milwaukee domes Art Festival

August 16-18, 2013
Fri 12-7  Sat 10-7  Sun 10-4

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

Artist: Jenny Anderson - MDAF Plein Air 2012
High Resolution Digital Scan: TNB Designs

milwaukeedomesartfestival.com
Meet Burt Gross – Park Artist

By Bridget O’Donnell

What would you call a four-year-old ring bearer in a wedding at the Domes…who grows up to be the Park Artist for the Show Dome? If you were Burt Gross, you would call him a very lucky man!

In an old pavilion on the grounds of Mitchell Park, surrounded by what can only be described as intriguing creative chaos, Burt talked about his job, while working effortlessly on a wonderful pen and ink drawing that may be the inspiration for a future display in the Show Dome.

Burt is a graduate of UW-Milwaukee, where he studied Fine Arts. Everything from drawing, painting and sculpture, to a focus on filmmaking, prop and set design, lighting, costuming, acting and computer animation. Then he moved away for more in-depth study of all aspects of his craft. At one point in his career, he spent nine years teaching and worked as a jewelry designer.

But nothing quite “fit” Burt like the job of Park Artist. Like many people, he didn’t even know such a job existed. After returning to Milwaukee, he was hired as a seasonal worker to help set up several shows a year at the Domes. It is this new role, however, that allows him to dream up his own creative visions for the five yearly displays in the Show Dome. He works closely with an “amazing team” to collaborate in making those shows a reality.

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Milwaukee Domes Art Festival 2013

By Steven R. Libbey, FOD Board Member & Art Festival Director

Our MDAF is an opportunity to see inspiring art, meet the creative geniuses who created it and a lot more.

The 4th annual Milwaukee Domes Art Festival is coming to life. Leveling the turf beds in front of the Domes and moving the MDAF to the front of the Domes for 2012 was a huge success. The music stage centered in the middle of the art brought a higher level of energy to the festival. “The Kohl’s Design It! Lab” and our volunteers provided an incredible youth art experience, attendance was up and more.

What will the grounds look like this year? Where will the stage be? What incredibly interesting and entertaining features will there be? Mark your calendar now for August 16 – 18, and come see for yourself.

The 2013 MDAF will feature incredible visual art, wonderful performance art, delicious food, entertaining and educational features, adult and family

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By Phil Rozga, Acting President

By the time you read this, the seven new greenhouses should be nearly completed. The progress has been remarkable. Work started in late April and within a few weeks some of the framework for one of the new structures had taken shape. The staff and the Friends of the Domes are excited about the opportunities they present. In addition to growing plants for display in the Show Dome, we plan to raise plants that will be sold in the Gift Shop. We also hope to have classes in the facility and allow volunteers to help the staff in the growing process. A plan to celebrate the opening is in the works.

Other changes you will see in the near future are new doors in the three Domes. The current wooden doors are in bad shape and are in need of replacement. We plan to install metal doorframes and make them handicap accessible. The decorative glass inserts will be retained in the new frames. The Friends of the Domes will pay part of the cost of the replacement.

One final note, I would like to publically thank the volunteers who put in hundreds of hours at various Domes’ events. They save the county thousands of dollars. Without their service most of the events could not occur.

From the Friends of the Domes

By Sandy Folaron

How do you move an accumulation of three decades worth of “stuff” out of a facility and find use and reuse for it? We were up for that challenge the past six months, knowing that ultimately we would be looking at a brand new replacement Greenhouse here at the Domes! Working on organizing and streamlining the process at the old Watertown Plank Greenhouse facility, we came across not only an amazing time capsule reflecting past greenhouse staff and tools of the horticultural trade, but it became apparent that the old County Greenhouses had certainly seen their share of history and provided Milwaukee County with acres and acres of perennials, show plants and annuals that hundreds of thousands of visitors enjoyed for over 50 years! They served us well, as did all the facilities dedicated employees and seasonal workers through the years. It is a big piece of our history. When we finished, a toast was made to honor those memories and celebrate the future as we turn the page and step into a new history-making initiative here at the Conservatory.

