Milwaukee Domes
Art Festival 2011
August 19-21

Steven R. Libbey, FOD Board Member, Milwaukee Domes Art Festival Director

Thanks to the incredible support of the Milwaukee County Parks, the hard work of many volunteers, the incredible Friends of the Domes organization, an absolutely gorgeous park in the shadow of our beloved Domes, and a field of regional and national artists of the highest caliber, the inaugural Milwaukee Domes Art Festival was a smashing success. If you didn’t make it last year, you missed something very special. Mark your calendar now and join us at the Domes for our spectacular cultural extravaganza, August 19-21, in our “Gold Medal Winning” Milwaukee County Park.

Meet some of the finest artists of our time displaying their creative, inspired works of art for you to view and purchase. You will see plein air painters creating works of art live at Mitchell Park. There will be live painting. See the schedule of events at www.milwaukeedomes.org.

Curator Kehoe Thanks the “Friends”

Patrick Kehoe, Tropical Dome Curator

I had the unique opportunity to attend the 2010 Plant Collections Symposium last October in Denver. This event was sponsored by the American Public Gardens Association (APG-A) and hosted by the Denver Botanical Gardens. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Friends of the Domes for sponsoring much of the cost for me to attend. This three-day event focused on curatorial procedures and management of plant inventories. That covered a lot of territory in a short time and was compressed into daily lectures, tours and workshops. I found it quite humbling to be surrounded by my peers in the trade, experts in the field of managing, teaching and hands-on maintenance of plant collections. The following is a brief overview of the topics covered. continued on page 7

Spring Plant & Bulb Sale
Sponsored by the Friends of the Domes
Saturday, June 4 and Sunday, June 5
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

www.milwaukeedomes.org
Clever Companions for Your Chemical-Free Garden

Before you turn to harsh chemicals to solve your garden woes, consider planting clever combinations of flowers and herbs to improve your soil, increase propagation and keep harmful insects at bay.

Garlic – plant it with roses, raspberries, cucumbers, peas, lettuce and celery to keep aphids off roses and repel Japanese beetles and spider mites, too.

Mint – plant it with tomatoes and cabbage because this quick growing herb deters ants, fleas, aphids, cabbage moths, even rodents – plus it attracts earthworms, which help soil condition.

Lavender – plant it with roses, alliums and fruit trees to discourage fleas and moths while drawing beneficial insects such as bees, ladybugs and praying mantises.

Nasturtium – plant it with fruit trees, cabbage, cucumbers and radishes because it repels squash bugs, whiteflies and cucumber beetles. The blooms also keep aphids from nibbling on fruit trees.

Information source: Thisoldhouse.com
From the Friends of the Domes

By Phil Rozga, Acting President

Why an “Acting President?” When the new Friends of the Domes Board of Directors was elected last November, there was no one whose schedule would allow them to accept the nomination for President. According to the by-laws, the First Vice President will serve as the temporary President. That is the process by which I became Acting President. While I did not seek the position of President, I will, with the help of the Board, attempt to guide the organization until a new President is elected.

I have been a member of the Friends of the Domes Board for more than nine years. When I first joined we had Board meetings every other month. At that time, and for the most part, all events were fairly traditional and required minimal planning.

Many changes have taken place during the past nine years. The Board now meets monthly. We have celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the construction of the Domes. The lighting show, inside and out, is a major attraction. Sandy Folaron, the Director, has instituted the popular “Music Under Glass” on Thursday evenings from November to March. Various ethnic groups have held festivals at the Domes. “Restaurants Under Glass” and an Art Show have been added to the calendar. The Gift Shop has expanded and moved to a more prominent location. During this time we have maintained a faithful membership of just over one thousand.

Recently, The Board reluctantly accepted the resignation of two members who have provided outstanding service to the Board and to the organization, Deanna Andre and Gail Schumann. Deanna is the past President. Among her many accomplishments was her leadership in negotiating the agreement between the County and the Friends of the Domes. Gail assisted the membership committee and was responsible for the highly successful Restaurants Under Glass. She will continue to write a column for this newsletter. Both will be missed. We thank them for sharing their time, energy, knowledge and service.

Art Show

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music, incredibly delicious food, even a future artists pavilion for children to create art.

Shelby Keefe, one of Milwaukee’s most spectacular contemporary painters (recently named The Pfister Hotel Resident Artist 2011), has renewed her mentoring commitment. We’ve made some wonderful improvements for this year’s amazing event:

♦ FREE parking with paid Milwaukee Domes Art Festival Admission
♦ Complete access to the Festival and the Domes for one $8 admission
♦ 10 artist booths inside the air-conditioned Domes
♦ Refined layout using the Domes’ beautiful new entrance and landscape.

If you know an artist who would like the opportunity to display and sell their art with a chance to win one of eight cash artist awards totaling $10,500, please send them to www.milwaukeedomesartfestival.com to apply!

Volunteers are needed and welcome. Find out more at the website above.

