

Matthaei-Nichols: Transformative & Transforming



Our spaces provide the elemental contact with nature found by researchers to be beneficial to human well-being

The Great Lakes Gardens, above, opened at Matthaei Botanical Gardens last April. Planted with thousands of regional native species and featuring native orchids, ferns, and other plants of our woodlands, oak openings, prairies, and coastal areas, the Gardens offers visitors the opportunity to see native plants up close and demonstrates our commitment to environmental stewardship. Together with another new space, the Bonsai & Penjing Garden, The Great Lakes Gardens transformed the grounds at Matthaei and opened up a world of new experience for members, visitors, and students.

The more things change...! Reading our inaugural 1974 newsletter in preparation for this story I was struck by the *Friends* mission statement from that year. It articulated the goals of the Botanical Gardens' newly formed and 90-person-strong membership program: "to give aid of various kinds to the Gardens and to give people with an interest or affection for the Gardens an opportunity to have a closer association with it."

We've continued to refine and add to that mission statement over time, including the addition of the *Friends* of Nichols Arboretum in 1991 with over 100 charter members. Today we represent four properties under one organization at the University of Michigan—Matthaei Botanical Gardens, Nichols Arboretum, Horner-McLaughlin Woods, and Mud Lake Bog. But in the main, our mission remains the same as it was forty years ago: caring for nature, enriching life. Through those years, the *Friends* have played a transformative role in shaping Matthaei Botanical Gardens & Nichols Arboretum.

What do we mean by transformative? First, the way our members, U-M students and faculty, and visitors renew and revitalize us through their ideas, fresh approaches to old problems, and continuing support. For instance, membership gifts provide critical funding for our summer internships. Each summer the indoor and outdoor spaces here course with the youthful energy of dozens of U-M students working in our internship program. The creativity and dedication of our interns breathe life into all of our offerings throughout the summer, allowing us to maintain our properties and programs at a level that just wouldn't be possible without their help. It also touches on our core mission by providing genuine professional development and educational opportunities for University of Michigan students.

Donor gifts transform us, too. **Elizabeth Needham (Betty) Graham** (A.B. '46) was a force for nature at Matthaei Botanical Gardens from the early 80s until her death last February. The first of more

than 50 donors to honor her were **Donald C.** (B.S.E. '55, M.S.E. '56) and **Ingrid A. Graham** (B.S. Des. '57), Betty's former brother-in-law and his wife, who committed \$200,000 to create the Elizabeth Needham Graham Internship in her memory. With this generous memorial, an Elizabeth Needham Graham Intern will oversee an ambitious collection of native Michigan trees that Betty envisioned years ago and garner a valuable summer experience in the process.

Stewarding our culturally and historically significant plant collections forms a central part of our mission. Over 90 years ago, **W.E. Upjohn**, founder of the Upjohn Company in Kalamazoo, donated a significant number of peonies from his personal collection. Recently, descendants of Dr. Upjohn made a \$500,000 gift to conserve and enhance what he began. The gift, the largest endowment gift in Matthaei-Nichols history, establishes the **W.E. Upjohn Peony Garden Fund**. The Nichols Arboretum Peony Garden represents the largest collection of heirloom peonies in North America. With the Upjohn's gift we can continue to develop, expand, and maintain the Peony Garden and bring together leading practitioners in modern horticulture, plant conservation, landscape history, and the arts from the university and beyond.

What do mean by transforming? In 2013 the **Bonsai and Penjing Garden** and the **Great Lakes Gardens** opened, in large part thanks to more than \$1,000,000 from an anonymous donor for their construction. Our current bonsai collection of more than 70 plants began in 1977 with a gift of trees from the estate of **Dr. Maurice Seevers**, a former director of the U-M Department of Pharmacology and an ardent bonsai lover. The garden demonstrates the international scope of bonsai today in its use of native and traditional materials and in how it connects us with the University and local Japanese and Chinese communities.

The **Great Lakes Gardens** stands out as an example of our mission of "caring for nature." Within this

garden's spaces we've planted hundreds of Great Lakes native plants, many of them endangered or of special concern. Unique among native-plant gardens, the Great Lakes Gardens recreate the habitats of the region such as dune, woodland, and wetland. The gardens offer visitors a rare opportunity to see many native plants up close and to learn about their conservation.

The **Campus Farm** at Matthaei is now in its second year. This living classroom of sustainable agriculture draws students from across the university, provides a connection to local food, and offers the benefits of learning and community. If you haven't visited the Farm yet, stop by any time the Botanical Gardens is open.

