

SUMMER 2023

INSIDE THE DOMES

Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory



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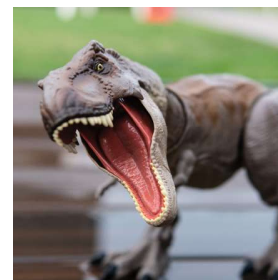


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NEWS FROM THE DOMES



Spring has finally sprung, and we are excited to bring you another edition of *In-side The Domes*. Here are a few important updates:

Membership

- The member lane is now closed for the slow season, reopening this fall. It is easy to know whether the member lane is operating—just look for the large sign in front of the automatic door. When the member lane is not operating, be sure to check-in at the fee booth.
- Interested in renewing your membership during your visit? The Gift Shop staff can do that in just a few minutes.

Education

- The Education Center is open to the public from 9:30AM-2:30PM on weekends (unless volunteer staffing is unavailable). During the week, the

Ed Center has limited public hours due to field trips.

- This year, we have welcomed more than 4,500 field trip students (a 100% increase from last year)! Interested in your child or grandchild attending a school field trip at The Domes? Email FOD@MilwaukeeDomes.org with the teacher's name and email. Our staff will reach out.

Plants and Facility

- The next show, *DinoDomes* launches June 10, 2023.
- We often are asked how many people visit The Domes. Although the number changes based on the weather (cold days are busier), we often welcome 20,000+ visitors *each month* during the winter.

Events

- Art in the Green was wildly successful with 30+ artists

and 5,000+ attendees. This event, which always takes place the last weekend in April, raised more than \$40,000 to support facility and plant enhancements as well as educational programming at The Domes. Thanks to all who attended!

- The Symposium takes place Thursday, September 14, 2023. Learn more on page 3.
- Grooving Under Glass takes place Thursday, September 28, 2023, and will feature local musicians and food. Be sure to register soon at www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/GUG as it is likely to sell out.

Other

- Be sure to visit the new online gift shop for great gift ideas. All proceeds benefit educational programming at The Domes. Visit www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/shoponline for more

The Domes Receives Donated Breadfruit Trees

This April, two breadfruit trees found their new home at The Domes, thanks to a very special donation from the Trees That Feed Foundation. This new addition to our collection will help members and visitors learn about the breadfruit plant and the important work of the foundation.

Mike and Mary McLaughlin started the Trees That Feed Foundation 15 years ago out of concern for the environment. Mary wanted to plant trees. Together they realized that they could solve multiple problems if they planted fruit trees. Breadfruit trees provide nutritious complex-carbohydrate rich fruits that can be prepared in many different ways and even processed into flour. When



Mary Braunreiter, Horticulturist at The Domes with Mike McLaughlin, Co-Founder, Trees That Feed Foundation

roasted, a mature breadfruit tastes and smells like warm baked bread. It can be used like a potato in many recipes (including soups and stews) and mashed or even fried to make breadfruit French fries.

The fruit can also be sold to help provide sustainable income to

farmers. Since 2008, more than 300,000 trees have been donated to farmers and groups in more than 20 countries.

We are excited to teach our visitors about the wondrous breadfruit plant. We are grateful for the donation! ■

EDUCATION AT THE DOMES

Educational Symposium—September 14

How Policies Trickle Down and Impact Access to Clean, Safe Water

The Friends of the Domes' annual educational symposium explores topics important to our community. This year, the focus is on access to safe, clean water. "We are pleased to once again bring a stellar lineup of thought leaders," said Christa Beall Diefenbach, Executive Director, Friends of the Domes. "Through speed sessions and keynote addresses we will unravel why access to safe and clean water is one of the most pressing issues facing our state." ■

Presenters: Midwest Environmental Advocates, Sweet Water, and Milwaukee Riverkeeper

Location: Mitchell Park Domes Greenhouse • **Date:** Thursday, Sept. 14, 2023, 3:00-6:30PM

Includes one-hour networking reception. Cash bar available; light appetizers will be provided.

Admission: \$18 Members, \$22 General Admission. www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/Symposium

Meet Horticulturist Michelle Pinnola



My name is Michelle. I am the “floating” horticulturist at the Mitchell Park Domes. I help in all three domes. From spring through fall, I also care for the outdoor perennial gardens. Outdoor gardening includes cutting back dead material in spring and watering and weeding as

necessary in the summer. There isn't much work in the fall as the gardens were designed to leave the dead stalks, leaves and grasses. Through winter, they provide visual interest and food and shelter for insects and small animals.

I became interested in horticulture just as I was about to graduate with a degree in social work. I had an epiphany that plants are fascinating!

At home I have about 50 plants. I really like philodendrons and vines, but I also am excited about the idea of growing food. Plants are a source of remedy and food that is all around us.

