The Domes are Under Attack!

By Burt Gross
Parks Artist

That’s right! It’s time for another one-of-a-kind, model train show in the Show Dome! This year’s theme is “Attack of the Giant Monsters!” The show will spoof many of your favorite mega-menacing vintage movie monsters. See what were once peaceful, rural neighborhoods get invaded by humongous beasts. Be witness to the destruction of a major city as a variety of trains speed along nearly 700 feet of G-scale track. There will be battling creatures, giant insects, and... (Continued on page 4)

Family Friendly New Year’s Festivities

By Liz Fehring
Event & Volunteer Coordinator

Join us for our fabulous, annual New Year’s Eve Family Celebration, Thursday, December 31 from 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM! This is one of the only indoor family events in the city.

We will feature live entertainment for the whole family, including a dance party, magician, balloon twisters, live music, children’s crafts, party favors, and much more! The evening will wrap up with a balloon drop.

Zilli’s Hospitality will offer food and beverages for purchase. For more information or to purchase advanced admission tickets, visit us online at milwaukeedomes.org or in the Domes Gift Shop.

When: December 31, 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM
Cost: $10 for Adults; $5 for children ages 3-17; children 2 and under are free.

Note: Special events like this fund educational programs and projects at the Domes, so passes and special FOD membership rates do not apply.

Music Under Glass Returns January 14

Music Under Glass will return to chase away the midwinter blues and add some music to your Thursday evenings! Enjoy the ambiance and entertainment of acts including an Elvis Hawaiian Luau, an Irish Folk band, jazz performances, and even a “Johnny Cash” night with Liam Ford. Food and beverages will be available for purchase.

Not a member? Use this opportunity to sign up for a Friends of the Domes membership and all nine concerts for free! It doesn’t get any better than that!

When: Thursdays, January 14 through March 10, 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM
Cost: Free for Members; Non-members, regular admission rates apply
Thank you so much to those of you who participated in our first Friends’ survey! Your feedback provides us valuable information that we will use to make decisions and plan for the future.

If you did not receive an email with a link to the survey and would like to participate in future surveys, please contact us at friendsofthedomes@gmail.com to verify that we have your email information. Since so many people responded to the survey, we plan to send out additional surveys periodically to find out what you think about other topics! The next survey will ask you questions about the newsletter.

### Results of Survey Number 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your Friends of the Domes membership entitles you to free admission to gardens throughout the nation through a reciprocation program. Are you aware of this membership benefit?</td>
<td>Yes 59%  No 41%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you ever used your Friends of the Domes membership to access other botanical gardens, arboreta, or conservatories?</td>
<td>Yes 33%  No 67%</td>
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<tr>
<td>If you answered yes to question 2, please indicate which gardens you have used your membership to access</td>
<td>Boerner Botanical 57%  Olbrich Botanical 40%  Chicago Botanic Gardens 27%  Rotary Botanical 19%  Anderson Japanese Gardens 16%  Green Bay Botanical 10%  Morton Arboretum 6%  Other: 15 other gardens mentioned</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Note: For a list of the gardens and conservatories your membership gives you access to, please visit www.milwaukeedomes.org. Click Membership at the top and view the list of Member Benefits. Your reciprocity benefit is described in the last bullet.

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### Valentine’s Day, Hearts Under Glass

Find your brand new 2016 calendar and make a big red heart around the 14 in the month of February. Now is the perfect time to get your plans set for Valentine’s Day! Spend your evening at the Domes surrounded by a romantic setting including soft lighting and music. There will be great appetizers, desserts, Champagne, and a complimentary photo. Spend the evening or stop in before or after dinner.

Purchase tickets at the door the evening of the event.

**When:** February 14, 5:30 PM to 9:00 PM  
**Cost:** $10 Per person
Special Holiday Visitors!

When you are planning your visit to the Gingerbread Land show in the Show Dome, don’t miss Santa and Mrs. Claus with the Domes’ beautiful Christmas tree! The tree will be in the Show Dome through the holiday show; Mr. and Mrs. Claus will be at the Domes the following dates and times. Kids can say hello and you can take their picture with our jolly visitors!

**December 12, 2015**
11:00 AM - 12:00 PM in the Conservatory Annex
12:00 PM - 3:00 PM in the Domes

**December 19, 2015**
12:00 PM to 3:00 PM in the Domes

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From the President

By Roger Krawiecki  
President, Friends of the Domes

I would like to thank all of the members who responded to our first online survey. We received a great response so we have decided that we will continue the surveys in order to get to know our members better.

I would also like to thank our volunteers. I recently attended Cupcake Fest at the Domes. This was not a Friends or Domes event. However our dedicated volunteers were at the event helping out in any way they could. It was great seeing so many familiar faces. A thank you also needs to go out to the Domes limited staff. I am amazed at how much they can get done.