The inaugural Milwaukee Domes Art Festival last year showcased the limitless potential of our beautiful park as a green space in a metropolitan environment. You have never seen Mitchell Park looking so good. Come and enjoy a day or the weekend. I personally guaranty you will be glad you did!
**Ask the Horticulturist**

**Do you have a gardening question?**

Email your question to www.milwaukeedomes.org or mail it to the Friends of the Domes, 524 S. Layton Blvd., Milwaukee, WI 53215. Please include your telephone number and/or email address with your request. Our Board of Directors includes a past director of the Domes, and other experienced gardeners, who will attempt to answer your questions by phone or email. Some questions and answers may be included in future issues of this newsletter. If your question is used, we will identify you by first name only.

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**Gifts Under Glass**

**What’s New in the Gift Shop?**

By Sarah Philipp

The creations of Debbie Grieb are not only beautiful to look at, but they are functional as well. Debbie’s mission is to provide home accessories and gifts, such as bud vases, oil bottles, and wine glasses.

Debbie is a self-taught artist and the owner of Crystal Garden Studio, which specializes in hand painted glassware. She resides in Pewaukee, Wisconsin with her husband, two children, and numerous pets.

Visit the Domes’ Gift Shop to experience Debbie Grieb’s affordable and usable art in person, and, as always, the work of other local artists. Take their art home, while doing your part to support the Friends of the Domes.

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**Beautiful Bougainvillea!**

The beautiful Bougainvillea featured here and on the cover can be found in the Desert Dome. According to Board Member, Richard Risch, this was one of the original plantings when the Domes first opened in 1967! See more about the Desert Dome in the Children’s Corner on page 6.

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**Train Show Tradition**

Noah Rusks traveled from Utah to visit the Train Show with his grandparents – a tradition they began when he was 10 years old. Noah has a lifetime of wonderful memories from past shows, and says he is lucky to have the best grandparents in the whole world! He thanks them, and the Domes, for this exciting annual tradition. We wish Noah and his grandparents many more years together to enjoy their loving relationship and the show.
Committee News

Phil Rozga, Acting President

A number of plants in our permanent collection produce seeds and shoots, which could be propagated. Board Member Jeff Shaffer has suggested that these could be used to produce plants for the exhibits in the Domes or to sell in the Gift Shop. The Board agreed and we are working out plans to implement this idea. Watch for more on this topic in the future.

FOD Dues
Tax Deductible

Just a reminder that membership dues for Friends of the Domes are tax deductible for those who itemize.

Garden Wisdom

“All my life, the new sights of nature made me rejoice like a child.”

-MARIE CURIE

Upcoming Floral Shows

Rocky Mountain Spring
(Spring Show)
April 16 - May 8
Enjoy a mountain cabin setting amid hundreds of fragrant spring flowers. A great photo opportunity!

Little House On The Plains
(Fall Mum Show)
September 24 - November 6
Experience the feeling of living on an open prairie as a homesteader would! A floral design exhibits a colorful assortment of mums for the fall season.

Holly, Jolly Holidays
(Holiday Show)
November 19 - January 1, 2012
This popular show will pay tribute to the many ways in which cultural and ethnic customs define "Santa." Set against a backdrop of thousands of poinsettias. Another great family photo opportunity awaits you.

“Flowers at Trout Lake” Photo by Kyle Balke

Up, Up And Away
(Summer Show)
May 14 - September 11
A house, an old man and a boy scout all ready to take off on an adventure of a lifetime. Join us for the ride and take in our whimsical floral display of summer favorites!

SAVE THE
DATE!

Orchid Show & Sale
September 17 – 18

Photo by Bridget O’Donnell
**Children's Corner**

**Water is a Precious Resource**

Did you know that humans cannot live without water? Many other living, growing things like animals and plants that share this planet also need water to survive.

When you think of the Earth, you probably think of land, however, 80% of the planet’s surface is covered in water! Water is all around you, even when you can’t see it. In addition to oceans, rivers and lakes, there is water under the earth’s surface (groundwater) and in the air (clouds and humidity). Surprisingly, Antarctica is the driest continent on Earth! Although covered in ice, it is a desert and receives very little precipitation.

Only one percent of the earth’s water is actually drinkable, the rest is either salty seawater or frozen in glaciers and polar ice. You can’t use it to drink, wash or water plants. The earth has pretty much all of the water it is ever going to have. Even rain is evaporated water falling back to the ground. So, it is important to use water wisely.

The average American uses an amazing 100 gallons of water a day! You can help save water every day in small ways that make a big difference. Turn off the faucet while you brush your teeth. By turning off the tap while you brush your teeth, morning and night, you can save up to eight gallons of water. That adds up to more than 200 gallons a month — enough to fill a huge fish tank that holds six small sharks!

Source: National Geographic Kids and EPA Water Sense Kids

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**Did You Know? Milwaukee Has a Desert! Come and Explore...**

The Desert Dome (sometimes called the Arid Dome) at Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservancy gives you a chance to see “up close” many plants that you could never see without traveling to far away places. The Desert Dome collection is one of the largest in the United States. A lagoon, crop garden and free flying birds are also at home here.

