daffodil Photo Contest Winners:

First Place:
by Peter Squicciarini
(far left)

Second Place
by Andrea Jamison
(above left)

Third Place
by Scott R. Sechrist
(bottom left)

Follow us on social media for future photo contest opportunities.



THANK YOU!

To our Major Garden of Tomorrow Donors!



Kay Abiouness points to the limited-edition rose wine created in her honor by her daughter. The Garden of Tomorrow Skywalk is a gift from Kay and Al Abiouness.

More than 125 guests were in attendance for a private donor reception and preview of the Dominion Energy Garden of Lights held this past November. Major donors have contributed nearly \$32 million towards The Garden of Tomorrow building campaign and the endowment.

The Garden of Tomorrow



Left-to-right: Steve and Maç Houfek, David Jester and Heidi Laderberg Jester are all long-time supporters of the Garden and major donors to The Garden of Tomorrow.

Scan code to view a full list of donors.





Tribute Opportunities

The beauty, wonder and serenity of the Garden combine to create a perfect setting to honor a loved one, pay tribute to a friend, or mark a special anniversary or milestone. Select from a number of sites in the Garden to place our teakwood bench, complete with commemorative plaque. Please call Cathy Fitzgerald at 757-441-5830 ext. 319 or email her at cathy.fitzgerald@nbgs.org to make an appointment to discuss this \$25,000 tribute opportunity.

ART in BAKER HALL

Included with Garden Admission

JANUARY 1 — FEBRUARY 28

Nature



Watercolors by Diana Davis

MARCH 1 — MARCH 31

The Magic Brush



Ink and watercolor nature art in the Chinese art form of Sumi-e by The Blue Heron Chapter of the Sumi-e Society of America

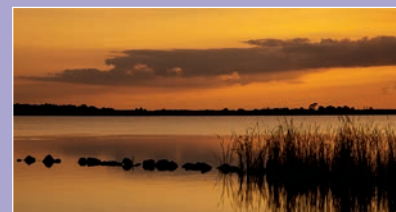
APRIL 1 — MAY 31

Gifts From My Garden



Colorful contemporary oil paintings by Karen Kinser

Scenes of Coastal Virginia



Nature photography by Lori Cash

Leaving a Legacy

The Evergreen Society recognizes and celebrates an outstanding group of friends who generously support the Garden beyond their lifetimes.

Evergreen Society Members

If you are interested in learning more about the Evergreen Society or letting us know about a gift in your estate plan including IRAs, please contact cathy.fitzgerald@nbgs.org.

Dan Allison, Annette Averitt, I.M. & Sarah Lee Baker, Ty & Martha Brown, Elizabeth Bruce, Blanche C. Chappell, Robert & Janie Creecy, Cindy Cutler & Craig Haines, Sandra L. Dashney, Michael Desplaines & Jason Robinson, William W. Eley, Richard & Eleanor Evans, Cathy Fitzgerald, Joe Foreman, R. Michael & Patricia Fuller, Jane Frazier, Robert M. Gostel, Craig & Sue Grube, Randy Harrison, June Hoye, Kit E. Johnson, Karen S. Gershman, Karen L. Hines, Edward C. & Betty Lou Johnston, Sr., Patricia A. Kiefer, Patty L. Landrum, Virginia T. Lawrence, Eleanor Marshall, Bee McLeod & Goody Tyler, Rick Morsink, Susan Elise Morton, Nancy Nelson, Edward & Gayle Nichols, Susan L. Oldridge, Brian O'Neil, Dana Parker, Stephanie Pope, Mildred Amsinger Powers, Judy Pravecsek, Kathleen Keogh Rahman, Ann Rathbone, Pamela Read, Alan Rohanna, Kurt & Debbie Schroeder, Sam Strickland, George & Nancy Sutcliffe, Sylvia E. Simons Trembelas, Jim & Christiane Valone, Richard & Ann Weber, Pearl Windle, 3 anonymous.

NBG celebrates Black History Month by offering FREE Admission Thursdays in February



Connect with nature and explore all that the Garden has to offer.

norfolk botanical garden

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NORFOLK, VA
PERMIT #568

FIDO FRIDAYS IN FEBRUARY

Explore the Garden with your canine best friend. Members & their dogs are FREE

Not-Yet-Members' Dogs \$5 (Human Admission applies)



Tram Tours and Bike Nights Return in April • WOW Splash Pads Open April 8TH