I have realized many people have plant blindness; they don't

pause to see the plants and nature all around them. I love that people come to The Domes for the plants. When I talk to visitors, I hope to excite them about plants and to get them to notice nature—not just in The Domes but everywhere outside.

When school groups come, I provide opportunities for students to interact with plants—to touch and water them. Teenagers will fight for the opportunity to water the plants!

The Friends members should know that there is no such thing as a “brown” thumb. Just learn how to care for one plant at a time. If you learn about one plant a day, you will know about 365 plants at the end of a year! ■

GIFT SHOP GALORE

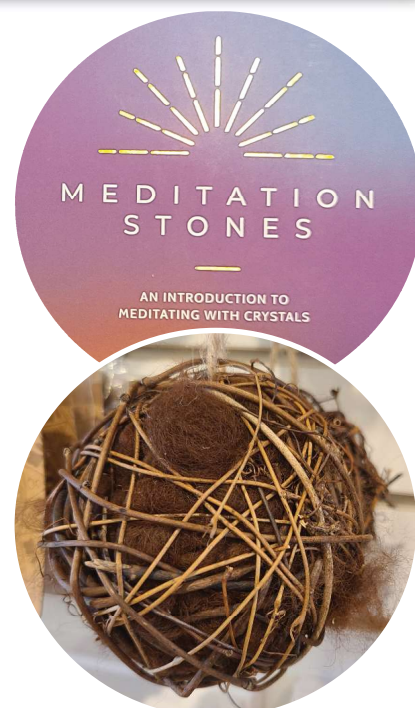
People of all ages, from all backgrounds tell us that a trip to The Domes restores and calms. Our gift shop carries a wonderful assortment of gifts, including books and natural body care items, that will help you to nurture that calm feeling.

Plants, bird feeders and “bird nesting balls” that attract humming birds will bring nature to your own home and yard.

Give the gift of a Friends of the Domes membership to ensure that others in your life can enjoy

the restorative benefits of nature at The Domes.

For more information about gift memberships, scan the QR code below or go to www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/membership. ■



Journey to the DinoDomes: June 10–September 10, 2023

Deep in a living plant museum, the age of dinosaurs will dawn again! Find the dinosaurs that have hatched throughout the lush flora of the Mitchell Park Domes. Roam with the massive creatures among the prehistoric plants and dare to pose for a picture with the raptors. Uncover ancient fossils in the Desert Dome and encounter our largest dinosaur, Brachiosaurus, in the jungle of the Tropical Dome. But be on your guard—Jurassic times call for Jurassic measures. ■



A few of the plants you will find in the Show Dome this summer: Coleusaurus (LEFT); White Begonia (RIGHT)

VOLUNTEER CORNER

Volunteer Highlight—Linda Carlson



Linda Carlson spent a lifetime traveling and learning about other cultures, but when she thinks about the most special and fascinating places in the world, she doesn't have to travel far. One of those is our

own Mitchell Park Domes!

"My husband and I were living and teaching in Melbourne, Australia. One Sunday we were reading the newspaper," Linda explains. "Right there was a spread about The Domes. The headline read, 'This is something you should not miss'."

In Japan, Linda saw a similar article praising The Domes, "How funny that so many people in Milwaukee have not been to The Domes in 20 years and yet the rest of the world is so eager to visit."

Linda and her husband, Steve, moved to Milwaukee in the 70s. Both teachers and both nature aficionados, Linda and Steve used The Domes as a refuge from the frustrations of their

day. They soon joined Friends of the Domes and raised their children in the gardens.

Linda is delighted to volunteer as it gives her more time in The Domes. She helps with events, the Ed Center, school field trips, and clearing and pruning the gardens. She also volunteers for the new SPARK! program offered at The Domes for people with memory loss.

Just since January of this year, Linda has volunteered 40 hours. When asked why someone should volunteer for Friends of the Domes, Linda says, "There truly is something for everyone. You don't have to be a botanist." Linda encourages others to get involved and dig into their love of nature. ■

FOR THE LOVE OF NATURE

The Restorative Power of Nature

Milwaukee-area counselor and social worker, Tia Oestreich, shared with Friends of the Domes how nature is restorative to people's emotional and physical well-being. A great reminder to get out and enjoy nature!

Tia Oestreich loves to be outdoors. Even as a little girl, she preferred to be barefoot in the grass. Now, she lives in Milwaukee and loves getting outside to walk her dog twice a day. It helps her to feel grounded and calmer, especially when she can leave her cell phone at home.

At work, if the weather is nice, she will ask clients if they would like to do the counseling session outside, sitting or even walking. She encourages her clients to get outside and to bring the outdoors inside. "My spider plants and jade plants are always propagating. I share plants with my clients, which gives them a connection to nature and something to take care of. This is a great way to support their mental wellness."

