

Franklin Park Conservatory
and Botanical Gardens

2015 ANNUAL REPORT





BILL GERHARDT, BOARD PRESIDENT

2015 proved to be yet another year of growth and vitality for Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. Closing in the black for its eighth consecutive year, the Conservatory raised \$3,487,543, or 44% of its \$7,864,131 revenue budget through generous philanthropic and public support. The remaining \$4,376,588, or 56%, was earned through admissions, membership, public horticulture projects, event rentals, retail sales and class fees.

Since 2008, the Conservatory has enjoyed a legacy of successful capital improvements, completing four major projects on time and on budget. The most recent, the Wells Barn, has been a hub of activity since its dedication in October. I am proud of the Leadership Team for taking on the planning, fundraising and building for this and other projects planned for Master Plan 2.0.

Accomplishments in the area of horticulture were notable, beginning in the spring when 70,000 bulbs filled the Conservatory's exterior gardens, indoor courtyards and display areas. This same level of botanical color and beauty was replicated in the fall with extensive plantings of mums and fall blooming plants.

It has been my pleasure to have served as Board president over the past two years as the Conservatory expands as an educational and cultural community asset and "must see" destination.



BRUCE A. HARKEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The momentum of 2014 not only continued, but increased in 2015 across all aspects of Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. Supported by our generous community, the Conservatory's staff and Leadership Team wrapped up a dynamic and successful year. There was high level of activity across all departments that you will read about in this report. To note just a few:



Projects within Master Plan 2.0 were identified. Construction began, and was completed, on the Wells Barn. Replacement of the Conservatory's rubber roof was completed and the design phase for an updated Grand Atrium wrapped up.



Programming developed and implemented by the Community Outreach and Education Department continued to expand, opening up more opportunities for participants of all ages.



A horticulture advisory committee was established to support our direction of presenting world class botanical gardens.



Three concurrent exhibitions—**Blooms & Butterflies**, **David Rogers' Big Bugs** and **Life on the Leaf Edge** — brought families, regional visitors and summer vacationers to the Conservatory for the "Summer of Bugs".

With your generous support, the Board, staff and an ever-growing corps of volunteers will sustain this momentum through 2016. Thank you for your continued engagement.

Inspired by horticulture, Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens elevates quality of life and connects the community through educational, cultural and social experiences.

2015 LEADERSHIP TEAM

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Executive Director

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Planning & Facilities

Lori Kingston
Marketing & Visitor Experience

Jenny Pope
Community Outreach & Education

James Butch
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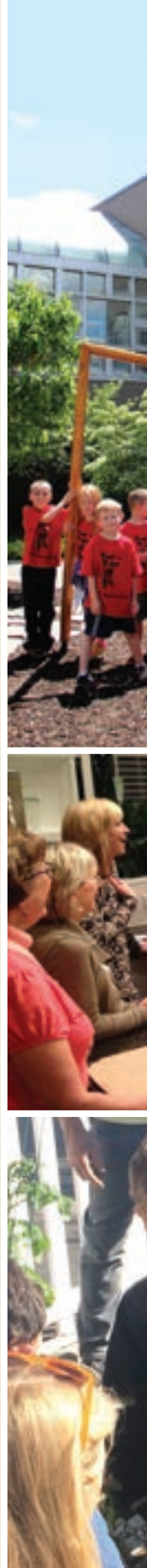
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LEARN & GROW

The Conservatory's outreach and education programs address community needs such as nutrition and food access, workforce readiness and informal education in the arts and sciences. The new department, formed in 2014, continued its growth and expanded its reach in 2015.

498 classes were offered in gardening, health and wellness, culinary and fine arts, serving 3,996 participants, up from 3,700 participants in 340 classes in 2014.

Guided K–12 school programs in the arts and natural sciences welcomed 10,900 students, teachers and chaperons.

19 summer camps served 287 children—the most ever.

Seven young adults graduated from **Green Corps**, ready to join the workforce in the landscape and horticulture field.

Growing Up Green taught nutrition and gardening at three early childhood learning centers and extended its summer curriculum from four to eight weeks.

Garden Explorations provided therapeutic horticulture for groups of adults with disabilities.

Seven families participated in **Healthy Harvest**, receiving nutrition and cooking lessons and fresh produce from the ScottsMiracle-Gro Community Garden Campus.

A record 5,800 people shopped at the summer Farmers' Market, twice as many as the previous year. **Veggie SNAPs** continued to allow EBT participants to double the value of dollars spent on fresh produce at the market.

In August, in partnership with the Community Outreach and Education Committee, a **Summer Celebration** welcomed area residents with a free day of programs and activities.

In April, the Conservatory held its first annual **Urban Agriculture & Community Garden Summit**, welcoming 125 attendees from around Ohio.

2,718 adults and children were served through the Conservatory's signature community gardening program, **Growing to Green**.