The Board of Directors continues to restructure. We now have clearly defined goals for all of our committees. We still have a few open positions for people with key skills to be a part of the board or one of the committees. If you feel that you would have time to help, please reach out to me, and I can get you in contact with the right person.

Progress is still being made with our Beautiful at 50 Campaign. Our goal was set high. The response has been light. We are still accepting donations. However, in our efforts, we have made many contacts, built relationships with foundations, and community organizations, and laid the groundwork for potential grants, sponsorships, and donations in the future.

With each response we learn a little bit more as to what our focus needs to be going forward, and we are confident that our hard work will pay off.

The end of the year is upon us. One of our biggest events of the year is New Year’s Eve Family celebration. This is a perfect event for anyone who is not a night owl. Midnight always comes early at this event, so the little ones can go home to bed. It is a fun event to ring in the New Year.

I would like to wish everyone a safe holiday season. May 2016 be a wonderful year for you and your family. And thank you for your support by being a member of the Friends of the Domes.

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding the Friends or the Domes please reach out to me. You can contact me by phone at 414-384-0161 or by email at rjkrawiecki@gmail.com. Enjoy the fall and get ready for winter.

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Winter Farmer’s Market

First
The Winter Farmer’s Market continues to be very popular! The market features everything from local winter vegetables, to prepared soups, bakery, meat, honey, and mushrooms. Because many vendors sell out early, the market will now close at 12:30 PM.

And Second
Shop the Domes Gift Shop right at the Farmer’s Market for great local goodies—books, mugs, candles, chocolates, and even coffee that would all make great holiday gifts!

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Join us for a Walk — the Mitchell Mile!

As the weather gets less pleasant, take steps to join us for our weekly, indoor, one-mile walk! Join the group for a fun walk filled with discussions about the Domes and varied health topics.

**When:** Mondays, 9:05 AM

**Cost:** Free for Friends’ Members; Regular Domes’ admission prices for non-members
Celebrating A Shared History

To continue our celebration of the Domes’ 50th year, we will be featuring stories of members’ special memories at the Domes. Send your stories and pictures to us at friendsofthedomes@gmail.com or mail them to The Friends of the Domes, Attn: Sally Sullivan, 524 S. Layton Blvd., Milwaukee, WI 53215

This story comes from members Raymond and Greg Konz-Krzyminski...

Our daughter, Jill and her fiancé Chuck wanted a Renaissance themed wedding but more importantly, they wanted it on a special date—10-10-10. Since the Bristol Renaissance Faire closes on Labor Day they were out of luck for that site. However, the Domes was an even more picturesque venue with the Autumn show in the Show Dome. The greeters even dressed up as Renaissance characters to complete the theme!

Save The Date—Very Fairy Princess Day

Join us for the 3rd annual Very Fairy Princess Day! Little princesses, princes, and other mystical dears are welcome to don wings or costumes and enjoy creating their own fairy gardens, learning fairy dances, and participating in other fun activities!

When: April 3, 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
Cost: Free for Friends’ Members; Regular Domes’ admission prices for non-members

(Train Show: Domes Under Attack! continued from cover)

other terrifying, other-worldly beings, (although not too scary, more of a silly homage to the old movie greats).

Parks artist Burt Gross is developing new model buildings this year and will be refurbishing the classic train station to resemble an old-time movie theater. He is also creating the monster sculptures that will be featured in the show. The tracks will be lined with vintage-style movie posters to set the stage for the variety of vignettes and movie scenes that the trains will pass by.

Of course, to fill out these small-scale environments, the Domes’ horticultural staff will be loading the landscape with vibrant azaleas and tons of miniature trees and shrubs. The mixture of these tiny trees and monstrous models will surely be a spectacle that is fun for the entire family!

“Attack of the Giant Monsters!” opens January 16 and runs through March 6, 2016.

www.milwaukeedomes.org
From the Director’s Chair

By Sandy Folaron
Director, Mitchell Park Domes

Winter is now upon us and with that a very busy holiday season and the long awaited upcoming Attack of the Giant Monsters! train show! This means thousands of visitors and guests coming in with friends and families to experience the conservatory. Special events and festivals all play a very important role for the Domes. They bring in visitors who might not think of visiting the Domes (think Steampunk Day or Very Fairy Princess Day!) and allows the guests to experience the facility in a different way. Our ethnic festivals are all community based partnerships staged by hundreds of volunteers who give generously of their time, talent, and energy. Visitors enjoy a unique experience and revenues increase for both the Domes and the FOD’s Gift Shop! Visitors also become members and bring others to the facility. This ripple effect is what keeps us alive and growing. It also introduces a new generation of supporters to the Conservatory.