Come see plants from Madagascar, an island off the east coast of Africa. Whenever botanists* at the Domes could not obtain specimens (sample plants from other collections) they started plants from seed sent directly from Madagascar. Endangered and unusual plants are grown and protected here.

Plants from the deserts of the American southwest as well as South America, Africa and Mexico are also featured. You will find a world-class collection of cacti as well as palms, succulents and grasses. What do you imagine you might see in the Canary Island Collection?

In the shade of date palms, you will find a small pool with aquatic plants, providing a bit of respite from the desert heat. Nearby are plants important to arid (dry) agriculture, especially chili peppers – one of the earliest plants to be cultivated in the New World and today among the top 75 most consumed plants in the world!

Come and explore the Desert Dome. See what grows and even blooms from time to time in this beautiful arid place. Bring your camera or sketchpad. Take photos or draw pictures of your favorite things.

And, if you want to learn more about deserts and other fascinating nature topics, stop in the Gifts Under Glass Gift Shop to see a wide array of fun and educational books and toys. You might even find a small cactus of your own to buy and grow at home!

*A botanist is a scientist who studies plants. Botany is the scientific branch of biology dealing with the study of plants.*

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*Photo by Bridget O’Donnell*
Brats and other sausages are very popular in Milwaukee, but you probably don’t think of tropical Africa when eating them. The fruit of the “sausage tree” are not edible anyway. *Kigelia pinnata* (also known as *K. africana*) is hard to miss in the Tropical Dome. The tree can grow to 60 feet in height and has gray bark. The wood is not used commercially. Its scientific name comes from the leaflets of the compound leaves that form oppositely along the leaf stems. The leaves fall off each spring, but regrow almost immediately in the Domes because the tree is continuously watered. Deciduous leaves are an adaptation for reducing water loss in tropical areas where there is a dry season each year.

Some plants have really eye-catching ways of reproducing, and the sausage tree certainly qualifies in this area. It produces very long stems that hang down from the upper branches. Large, fragrant, maroon flowers form at the ends. They open only at night because they are pollinated by bats looking for pollen and nectar.

An unusual feature of this plant is the sausage-shaped fruit that form after pollination. They can be up to 2 feet long and weigh up to 10 pounds. Don’t plant one of these where they can fall on someone’s head or car! The fresh fruit are poisonous to people, but are eaten by baboons, elephants, giraffes, hippos, and other animals. The fruit are woody berries with pulp and many seeds inside. The seeds are dispersed in the dung of the animals that eat them.

Look for the long stems hanging from the sausage tree in the Tropical Dome. You may see closed flowers and, if you are lucky, some of the “sausages.” They don’t usually get as big as they do in the wild, but watch your head just in case!

Photo courtesy of the National Tropical Botanical Garden


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**Curator Kehoe continued from page 1**

Developing an Integrated Plant Record System: I found this most interesting since we are considering upgrading the Domes’ plant ID signage. Discussed were the latest in barcoding, labeling techniques, and incorporating GPS for plant locations.

Strategies for Saving Collections: It’s not an SOS for rescuing plants, but rather harvesting, storage and conservation through seeds, tissue culture, and herbarium vouchers – perhaps even sharing plant material with others in the future.

Prioritizing Collections and Making Tough Decisions: This is a perpetual discussion the Domes’ horticulture staff has dealt with. What to collect, what to keep and what get rid of while working within the collection policy and master plan. We can’t have it all and space is limited.

The conference was quite motivating. I realize as technology continues to change, we too find ourselves changing how we manage our plant collections in the Domes. See you in the tropics.

**Editor’s note** – Patrick has spent 14 years working in the Show Dome and nearly seven years in the Tropical Dome. He noted that he “moved to the ‘tropics’ in 2004, when long-time Curator, Bob Stark retired after 29 years, and he thoroughly enjoys it.”

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*By Gail Schumann*

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Mitchell Park Domes: (414) 649-9830 • Friends of the Domes: (414) 383-3818 • www.milwaukeedomes.org • E-mail: fod@milwaukeedomes.org
2011 Calendar of Events

April 2 ................................................................. Green Living Festival
April 9 ................................................................. Dare to be Aware Fair
April 16 – May 8 ............................................... Rocky Mountain Spring Show
May 14 – September 11 ...................................... Up, Up & Away Summer Show
June 4-5 ............................................................... Spring Plant & Bulb Sale*
August 19-21 ...................................................... Milwaukee Domes Art Festival
September 17 – 18 .............................................. Orchid Show & Sale
September 24 – November 6 ................................ Little House on the Plains (Mum Show)
October 7 .............................................................. Rainforest Night
October 15-16 ...................................................... Ikebana Show
November – March ............................................ Music Under Glass Concert Series**
November 19 – January 1, 2012 ...................... Holly, Jolly Holidays (Holiday Show)
November 27 ...................................................... Holiday Dinner Fundraiser*
December 31, 2012 .......................................... New Year’s Eve Family Celebration*

* Sponsored by the “Friends of the Domes.”
Special admission rates apply.
**Thursday Evenings from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE
Visit our website www.milwaukedomes.org for more information and events scheduled after publication of this newsletter.