This fall, when we begin to move into our “new house,” we will need to learn a whole new system of computerized controls, including automated venting systems, shade cloth, water reuse and radiant heating! Some things never change however. The seeds and plugs will still be planted by hand, but the new state-of-the-art systems we now have will help insure better and more consistent crop management by our staff. We are hoping to open these greenhouses to the public and include them in our educational classes and outreach programs. So there is still a lot of work to do even as we are now in transition.

Enjoy the summer months and when traveling, visit a conservatory or a botanical garden; support their efforts by making a donation or visiting their gift shops. Most of all enjoy nature and all it has to give!

From the Director’s Lawn Chair

By Sandy Folaron

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Milwaukee Domes Art Festival 2013

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friendly fun at a world class venue, our Gold Medal Winning Milwaukee County Park’s Mitchell Park Domes.

The 2013 Art Festival website is the place to visit for up to the minute updates on participating artists and performers and festival features. As soon as the participating artists are determined by our jury, they and their art will dominate the site: www.Milwaukeedomesartfestival.com. When I see you there, we will both be having a great time!
Meet Burt Gross – Park Artist

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Burt genuinely appreciates the team at the Domes. Sandy, the horticulturists and other staff members are a wealth of knowledge and they work well together. He sees the team as one of his greatest resources. Like most artists, he is incredibly curious, and that curiosity fuels his creativity. Talking with staff, rummaging through intriguing materials found in the old greenhouse, observing visitors of all ages in the Show Dome…you never know when or how an idea or inspiration will take root.

When nurturing a new idea, Burt sees everything around him as a potential resource for creating the magic that fills each show. The freedom to unleash his creativity is another thing he really appreciates about the job. It is this creativity and skill that often turns the most inexpensive, old and forgotten materials into one-of-a-kind “show stoppers.”

Remember the darling elephant perched on a drum at the train show? It was made from chicken wire and old newspapers. The lovable alligator in the Blue Bayou show was a snowman in a previous life. It’s the ultimate form of creative recycling! As he matures in his new role, Burt is dedicated to making the most of his resources, learning about the horticultural treasures around him, bringing fresh ideas to future displays and continuing to find ways to engage others in their own unique Domes experience.

Burt Gross has found his true calling. He literally hopes to be doing this job forever. A job he dearly loves surrounded by true professionals and the chance to bring an exhilarating variety of art forms together with awesome plants – all to delight and inspire the young and the young at heart. In Burt’s own words, “The creative opportunities are endless. How cool is that!”

SAVE THE DATES!

Don’t miss our Events Calendar on the back page or visit www.milwaukeedomes.org.

Ask the Hort

Q  We would like to know the name of this plant in the tropical Dome. It is the prettiest flower I have ever seen.

A  The plant in question is *Hibiscus schizopetalus*. Also called Chinese Lantern. It is native Range: Kenya, Tanzania, and northern Mozambique. Winter hardy to USDA Zones 10-11 where it is best grown in rich, moist, well-drained soils in full sun. Plants appreciate abundant watering and fertilizing when young, and are intolerant of drought. In areas subject to frost (all zones south of USDA Zone 10), plants should be grown in containers and brought indoors before first fall frost for overwintering in sunny areas with cool evening temperatures (55F to 65F) or treated as annuals. Indoor plants need regular pruning to maintain compact shape.

If you have a question for one of our horticulturists, go to www.milwaukeedomes.org and see “Ask The Hort.”
Good Earth products are created with the finest ingredients. Each batch is made with a unique blend of aromatherapy grade essential oils and organic herbs, handcrafted in small batches to refresh and invigorate your soul. The simplicity of the ingredients aid in healing and revitalize your skin. Our products are so good for you because they are created from natural butters, oils and waxes.