Where else can you visit Poland, Germany, Turkey, Ireland, and China on a weekend? Where else can you bring your Valentine for a night of ambiance, enjoy a day of fairies and princesses, dress up as a Steampunker, enjoy a spring art show, get tips on Green Living, and ring in the New Year with a family oriented celebration? You guessed it, the Domes! Have a wonderful holiday and a great and prosperous New Year!

Don’t Miss Green Living Festival April 16, 2016

Our 9th annual Green Living Festival will feature over 50 activities to celebrate the Domes 50th anniversary! Activities include local food sampling, viewing and learning about farm animals, table talks, and an exclusive fashion show from a New York Eco-Fashion designer. Take a special tour of the tropical Dome to celebrate our 50th anniversary. Attendees can also participate in DIY workshops, view cooking demonstrations, and walk a mile as part of the “For the Health of It” clinic.

Activities throughout the day; fashion show at 1:00 PM. For more information, visit www.countyparks.com.

Winter Workshops Offered by the Education Center

The Education Center is pleased to announce four special workshops this winter. The fee for each workshop is $8 for Friends of the Domes Members or $15 for non-members [fee for non-members includes Domes admission]. Please pre-register by contacting Paula Zamiatowski in the Education Center at Paula.Zamiatowski@milwaukeecountywi.gov or 1-414-257-5603.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have a Holly Jolly Cactus</td>
<td>Saturday, December 5</td>
<td>9:30 AM to 11:30 AM</td>
<td>Domes Education Center and Transition House</td>
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<tr>
<td>Learn the best care practices for your succulents and cacti from Mitchell Park Domes Horticulturist Marian French and leave with a starter plant for home.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orchid Care Made Fun</td>
<td>Saturday, December 19</td>
<td>9:30 AM to 11:30 AM</td>
<td>Domes Education Center and Transition House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get your care questions answered by Mitchell Park Domes Horticulturist Lillian Torres while learning about orchid mystique. Orchids will be available in the gift shop for purchase.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growing Gourmet Sprouts for Your Family</td>
<td>Saturday, January 16</td>
<td>9:30 AM to 11:30 AM</td>
<td>Domes Education Center and Greenhouse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Join the Mitchell Park Domes Greenhouse Horticulturist Clay Gosse to start your very own mini-microgreen indoor garden.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have Fun Planning your 2016 Family Garden</td>
<td>Saturday, February 27</td>
<td>9:30 AM to 11:30 AM</td>
<td>Domes Education Center and Transition House</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thinking about what to plant in your yard is a great way to overcome cabin fever with Victory Garden Initiative member Paula Zamiatowski.</td>
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Kids Corner: Gardening in the Winter Months—It can be done!

By Paula Zamiatowski  
Conservatory Educator

Here in Wisconsin, having snow cover through a cold winter actually helps our plants. It insulates the ground from the worst cold and protects plants’ roots. But we know the sub-zero temperatures can be tough for kids stuck inside! Here are a few winter projects that will keep kids thinking about growing plants (food) and get them through to spring.

Window Gardens
If you have a window with full southern sun exposure, why not try a window garden with cacti or orchids? Learn how to care for them at one of our workshops—check out the Cactus Care workshop on December 5th or Orchid Care Made Fun on December 19th (see page 5) and share what you learn with your children. Kids also enjoy watching fast growing indoor bulbs like Hyacinth, Paperwhites, or Amaryllis as they bloom into fragrant plants. Bulb growing kits are inexpensive and can be found at most gardening and large hardware stores. Just read the directions on the box, set on a windowsill, water, and watch it grow.

Growing Sprouts?
Sprouts contain lots of vitamins and nutrients. Seeds that are good for sprouting include beans, peas, broccoli, sunflowers, and radishes. If you’re not sure if you want to try it on your own, sign up for the Education Center workshop, Growing Gourmet Sprouts for Your Family, on Saturday morning, January 16th (see page 5). Kids are welcome!

Seeds, Catalogs, and Possibilities!
Once winter peaks in late January or February, spring is right around the corner. Have the kids help you look through seed catalogs and your garden photos. This is a great way to keep the excitement for your seasonal garden going during the dreary months and to get your kids gardening imaginations sprouting!