All of our *Friends* members who have touched our lives and our work here over the years remind us of the elemental experience of contact with nature, contact that many researchers have found to be beneficial to human well-being. In 2014 we're honoring those decades of tradition and looking to the next 40 years of Matthaei-Nichols with the launch of a major *Friends* membership campaign. Campaign goals aim to significantly grow our membership numbers and increase commitment from our current members. The 2014 membership campaign also coincides with the University's next capital fundraising campaign. Look for more news of that as 2014 unfolds.

Please join us in celebration of the many years of a botanical garden and arboretum at the University of Michigan—and the many years to come.



Bob Grese, Director

Matthaei Botanical Gardens & Nichols Arboretum

On the Cover

Appreciative visitors last spring wander amid the dazzling blooms of pink, white, and red in the Nichols Arboretum Peony Garden, the largest collection of heirloom peonies in North America. The Peony Garden celebrated its 90th anniversary in 2012, marking the 1922 date of the original gift of peonies from Dr. W.E. Upjohn, an avid peony collector and founder of the Upjohn

Company in Kalamazoo. Thanks to a \$500,000 gift from the Upjohn family we can provide ongoing stewardship of this important garden and, along with generous gifts from the Porter Family Foundation and Philip and Kathy Power and grants from the Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust and the Institute for Museum and Library Services we'll also continue work on the Peony Garden Initiative, a multi-year renovation project to transform the Nichols Arboretum Peony Garden into an internationally recognized reference collection, a conservation model for other historic cultivar collections, and a destination for peony lovers. (Photo courtesy Michele Yanga.)



Matthaei-Nichols staff and members of the Peony Advisory Council have met several times to identify, photograph, and catalog the peonies in the Peony Garden. Data from these meetings and

from research by Arb & Gardens staff and the Advisory Council formed the core of a new IMLS-funded website dedicated to the garden (mbgna.umich.edu/peony).



Fiscal Year 2013

caring for nature, enriching life

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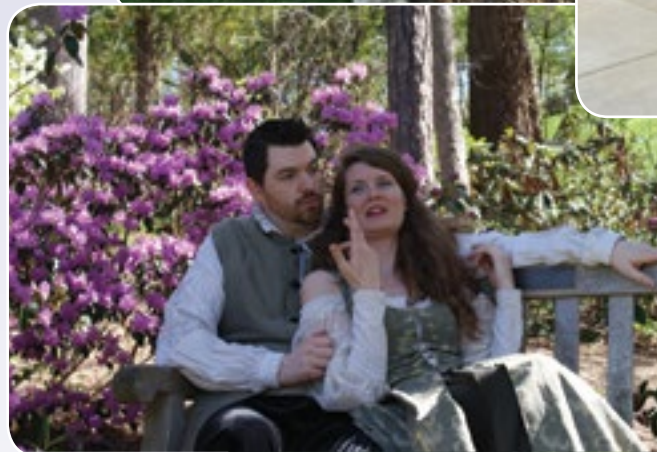
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A Year of Pictures

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Pictured clockwise from top middle: **FIELD NOTES:** Matthaei-Nichols Director and School of Natural Resources & Environment Professor **Bob Grese** leads NRE 587, the Landscape Architecture Studio class, on a field trip to Radrick Fen at Matthaei Botanical Gardens to observe the patterns found in natural ecosystems. **STUDENT RESEARCH:** U-M faculty and students regularly make use of the facilities and staff expertise at Matthaei-Nichols for research purposes. Working with several U-M faculty as sponsors, post-doctoral research fellow **Dan Allen** conducted a study in one of the greenhouses at Matthaei to determine if plant-community biodiversity increases the density, biomass, and complexity of soil rooting systems in ways that reduce streambank erosion. **DOWN ON THE FARM:** The Campus Farm, located at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, has captured the imagination—and dedication—of the university and of students across campus. Here, student volunteers harvest vegetables from the Farm during a student volunteer workday. **MAIZE & QUIDDITCH** Student members of the **Michigan Quidditch Team** have adopted Nichols Arboretum as the home of the competitive sport made famous in the Harry Potter novels. **MAKING AN ENTRANCE:** Intern **Laura Palm** worked with staff and other interns last summer to reimagine and recreate the Geddes Road entrance of Nichols Arboretum. Palm transformed what had been a drab, uninviting threshold into a dramatic approach complete with new plantings and stonework. **ALL THE ARB'S A STAGE:** **Carol Gray** and **Graham Atkin** bring to life Shakespeare's dashing duo Benedick and Beatrice in last summer's Shakespeare in the Arb production of *Much Ado about Nothing*. **LAW STUDENTS LEND A HAND:** Future barristers got in touch with their inner farmers in a Law School Orientation service project in the Campus farm work area at Matthaei last summer. **CULTURE-BRIDGING BONSAI:** Hundreds of members and visitors attended the opening of the Bonsai & Penjing Garden last May, including Kuninori Matsuda, Detroit consul-general of Japan (left; now retired); Noriko Masada, president of the Japan News Club; Matthaei Nichols Director Bob Grese; and Jerry Meislik (right). Together with his wife Rhona, Jerry Meislik donated funds to begin an endowment to provide care for the bonsai collection. **UNCOMMON PLANTS, EXTRAORDINARY PLACES:** The Great Lakes Gardens, a series of contiguous spaces that recreate the diverse habitats of the Great Lakes regions and that feature the region's native plants, opened last spring at Matthaei. The Great Lakes Gardens include native orchids and ferns, coastal plants, woodland settings, and oak openings.