The Good Earth took root from a very simple beginning – simplicity, combined with quality was the key inspiration. All of our products are thoughtfully created entirely from scratch by Michael or myself in our 1900s farmhouse on the shores of Lake Michigan in Kewaunee, WI. We do it all, from weighing the ingredients to packaging the orders. Not one step of the process is overlooked.

Founding the Good Earth gave me a platform to put my thoughts into practice. All of my philosophies are embodied in the Good Earth. It is my way of giving back to the community and using the natural ingredients provided by the earth to enrich the lives of others. I know I am making a difference, one bar of soap at a time.

We feel very strongly about our commitment to the environment. It is at the forefront of every choice we make in our lives. We continually try to reduce our footprint on the earth. All of our products are biodegradable; the vast majority of our packaging is recyclable or compostable. Each and every year we support others who spend their time defending the earth by donating a portion of our proceeds to nonprofit organizations.

Volunteers Bring Sunshine to a Rainy Weather Day!

By Paula Zamiotowski, Interpretative Educator

On April 18th, the 5th Annual Weather Day at Miller Park was the place to be. Nearly 10,000 students, parents and teachers visited the ballpark for a day of learning, fun and baseball. The Domes, along with TODAY’S TMJ4, Milwaukee Public Museum’s Planetarium Team and Discovery World, produced the best Weather Day in Milwaukee Brewers history! Five weeks before event day, Miller Park invited the Milwaukee Public Museum and The Domes to join their Weather Day team. I may be biased, but I think that’s why this was the best year yet…our volunteers!

So what was our role? We created a mobile tropical rainforest and desert climate! Jeff Shaffer, Diane Lindsley, Tom Schuck, Howard Aprill and I put our heads together to create a mini-dome experience for all 10K people to pass through in 75 minutes. The hard work came in when we trucked 53 plants, 31 cuttings, a canopy tent, stage spotlights, cords, poles, props, signs, soils, green roof display, murals, flags and people to the stadium, unloaded, set-up (40-minutes), met the crowd and then took everything down (30-minutes) all before 12:30 pm! Believe me, all ten of us were hustling!

Our “Friends” President, Phil Rozga, manned the Tropical Dome artifact area and brilliantly fielded questions from our guest. Connie Blair and Karen Hartwell greeted all of the guests to the Domes experience with a passion that heightened the excitement of all present. I manned the Desert Dome artifact area and fielded questions as our guests moved on to our green roof display and soil area with Mercedes Falk and Emmey Malloy who engaged everyone to touch the roof plants and soils. I think getting a sneak peak at the ballpark’s field sub-strate was a huge hit!

The Brewers won that game but our volunteers will always ROCK!
Busy Bees!
Bees are found on every continent except Antarctica and in every habitat that has flowering plants. Many plants produce nectar, a sugar-rich liquid that encourages bees to stop at the flower. Nectar is the source that helps bees produce honey. A honey bee’s long, slender, tongue acts as a tiny straw that sucks nectar from flowers. In the process of gathering nectar, a bee collects grains of pollen on its fuzzy body and transfers it from one plant to another. This fertilizes the plants and helps them grow. A honey bee visits 50 to 100 flowers during a collection trip. Honey bees are responsible for the pollination of more than 100 crops, including fruits, vegetables, nuts, and seeds. Bees are very busy and play an important role in nature!

Honeybees live in colonies or hives. An average bee colony will have about 50,000 bees. Bees are the only insects that produce food (honey) eaten by people. The honey bee’s wings move incredibly fast, about 200 beats per second, which makes the buzzing sound you hear when a bee is near.

LOOK UP! Grapefruit
You never know what you might see at the Domes. One little boy visiting the Tropical Dome with his Dad looked up and asked, “What is that?” High above his head were two grapefruit as seen in the photo. Even sitting on his Dad’s shoulders, the tree towered above them. The grapefruit tree in the tropical dome is approximately 30 feet tall!