Monday Storytime Begins its 5th Year!
If you have preschoolers, join Conservatory Educator Paula Zamiatowski for age-appropriate stories each Monday morning at 10:00 AM. Each week, the stories and activities are focused on a theme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Storytime Theme</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>December 7</td>
<td>Wisconsin Animals</td>
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<tr>
<td>December 14</td>
<td>Penguins and Polar Bears</td>
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<td>December 21</td>
<td>Winter</td>
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<td>December 28</td>
<td>The Mitten by Jan Brett</td>
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<td>January 4</td>
<td>Animals and Plants in Winter</td>
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<td>January 11</td>
<td>Snow</td>
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<td>January 18</td>
<td>Owls</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 25</td>
<td>Trains</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 1</td>
<td>Ground Hogs</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 8</td>
<td>Trains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 15</td>
<td>Deserts</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 22</td>
<td>Trains</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 29</td>
<td>Rainforests</td>
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Girl Scout Juniors Class Offered

In addition to the learning opportunities for adults, the Education Center is offering a special Girl Scout learning experience. This program was specially designed to accommodate troops under 20 with an opportunity to meet other scouts. Girl Scout Juniors will participate in a large group guided tour that will fulfill most Gardener and flowers badge requirements while they enjoy a day filled with fun activities at the Domes.
To register, please call Paula Zamiatowski in the Education Center at 1-414-257-5603

When: February 13, 9:30 AM to 12:00 PM with a break. Please bring a snack.

Cost: $6 per Scout; $8 per adult

Participants in a Girl Scout workshop this fall toured the Domes and planted their own Spider Plants and Desert Plants
Vanilla, the Most Useful Orchid

By Marian French
Horticulturist—Desert Dome

If you have visited the Tropical Dome, you probably saw it: a long, rambling mass of vines climbing the trunk of a tree in a zig-zag pattern or hanging down from the branches, its greenish-white flowers the only clue that it is an orchid. But it’s not just this vine-like appearance that sets vanilla apart from its other orchid cousins. It is also the only orchid truly useful to humans on a grand scale.

The first people to use vanilla were the natives of ancient Mexico, most notably the Aztecs, who added it to their chocolate drink. When European explorers “discovered” chocolate in Central America, vanilla came along with it as an ingredient in the recipe. It was not until 1602 that an English pharmacist discovered that this new flavor could stand on its own in candy. By the 18th century, vanilla was being labeled a medicine – it was an aphrodisiac, a cure for stomach ulcers, and a treatment to “stimulate dullards.”

In the tropical forests of Central and South America a specific insect pollinates the vanilla vine’s flowers, producing beans. Early attempts to grow it outside of Mexico failed to produce fruit because this pollinator was not present. A clever worker on an African plantation devised a method of hand-pollinating each flower with a small, sharp stick. Today this is still the only way vanilla is produced commercially, workers go out every morning looking for newly-opened flowers and hand-pollinate them. The average worker can pollinate a thousand flowers in a day. The flowers then take 4-9 months to ripen.

The curing process is also labor-intensive. Immediately after harvest, the beans are dipped in boiling water to stop further ripening. They are laid outside, where each day they dry in the sun, and each night they are covered by blankets to “sweat.” During a 2-6 month period of this special, care, enzyme reactions occur developing the flavor we know as vanilla.

Because of all the work and time that goes into vanilla production, it is no wonder that vanilla is the second-most expensive spice in the world. It is also no wonder that people would try create cheap imitations. In 1858, the essence of vanilla flavor, known as vanillin, was isolated in a chemist’s lab, and by 1874 it was being mass-produced. Today, artificial vanillin can be synthesized from such delicious sources as paper pulp, sassafras oil, and coal tar. Tonka beans, found in the American tropics, can be used to produce another type of cheap vanillin but because this extract contains coumarin (a liver-damaging substance) it is illegal in the United States.

Stick to real, honest vanilla extract - it beats the artificial in taste tests every time. As you savor it in your next scoop of ice cream, take a moment to think about everything that had to happen for that little burst of vanilla to touch your tongue and enjoy the incredible flavor!

Vanilla beans drying in the sun
524 S. Layton Blvd.
Milwaukee, WI 53215

Phone: 414-257-5608
E-mail: fod@milwaukeedomes.org
www.milwaukeedomes.org

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**Upcoming Events**

November 7—April 9, 2016 ................................ Winter Farmer’s Market**
December 31 ...................................... New Year’s Eve Family Celebration*
January 14—March 10 ................................. Music Under Glass***
January 23 ........................................... Poland Under Glass Festival
January 30-31 ......................................... Chinese New Year’s Celebration
February 6-7 ........................... Collectible All-Scale Train Exhibits
February 14 ...................... Hearts Under Glass Valentines Night Out*
February 20 ........................................ Turkey Under Glass Festival
February 21 .................................... Steampunk Day
February 28 ................................... Bonsai Silhouette Show
March 5 .............................................. Germany Under Glass Festival
March 6 ........................................... Irish Family Day Festival
March 12 ...................... Woman’s Health and Happiness Expo
April 3 ................................. Very Fairy Princess Day
April 16 ........................................ Green Living Festival

*Special admission rates may apply
**Saturdays 9:00 AM to 12:30 PM
***Thursdays 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM