A Friends of the Domes Event in a Gold Medal Winning Milwaukee County Park

Artist: Tom Kubala ‘best of’ MDAF Plein Air 2011
High Resolution Digital Scan: TNB Designs

View spectacular art on the newly enhanced plaza in front of the domes
Meet Amy Thurner
Bringing New Magic to the Domes!

Amy and her daughter, Sophia, enjoy a day at The Domes.

Amy Thurner absolutely beams when she talks about her new role at the Domes. She is an experienced horticulturist who spent the last 15 years working “behind the scenes” at the County Greenhouse that supplies plants and flowers for the Domes. Now, she is front and center, helping to create the magic that keeps visitors coming back for more.

Magic is a good word for Amy, who loves to visit Disney World, and says that the Domes are like Milwaukee’s own version of the magic kingdom!

Milwaukee Domes Art Festival
August 17 – 19

You will see incredibly talented painters painting live on the grounds. Dozens of sculptors, potter, jewelers and glassworkers will be displaying the fruits of their creativity. As a juried fine art event the art will be amazing. Spend time relaxing lazily in the summer sun while enjoying the wonderful energy of a creative art event in the shadow of the jewels of Milwaukee’s southern skyline or dance to the high impact energy of some of Milwaukee’s coolest entertainers.

Art for view and purchase, great music, delicious food, tasty adult and soft beverages at The Domes, what more could you ask for?

Friday, August 17th from Noon to 8 p.m, Saturday the 18th from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday the 19th from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The beautiful plants and flowers, the delightful seasonal shows and amazing special events create a sense of wonder that captivates visitors of all ages.

And visitors are not the only ones captivated by the Domes. Amy feels a little like she has won the lottery when it comes to her new job. In a word, she emphatically describes it as “fun!” Every day she finds herself surrounded by beauty, working with wonderful, talented people, and she gets to witness the joyful reaction of those who see the end result of all the hard work that goes into making the magic happen.

Continued on page 5
From the Friends of the Domes

By Phil Rozga, Acting President

What happened to the tulips in the Spring Show? The tulips were ready before we were. Consequently, we had more hydrangeas than tulips on display. Nevertheless, the overall concept was beautiful. The tulip bulbs were sold at our annual bulb sale, so they will be given another chance next year, in someone else’s garden.

You may think that summer is a slow time at the Domes. Not true. This is the time of year when we’re planning the Art Show, Ghosts under Glass and the new display featuring the 12 plants that changed the world. You may have noticed that the Domes have a new web page and that we are also instituting a new membership program. You can keep up with all the information, events, and changes by checking the web page at www.MilwaukeeDomes.org.

Sue Black, the Milwaukee County Parks Director, spoke to the FOD Board in April. She outlined plans for the new greenhouses. Construction is scheduled to start in August. She was particularly pleased that the addition will provide more space for educational programs. Throughout the year various school groups visit the Domes. Recently their number has been curtailed by the lack of school funding to pay for the bus transportation. The Board has voted to allocate $2500 from the $5000 Carmax Foundation Grant to help pay for bus transportation. See you in August at the Art Fair.

From the Director’s Lawn Chair

By Sandy Folaron, Director, Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory

Summer is a great time to travel and catch up on your reading list! I love road trips and have had the great fortune to be able to visit many botanical gardens and conservatories throughout the country. Sometimes it encourages me to re-evaluate how we manage our own Domes. Sometimes I leave other sites feeling that I have so much more to do here, and sometimes I am amazed at how much we have been able to accomplish with the limited staff and resources in our parks system! No matter what I come away with, it’s always inspiring to experience another garden and see how other conservatories keep their facilities renewed and growing by introducing art installations, staging special events and seeing a new awareness of green energy efficient strategies. I always take away something! A couple of books that I have found to be not only light reading and informative, but great to have on those road trips include; The Visitors Guide to American Gardens by Jo Ellen Meyers Sharp and Wicked Plants, The Weed That Killed Lincoln’s Mother & Other Botanical Atrocities by Amy Stewart.

Today as I look out my office windows, the plaza is filled with students lunching and enjoying the wonderful summer-like weather during their visit to the Domes! The fountains are on, the entry beds newly planted and Mitchell Park is looking its best. Our new plaza has been used constantly by visitors who are anxious to stay just a bit longer, and enjoy the weather, chat or read. It has become a well-used extension of the Conservatory. The more I see visitors responding to our improvements and ongoing projects, the more I want to move our endeavors into Mitchell Park itself and recoup some of what was lost long ago. The old sunken garden site still stands as a reminder of what disappeared decades ago. I am hopeful that the new Greenhouse project behind the Domes might serve as a catalyst to expand the services we provide to the community and our visitors throughout the year. This summer the 3rd Annual Mitchell Park Domes Art Festival will be staged in front of the Domes on the grassy side beds that were once reflecting ponds. Again, this additional recreated space will come alive with artists’ booths and displays and once again provide a new experience to our visitors! I encourage you to come on down, bring your friends or volunteer for this great event. We’re depending on you!

