

DEAR ARBORETUM MEMBERS

Preparing for the Future

Mark K. Wourms, Ph.D., CEO

When I was invited to become the Chief Executive Officer of The Arboretum just over a year ago, my first thoughts were, "This will be a wonderful place to work," and "What a pleasure it will be to get to know the interesting, diverse group of people already involved with The Arboretum." Both of these early observations have proven to be true.

Each and every garden and program has been examined over the past year. Changes have occurred, with more to come, and each action has been implemented with a number of goals in mind:

1) freshen-up and beautify the gardens, grounds and facilities; 2) improve educational opportunities; 3) make The Arboretum more family friendly; 4) add fun to the visitor experience so our guests are more likely to return, become more involved, and absorb more useful information; 5) ensure that the facilities, gardens, and historical landmarks receive more care—both short- and long-term; and 6) build the visibility of our gardens, programs and partnerships.

These goals are critical as we build a bright future for The Arboretum. Everything we do today is a step to prepare us for the future. Several milestones are nearing fruition and will push us forward.

The Conceptual Plan, which was started a few years ago, is being completed. It will help bring clarity to our visions for The Arboretum, what our visitor experience

will be, and it will give us opportunities to choose various paths to get there. A presentation will be put together for review by all members. This process and the publication of a final document and plan will provide guidance for years to come.

The mission of The Arboretum is also in review.

We are working to consolidate our complex organization and its related activities around one stated goal. This will also add direction for the future.

Each of the improvements made over the last year was a first step. Each will lead to another step and then to larger steps. An example: the review of visitor surveys indicated a need to improve signage and interpretation throughout our lovely grounds—greater quantities and clearer directional, location and interpretive

signage. Therefore, location signs are in construction for major gardens, including "Herbs of the World," "The Garden for All Seasons," "The Grace Kallam Perennial

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Garden," and many more.

Additionally, over the last year thousands of plants throughout the garden have been identified with labels. A new style of interpretive sign is being tested at the Roots and Shoots – Children's Discovery Node. This style and other informative signs will be

implemented in other gardens. Other examples of step-wise improvements are the painting of the Gift & Garden Shop and Queen Anne Cottage, adding a drinking fountain, and the new concrete paths in the greenhouses. More will come in each of these important areas.

As a **member**, you are the most important component of the future of The Arboretum. I invite you to become more involved by: visiting regularly; dropping notes and comment cards on what you see, what you like and, of course, what you do not like or do not understand.

Also, as a member, your recruitment of others is critical. Invite friends and family to visit our special events, shop at the Gift & Garden Shop, have lunch, and become members. You are our best marketing tool! Your efforts will generate funds that will reinforce positive changes and allow even more beautification and care for The Arboretum in the future. Together, we can work today for a bright, bright tomorrow.

See you in the garden





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