Grapefruit originated in Malaysia, and are now grown the world over. The grapefruit was brought to Florida in the early 1800s from Barbados in the West Indies. Today, the United States is the major producer of grapefruit.

“Parents” of the grapefruit are the pomelo and the sweet orange. Grapefruit grow in clusters on trees like grapes. Grapefruit is part of the citrus family, which means they are related to oranges, tangerines, lemons and limes. Several types of grapefruit exist – each with its own distinct taste and appearance. Grapefruit come in many colors. They can be yellow, pink, white or ruby red. All varieties have a tangy-sweet flavor and are very juicy.

The fruit is high in antioxidants and the rind yields a valuable essential oil.

I LEARNED IT AT THE DOMES!
The tallest trees of the rainforest are called "emergents" because their canopies rise above all others. The Tropical Dome’s emergent is the kapok (Ceiba pentandra), reaching 85 feet tall! It is native to the American tropics and West Africa, but can now be found in tropical forests around the world. What will you discover the next time you visit the Domes?
Featured PLANT:
European Fan Palm
(Chamaerops humilis)

By Marian French, Horticulturist – Desert Dome

Yes, this is a palm tree that is naturally found in Europe! Its native range consists of rocky hillsides and coastal areas surrounding the Mediterranean Sea, including southern Europe and northern Africa. It’s a shrubby-looking plant, producing many trunks, each topped with spiny, fan-shaped leaves. Because of its architectural form and hardy nature it is used as an ornamental plant around the world. In fact, the European fan palm can be grown anywhere that has winter temperatures that stay above the teens. Unfortunately, as we all know, Wisconsin does not fall into that category, which makes our lovely specimen here in the Desert Dome all the more special.

The way a palm trunk is formed is a bit different from other trees. Instead of forming new rings of wood every year, palms keep the same stem tissue throughout their lives. This tissue enlarges, as the palm grows taller, widening the trunk. Most palms only produce new growth from the top of the trunk, and if something damages this growing tip they will decline and eventually die. The European fan palm does not have this problem, however, and often, new sprouts can be seen where old stems were cut back.

As you can see in the photo our palm started to bloom in early spring, with clusters of bright yellow flowers forming amidst clumps of leaves. This species is dioecious, meaning there are distinctly male and female plants, so in order to produce living seeds we would need both sexes growing in the dome. Being dioecious is a relatively primitive reproductive strategy; as flowering plants evolved many became monocious, where both male and female structures are found on the same plant, making pollination much easier. So the big question remains, is our palm a boy, or a girl?

Photo credit: Bridget O’Donnell

Students Volunteer for Service Hours

Volunteers for the Domes can be as young as high school age, and volunteer hours can be reported to your school for credit as “service hours.” You choose the events you want to work, and the hours that work best for you. Volunteers are needed for the Art Festival, Ghosts Under Glass and New Years Eve events. For more information, go to www.milwaukedomes.org, or contact Liz Fehring at 414-322-7600.

Garden Wisdom

Wisdom begins in wonder.
~ SOCRATES

Photo by Bridget O’Donnell
2013 Calendar of Events

June 8 – September 8..............................................................Milwaukee Yards Summer Show
August 16 – 18.................................................................Milwaukee Domes Art Festival*
September 8..........................................................Milwaukee Antique Bottle and Advertising Club Show
September 14 – 15.................................................................Orchid Show & Sale
September 20.............................................................Fall into the Fifties Fall Car Show & Sock Hop*
September 21 – November 10.................................Fall into the Fifties Mum Show
October 11............................................................................Rainforest Night
October 26..............................................................................Ghosts Under Glass*
November 7 – December 26..............................................Music Under Glass**
November 16 – 17.................................................................Jewelry at the Domes
November 23 – January 5, 2014............................Nutcracker Suite (Holiday)
December 31...........................................................................New Year’s Eve Family Celebration*

* Sponsored by the “Friends of the Domes.” Special admission rates apply.
** Thursday nights, 6:30 – 9 p.m.

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