Have a great summer and see you at the Domes!
Mitchell Park Domes was awarded a grant from the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) toward the installation of an extensive green roof system on the Ed Center. Green roofs, also known as eco-roofs, are either partially or completely planted with vegetation growing in soil, or a growing medium, to hold 50-65% storm water. They can be planted in waterproof trays or on top of a waterproof barrier, and can be intensive (like a rooftop park) or extensive (relatively lightweight). Green roofs have many benefits above and beyond the ability to reduce water pollution. The technology offers a cost effective, healthy, sustainable and regenerative roof landscape in place of a barren desert of gravel and asphalt!

Ecosystems are being rapidly consumed by suburban development. Green roofs are a unique opportunity to re-create destroyed habitats for native flora and fauna through careful design. Conservation is part of the Domes mission. I am currently working on an interpretive display of our green roof to be installed outside the Ed Center sometime this summer. In our next newsletter: A closer look at the green roof plants, benefits, maintenance and examining the connection of green roofs with the Domes’ mission.
Completing the Sign

Steven R. Libbey, FOD Board Member

You will soon see beautiful color blooming as you round the corner passing our new digital billboard on your visits to The Domes. Milwaukee County Parks is planting a dozen lime hydrangeas, a wonderful drought tolerant showstopper of a flowering shrub, to provide a beautiful warm welcome all summer long, as a horticultural boarder surrounding our new digital sign.

You may also notice a donation by Mudtech, a corporate Friend of the Domes. The donation is an architecturally elegant minimal landscape boarder surrounding the planting. Mudtech is a locally owned and operated company, expert at concrete leveling, asphalt maintenance, concrete and asphalt repair, foundation repair and, of course, landscape curbing. If you need those products or services please consider our corporate partner. Please let them know (www.mudtechworks.com) you appreciate their support of our park.

Amy Thurner

Continued from page 2

There is no such thing as an average day for Amy. First and foremost, she is in charge of managing the horticultural staff, some of whom have been with the Domes for years, others joined the staff more recently. She is quick to note that each of these individuals is highly skilled, very well-educated and have a tremendous amount of professional experience – her responsibility is to see that they have the resources they need to do the very best job they can.

And, while her job is administrative in nature, she is also very hands-on. Amy really enjoys getting involved and doing whatever it takes to get things done. The day I visited her for this article, she was anticipating the arrival of a windmill for the Tulip Mania spring show and troubleshooting various aspects of the installation.

She also appreciates that “can do” attitude in the people around her. Everyone pitches in and you never hear anyone say that a task is not part of his or her job description. They are a great team, she explains, with some new blood, exciting, fresh ideas, and one more essential element of success...an amazing leader in Sandy Folaron, who sets the tone and leads by example, always willing to do whatever it takes to give visitors the most magical experience possible!

Amy is a graduate of Nicolet High School and MATC’s Horticulture Program. Her fellow horticulturists at the Domes are Mary Braunreiter, Marian French, Patrick Kehoe, and Lillian Torres.

"The longer I live, the more my mind dwells upon the beauty and the wonder of the world."

-JOHN BURROUGHS

Garden Wisdom

Photo by Bridget O'Donnell
In order to maintain a friendly environment for all our little friends, we avoid using insecticides and other poisons within the domes, because what kills a pest bug will also kill a beneficial bug. With the proper balance in place, our conservatory can grow and look its best!

Children's Corner

Insects Under Glass!
By Marian French, Horticulturist I, Desert Dome

At the Domes, insects have several important jobs to do, both for us humans and for our plants. Sometimes bees, butterflies, and flies find their way into the conservatory on their own from the outside, and while they’re here they can act as pollinators. Flowers that attract bees and butterflies are usually brightly colored and contain sweet nectar. Flowers that attract flies are usually dark red in color and give off unpleasant odors. Without pollinators, we would not get any of our fruits, including the cacao pods and bananas.

We also purposefully introduce large numbers of predatory insects, such as ladybugs and lacewings, into each dome a few times a year. These predators will eat pests like mealy bugs and spider mites, which feed on our plants and can affect the garden’s overall health and beauty.

Did You Know? Sunflowers are Super!

A sunflower looks like one huge flower, but a single sunflower head is actually 1,000 to 2,000 individual flowers! The yellow petals are protective leaves that cover the center of the sunflower head while it grows. Each of those tiny flowers generates a sunflower seed.

• The scientific name for sunflowers is Helianthus (Helia for sun, and Anthus for flower).
• Sunflowers attract birds and bees.
• Sunflowers can grow eight to 12 feet tall in rich soil within six months!
• The sunflower is native to North America.
• The sunflower is the national flower of Russia and the state flower of Kansas.

Sunflowers have names like Aztec Sun, Dwarf Sunspot, Evening Sun, Italian White, Orange Sun, Ring of Fire, Skyscraper, Teddy Bear, Valentine and Velvet Queen. Maybe you could grow a sunflower. See how high yours will grow!