IMPACT THROUGH COMMUNITY GARDENING

When Paula Penn-Nabrit was starting the Charles Madison Nabrit Memorial Garden (CMNMG) at the Church of Christ of Apostolic Faith on Brentnell Ave., she reached out to the Conservatory's **Growing to Green** program for help. *"We recognized that Growing to Green is a tremendous resource that could help us succeed,"* says Ms. Penn-Nabrit. The church wanted to provide a living legacy to Charles Madison Nabrit's commitment to holistic health, self-determination, education and community service. A four-part mission was developed for the garden:

- Affordable access to organic produce
- Awareness of the spiritual and cultural connections to gardening within black and brown communities
- Children's exposure to functional STEM studies
- Economic self-sufficiency and sustainability in the garden, in their homes and community

That is exactly what the 3,850 sq. ft. garden does each day. Whether through "Chemistry in the Garden" and other classes, a weekly Farmers' Market and Bake Sale, or just neighbors sitting and enjoying the garden, CMNMG is making a positive impact. According to Ms. Penn-Nabrit, *"Our gardeners and the community are gaining confidence and understanding of the power of healthy food, self-sufficiency, viable entrepreneurship and economic stability. Even small victories, like selling more fresh produce than cookies at our Farmers' Market, represent a positive impact."* In just two short years, The Charles Madison Nabrit Memorial Garden has had many victories – large and small. So many in fact that it was named the Growing to Green Community Garden of the Year in September, 2015.





The Conservatory named the new facility in honor of Bill and Jackie Wells, in appreciation of their leadership, philanthropy and commitment to the community.

The Wells Barn and Miles-McClellan Construction Company received the Associated Builders and Contractors' 2015 Central Ohio Excellence in Construction Award.





THE WELLS BARN

In October, the Conservatory celebrated the opening of the Wells Barn, a new facility for outreach and education with a sustainable business model. There was a growing need for space for these thriving programs, but with increased space comes increased operating costs. The Wells Barn addresses both sides of this issue in a single project, by creating opportunities for earned income so that the facility will be self-supporting.

A historic Ohio barn was reclaimed, transformed and expanded into a multi-purpose structure for programs that is also a beautiful and unique venue for special events. The main floor can accommodate up to 250 seated banquet guests, or 300 lecture style. It includes a stone fireplace, a cupola, a catering servery and a built-in bar. Colorful gardens surround a covered back porch with views into the ScottsMiracle-Gro Community Garden Campus. Amenities include a large demonstration kitchen, state-of-the-art audiovisual technology, classrooms and dressing suites.

And the plan is working. The first 100-person cooking class took place on October 31. The Wells Barn has hosted numerous programs in therapeutic horticulture, community gardening, a wellness fair, volunteer training and weekend Family Fun activities. In 2016, the brand new classrooms become home base for the Green Corps job training class. The Wells Barn now hosts the annual **We Dig Ohio** urban agriculture conference, an Earth Day Girl Scout camp-in, and eight weeks of summer day camps for children.

Many outside organizations have used the new facility for board meetings, 200-person corporate retreats, special events, weddings and a celebration of life. The Wells Barn has been booked for 89 outside events in 2016 and 17 events in 2017 as of this publication. Income from these bookings already exceeded initial projections and is forecast to reach 195% of goal by year end.

A PIECE OF OHIO HISTORY

The timber frame that serves as the skeleton and inspiration for the Wells Barn originates from a historic barn found in Richland County, Ohio. Harvested in the first decade of the 1800s from the hardwood forest of the Ohio frontier, the barn's timbers were hand hewn from oak, chestnut, beech, walnut, cherry and red elm trees that surrounded the property.

Doug and Beth Morgan of Mount Vernon Barn Company describe the barn as one of the finest in the area at the time of its construction. Its triple tie beams using mortise and tenon joinery are atypical and rarely found today. The workmanship in creating the solid square beams, many with minimal hand tool marks, makes it truly special.

In March of 2014, the barn was set to be demolished, just as the Conservatory identified the need for a home for its expanding programs. With the guidance of the Mount Vernon Barn Company and enthusiastic support from the Conservatory's Board of Trustees and committed donors, construction of this historic barn on the Conservatory's grounds became a reality. The first posts of the timber frame went up at a "barn raising" on May 22, 2015. The Wells Barn was dedicated just a few months later on October 27, 2015.



THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

The Conservatory welcomed over 200,000 visitors in 2015 to experience broad offerings throughout the year.

*“A wonderful adventure
no matter the season...”*

—LHoffman1978, Trip Advisor

Perennial winter favorite, ***Orchids!*** included interpretation for children and a gallery of rare prints and books from the Chicago Botanic Garden.

The unseasonably cold month of March was brightened by the return of ***Blooms & Butterflies***, and was embraced by thousands of visitors. It was accompanied by a vibrant Spring Color Showcase that included 70,000 flowering bulbs.