Matthaei-Nichols by the Numbers

Plants and people tell a story at the Arb & Gardens that's supported by the numbers for fiscal year 2013.

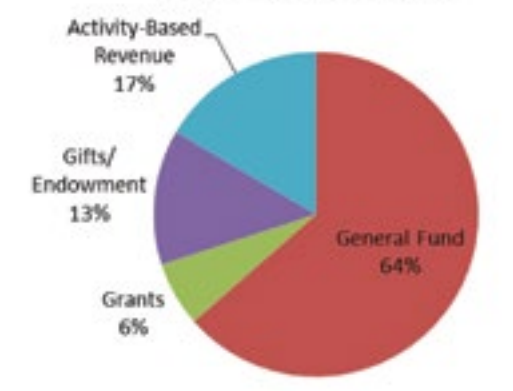
- 18,681** total number of hours worked by volunteers
- 1,227** number of U-M students attending 36 courses held at Matthaei-Nichols, with 30 instructors
- 1,140** number of individual plants in the Great Lakes Gardens, representing 35 species thus far
- 790** number of members from 10 years ago who are still members today
- 462** number of new members in FY 2013
- 232** number of named tributes at Matthaei-Nichols, including benches and trees
- 165** number of member households that increased their membership giving last year
- 99** individual trees representing 23 species planted in the Great Lakes Gardens
- 85** number of student workers hired in fiscal 2013
- 29** number of cherry trees received from the National Cherry Blossom Festival and the National Arbor Day Foundation that will be planted at Matthaei-Nichols in commemoration of Japan's 1912 gift of cherry trees to the United States
- 18** number of states our members reside in, in 3 countries

donors at the \$250 and above level for fiscal year 2013 (July 1, 2012–June 30, 2013) and cumulative lifetime supporters, endowments, and planned giving and bequests.

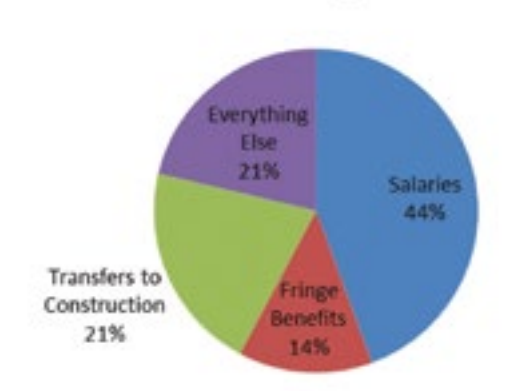
<p>Cumulative Lifetime Supporters (over \$100,000)</p> <p>Anonymous Robert and Marge Alpern The Andrah Foundation Sally and Ian Bund DTE Foundation Ford Motor Company Thomas and Jeanette Gaffield The Graham Foundation The Matthaei Family The Nash Family The Post Family The Reader Family Rudolph E. Reichert, Jr. Wilkinson Foundation</p> <p>Endowments</p> <p>Winifred B. Chase Fellowship William D. Drake Fund Jean A. Forrest Endowment Fund Carol Holbrook Memorial Fund Nanette R. LaCross Fund MBGNA Fund Mildred Hague Matthaei Fund Jerry and Rhona Meislik Bonsai Fund Harrison L. Morton Fund Natural Areas Fund Geoffrey and Marian Norman Memorial Fund Julie Norris Post Fund Research Endowment Fund Frances H. Seevers Bonsai Fund Woman's National Farm and Garden Association, Inc., Michigan Division, Internship Fund</p> <p>Planned Giving and Bequest Donors</p> <p>Anonymous Ann Abdo Carol L. 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Statement of Activity

FY2013 Revenue



FY2013 Expenses



General Fund	\$1,728,180	Salaries	\$1,633,523
Grants	\$175,559	Fringe Benefits	\$493,045
Gifts & Endowments	\$366,088	Transfers to Construction	\$769,500
Activity-based Revenue	\$449,781	Everything Else	\$784,026
Total	\$2,719,607	Total	\$3,680,094

Note: Expenses exceed revenues because money for major projects was received in FY 2012 and expended in FY 2013