Sharon Lovejoy’s book, Root, Shoots, Buckets, and Boots has fun ideas for kids and gardens. The Gift Shop at the Domes has all kinds of educational items and books you will love. Stop in today!
By Gail Schumann

The Bo tree received its name from a Sanskrit word for wisdom. Originating in Southeast Asia, the tree is important in both Buddhism and Hinduism. It is said that the Guatama Buddha achieved “enlightenment” while meditating under this tree. One Bo tree in Sri Lanka was planted in 288 B.C., the oldest verified age for any flowering plant. Throughout Southeast Asia, the tree is a symbol of prosperity and happiness.

Fig trees (Ficus species) are in the mulberry family. They grow to great heights and are found throughout the tropics where they require moist warm environments to thrive. Some Ficus plants are grown as houseplants with shiny green leaves, but they will quickly drop their leaves if exposed to cold drafts. The rubber tree (Ficus elastica), like all members of the mulberry family, produces a milky, latex sap. (But this is not the South American plant, Hevea brasiliensis from which we get most natural rubber).

The Bo tree belongs to a group of fig trees known as banyans or strangler figs. They begin to grow as epiphytes in the branches of another tree. Over time, the roots reach the ground, grow into the soil, and form a trunk. Aboveground buttress (prop) roots provide support in windy conditions, an adaptation that has been copied in the building of some cathedrals. Bo tree leaves are heart-shaped with a long tapering tip.

The fruit we call a fig is really the result of a collection of hundreds of flowers inside a structure that is pollinated by tiny fig wasps. Fig wasps can only reproduce in fig flowers. Neither one can survive without the other. A different wasp pollinates each different fig species. The Bo tree has separate male and female plants and produces small, paired, purple figs, which are not edible. The edible fig (Ficus carica) contains hundreds of seeds, one from each flower, which crunch in the teeth when eaten. Figs can be eaten fresh, but are commonly dried. If you look carefully in the Tropical Dome, you will find other fig species besides the Bo tree.

Photo courtesy Missouri Botanical Garden PlantFinder

Green Space We Can Use

Steven R. Libbey, FOD Board Member

You know the FOD is all about keeping green space at Mitchell Park green. After the grey water retention plaza, replete with wonderful flowering beds newly opened summer 2011, the possibilities for the front side of the domes are opening like a tulip on a warm sunny April afternoon.

If you have visited the conservatory within the last decade you recall the open ponds abutting the front plaza. Over the years maintenance made the original reflecting ponds unsustainable. What you might not have noticed is the green mounds behind them stretching around the domes, north and south of the plaza. Those two substantial green spaces were originally reflecting ponds. The two outside ponds are thought to have been abandoned in the 1960’s or 70’s.

Your FOD has endeavored to level these two green spaces in order to create open green spaces that can be used for outdoor events like the MDAF. It isn’t difficult to imagine large corporate or community events, scout camps and weddings staged in these spaces. The plaza has made the two green spaces accessible and, even now in their unmanaged condition, people can been seen regularly relaxing or playing there.

Come see this and so many other new things at the Mitchell Park Conservatory. Bring a book or picnic lunch, find a sunny or shady spot and relax as the soft splash of the fountains soothes your soul. Come to the Art Festival in August and see these spaces in action.
### 2012-2013 Calendar of Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 9 – September 9</td>
<td>Summer Winds Summer Show</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 17-19</td>
<td>Milwaukee Domes Art Festival*</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>Annual FOD Membership Meeting*</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 15-16</td>
<td>Orchid Show &amp; Sale</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 22 – November 4</td>
<td>Don Quixote Fall Mum Show</td>
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<td>October 12</td>
<td>Rainforest Night</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 25 - 26</td>
<td>Ghosts Under Glass*</td>
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<td>November 1 – December 27</td>
<td>Music Under Glass Concert Series**</td>
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<td>November 10 – 11</td>
<td>Jewelry at the Domes</td>
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<tr>
<td>November 17 – January 6, 2013</td>
<td>Let it Snow! Holiday Show</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 2</td>
<td>Gifts Under Glass Art Fair*</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 31</td>
<td>New Year’s Eve Family Celebration*</td>
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* Sponsored by the “Friends of the Domes.” Special admission rates apply.

** Thursdays from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

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

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**FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS, AUGUST 17 – AUGUST 25, 2012**

### Milwaukee Domes Art Festival

**Friday, August 17 – Sunday, August 19**

524 S. Layton Blvd.

MILWAUKEE, WI 53215
Your one-year sponsorship will provide your chosen animal a higher quality of life. Our resident animals live in the education center and in the Tropical Dome. Your sponsorship will help provide tanks, full spectrum lighting, basking lamps, specialty foods, supplements and veterinarian care. Your help is vital to continuing the best care possible for these animal educators.

In return, you will receive a thank you packet that includes a natural history profile of your sponsored animal, a photo and a thank you card from the Education Center.

Please cut at dotted line and mail to: Mitchell Park Domes, Attn: Gift Shop/Animal Sponsor
524 S. Layton Blvd.
Milwaukee WI 53215

ADOPT AN ANIMAL REGISTRATION

Name _______________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Address _____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

City/State/Zip ________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Phone ______________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Animal Choice(s)
1. ___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

2. ___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

3. ___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Total Payment Enclosed $____________  Check  ______________________________  Charge#__________________________________Exp Date: _________________________