In mid-May, more bugs arrived when David Rogers’ larger-than-life wooden insects invaded the Conservatory. ***Big Bugs*** was paired with a gallery exhibition of photographs by Sam Jaffe of The Caterpillar Lab in New Hampshire.

Evening hours were extended until 9pm on Wednesdays through the summer months. The three experiences together were dubbed “The Summer of Bugs” and drew an increase in visitors of all ages.

*“The towering wooden bugs
are fun to run underneath,
and to get frightened little
4 year olds used to the idea
that bugs aren’t all that bad.”*

—Stacy, blogger at Little Adventures Await

In October, internationally known pumpkin carver Ray Villafane and fellow artists fascinated crowds with a weekend of carving. The finished products, a cast of “Pumpkinheadz” were preserved in tanks in the Cardinal Health Gallery for the Halloween season. Villafane’s work added to the horticulture display ***Scary Plants*** that showcased unusual members of the plant world. A colorful display of fall mums filled the outdoor courtyards and beds surrounding the Conservatory, creating an immersive autumn experience.

The Conservatory’s legacy holiday exhibition, ***Merry & Bright***, is known for its poinsettias, gingerbread houses, model railway and evening light displays. The Central Ohio Watercolor Society added to the experience with a gallery of winter-themed works. Performances by local musicians and choral groups, family-friendly activities and extended evening hours added extra spirit to the season.

*“Lots of good programs and changing
exhibits pair nicely with the changing seasons
to make each visit a little different.”*

—Michael G., Yelp

Offering daily demonstrations from April through December, the Conservatory’s glassblowers kept the Hot Shop humming, creating over 1,000 pieces of art glass as visitors observed the process.

Additional activities and events throughout the year included weekly family activities, local plant society shows and sales, a Valentine’s Day Wine and Chocolate evening, a concert series by ProMusica, the Great Glass Pumpkin Patch and Retired Plant Sales.



WITH GRATITUDE TO THESE 2015 DONORS

HEIRLOOM SOCIETY

Honoring and celebrating the philanthropic legacy of those who have made a planned gift to the Conservatory. Planned gifts, or estate gifts, demonstrate a commitment to the mission of Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, today and into the future. Similar to an heirloom passed from one generation to the next, today's legacy gifts enable the Conservatory to elevate quality of life and connect the community for generations to come.

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Zanesville Museum of Art

*Deceased

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WOMEN'S BOARD GIVES BACK!

The Women's Board of Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens is an organization of enthusiastic individuals working together to help promote and support the Conservatory. In 2015, this vibrant group of 300+ members contributed 2,263 volunteer hours. They helped plant 100,000 bulbs for the Spring Color Showcase, led community gardening workdays, hosted classes and school groups, and provided enriching activities to persons with disabilities through the Garden Explorations program. Women's Board volunteers even hosted a potluck banquet for community gardeners at the Growing to Green Harvest Awards at the end of the summer.

In addition to volunteering, Women's Board members support the Conservatory through philanthropic efforts including their annual *Field to Table* event, which raised \$290,000 in 2015. Their steadfast support and commitment has been unwavering for 32 years. The broad success of the Conservatory and its vital community programs simply would not be possible without the support of this inspiring group of women.



2015 OPERATING ACTIVITY

Operating Revenues

General Admissions	\$959,022
Memberships	474,622
Gift Shop Sales	492,374
Facility Rentals & Café Sales	1,865,273
Education & Camps	180,629
Other Income	<u>404,668</u>

Total Earned Revenues **\$4,376,588**

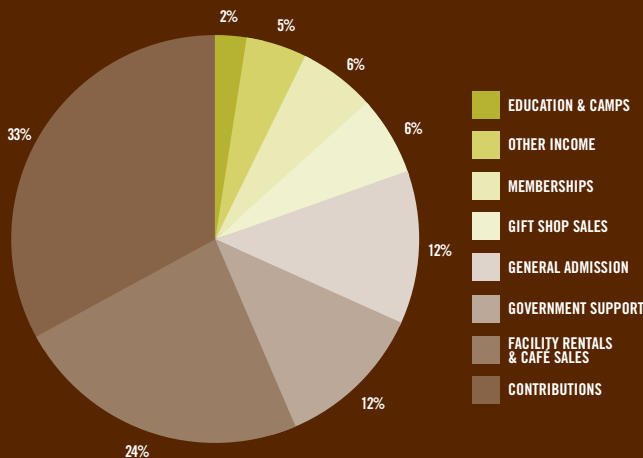
Contributions and Grants \$2,582,543

Government Support \$905,000

Total Revenues and Support **\$7,864,131**

Operating Expenses **\$7,841,750**

Operating Gain **\$22,381**





Franklin Park Conservatory
and Botanical Gardens

1777 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43203
www.fpconservatory.org



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