Tia shares five ways that nature can be restorative:

Nature can remind us of the temporary state of our feelings or circumstances; nothing is permanent. We see this in nature with seasons passing, plants growing, colors changing. We are reminded that even the

most difficult days or most uncomfortable feelings will pass.

Nature can remind us of a greater power, be it science or God (however you see it), and remove some of the pressure and responsibility we put on ourselves. Trees bud and bloom in spring and summer. Tulips spend winter underground but know just when to sprout. Animals and bugs go about their cycles using their intuition. Nature can remind us that we are not fully in control, and we can trust this greater power.

Nature provides us an opportunity to be more aware and mindful. My own practice of growing plants has helped me to slow down and pay attention. I notice when leaves are wilting and my plant is thirsty or if there are new leaves forming. Feeding the birds outside my house has helped me to pay more attention to their songs and noises in the mornings.

We live in a world that has no shortage of stimulation; so often we are in front of a screen or multitasking and not paying full attention to any one thing. However, if we put down our phones or electronics and focus solely on our plants or our yard or our walk, we feel more at peace.

Nature provides an opportunity to create and grow. It is gratify-



ing to create and have a tangible product for your effort. Raising and caring for plants provides a way to create and grow something beautiful and sometimes even edible. We can experience pride and joy at the results of our work.

Nature helps ground ourselves and our emotions. When I feel overwhelmed with an emotion or sensation, nature helps me return to a calmer state. A practice used for grounding engages the five senses: you can find three things to see, three things to touch, three things to smell, three things to hear, and, possibly, three things to taste. This activity helps to bring your heightened state "back down to earth." I think about the earthy smell of dirt and allow it to ground me. Nature is full of things that can engage our senses; we just need to slow down to see it. ■

ALL THINGS MEMBERSHIP

Member Highlight— Juanita Ramos

“For 8 months, as I healed, the Mitchell Park Domes was my sanctuary. I listened to the plants, to the songs of the birds. Every plant has a message of its own if you observe, listen and smell. That was my medicine.”

This spring, Friends member, Juanita Ramos, shared with us her powerful story of healing and the role that The Domes played in her journey.

Juanita endured many years of trauma and domestic abuse. One day, she felt so threatened and scared that she jumped off the second story balcony of her home to escape. Three women heard her crying out in pain. They helped her to leave her abusive situation. After the fall, her foot was seriously injured, and she was not able to walk. Her doctors were amazed that she was not killed or paralyzed.

After surgery and a long hospital stay, she returned to her home, near Mitchell Park. Even though the person who abused her was no longer there, she felt like she needed to escape the walls that held so many difficult memories. She would ease herself carefully down the stairs and slowly walk to The Domes.

Slowly she healed—physically, mentally, and emotionally.



“I would spend whole days enjoying the colors and the scents; it was meditation. In the Tropical Dome, there are so many plants that reminded me of my home in Puerto Rico. It was like a refuge for my mind. There are many references to trees and plants in the bible. I was calmed by how carefree the fish were.

In the Desert Dome, I heard God say, ‘you might feel like you are alone in the desert, but I am here with you.’ I could feel that I was not alone. Like an orchestra, the birds, the sound of the water, and the sound of the plants all came together. It made me feel love, health and growth. The music made me realize that I wasn’t going to stay injured and in pain. For 8 months The Domes was my sanctuary.”

Juanita saw that each plant, with its different color and

height, was displaying joy, strength and beauty, all things she was striving to see in herself. With each visit, she made progress on her journey to become a happier, stronger woman.

“The Domes healed my mind and my body. Not therapy or doctors—having nature inside, indoors, that is what healed me. Once your mind starts to heal, your body can heal, too.”

Now, Juanita’s backyard is also a natural sanctuary. It is full of roses, lavender and other plants. She gets together with other women regularly to pray and enjoy the nature in her own backyard. And, she still visits The Domes often. For the healing and light that it brought, Juanita believes that The Domes is the most special place in Milwaukee. She adds, “I thank God every day for The Domes.” ■



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TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE EDUCATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

September 14, 2023, 3:30—
6:30PM

The focus of this year's symposium will be regional, statewide and local policies that impact our access to safe, fresh water. Learn more at www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/Symposium



TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE GROOVING UNDER GLASS

September 28, 2023, 6:00—
9:00PM

An evening of live music, local food and fun at The Domes! Learn more and purchase tickets at www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/GUG



TICKETS NOW AVAILABLE DÍA DE LOS MUERTOS

October 27, 2023, 6:00—9:00PM

Don't miss our family-friendly Day of the Dead celebration! Learn more and purchase tickets at www.MilwaukeeDomes.org/DOD