Wild Wonderful Winter
What better time than winter to escape the cold for a stroll through our conservatory? It’s a perfect tonic for the winter blahs. Be sure to visit during our winter exhibit, “Wild Wonderful Winter,” which runs through Jan. 17. We’re open New Year’s Day—and don’t forget our free admission to the conservatory on Wednesdays from noon–8 pm. Also, school’s out Feb. 20-28. Join us for our “Get a Jump on Spring—Indoor Gardens for Kids workshop Feb. 23. For details see page 5.

A-Mazing Labyrinth
This spring, be sure to visit the recently completed labyrinth in the meadow next to the Helen V. Smith Woodland Wildflower Garden. This elaborate structure, based on the classical designs of Greece and Rome, will provide a place to wander and meditate away from the busier parts of Matthaei. The labyrinth’s path will be made of crushed stone and the matrix will be planted with buffalo grass, a turf grass native to western states and frequently used as a lawn substitute on dry sites.

The Healing Green
The Michigan Horticultural Therapy Association (MHTA) is hosting a regional networking meeting on Sun., Feb. 21, from 1–3 pm, room 125 at Matthaei for those interested in the development of horticulture and related activities as a therapeutic and rehabilitative medium. Whether you’re already working with a therapeutic garden program or would like to get started, this group will be sure to offer some best practices, inspiration, and ongoing encouragement. For more information about horticultural therapy efforts in Michigan visit www.michiganhta.org or call 734.647.8528.

Smooth Sailing
After years of bumps, dust, and ruts, and stones, members of and visitors to Matthaei can now drive on smooth asphalt and park in clearly marked spots. The previous gravel drive had become quite compacted, interfering with porosity. The new drive is smooth and easier to plow in the winter, and—in a plus for the environment—a bioswale will intercept and filter runoff from our larger parking lot. Take note as well of the handsome new crosswalks bisecting the drive in various locations.

Having Your Garden—and Eating It, Too
Great ideas have a way of catching fire. That’s especially the case with our Edible Estate, an experimental garden planted in the spring of 2009. Children in particular were captivated by the Edible Estate’s whimsical design and by its seed-to-harvest abundance. Adults, too, found a lot to like in the way the garden combined the conceptual and the practical. Best of all: by the end of harvest time over 800 pounds of fruits and vegetables from the garden had been donated to Food Gatherers, a local nonprofit that provides food for community programs in need.

Transitions
Two veteran staff members left MBGNA recently. After 26 years at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, Mike Hommel, Superintendent of Buildings and Grounds, retired. Mike was the calming voice and the go-to guy who planned for all scenarios. His words of encouragement and tireless effort helped us all work more effectively. Thank you, Mike, and best wishes to you and Judith in your new home! Mechanic Bob Schuyler, who had been here for 27 years, retired last fall. Bob was our Mr. Fix-It and we always appreciated his ready smile and sense of humor. Best wishes, Bob! Also, please welcome Andy Sell, who joined us as our development associate and membership coordinator (see story on page 7).

Get Involved—Volunteer!
It really does take a village of volunteers to keep us running smoothly, and we welcome new and veteran volunteers in every season. Volunteers are especially needed for major events such as our Spring Plant Sale coming up in May 2010. New volunteer orientations are offered every month, with additional training required for some assignments. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 734.647.8528 for a volunteer application.

Children’s Garden a Huge Hit
If you build it, they will come. That wisdom was abundantly clear last September at the grand opening of the children’s garden. Eleven hundred-plus visitors thronged Matthaei on a perfect late-summer day to delight in the garden’s many features, such as the music section, water feature, grows garden, and others. To all who helped make the children’s garden such a success—members and donors, interns, staff, volunteers—a huge Thank You!
Plants for Our Times and Places

The role of the St. Louis Codes

By David Michener

When we make choices about environmental impact we’re accustomed to considering our carbon footprint, the Energy Star ratings of appliances, the estimated miles per gallon of our vehicles, and other measures. And well we should. But far less obvious is how to assess the consequences of our horticultural and landscape plant selections. Indeed, understanding that different plants are part of the problem—and the solution—is a major current issue.

Plants play well-established and beneficial key roles in any wild or human-modified system: they take up carbon, release oxygen, make food, regulate the water cycle, and modify soils and climates. Likewise, in human-dominated landscapes, plants provide psychological benefits, a sense of place, and a range of intangible values that impact the quality of life.

But some plants disrupt the systems into which they’re introduced. And even if they seem as good as green, the harm they bring to ecosystem functions, and to human use of the larger landscape, can be severe. It’s one thing when a weedy tree grows in Brooklyn by colonizing hostile sites. It’s an entirely different matter when the species escapes and dislodges multiple other species in areas with more complex ecosystems, be it an urban park or wilder ecosystem.

Rethinking what to plant helps us to appreciate how plants spread from our garden to the broader landscape and to evaluate the benefits and risks of those choices. The best plants meet the ornamental, societal, and ecological roles of a site and region. These are the plants for our times and places—the ones we can use as part of personal best practices.

How to learn about these plants? The voluntary codes of conduct for controlling invasive plants, commonly called the “St. Louis Codes” (centerforplantconservation.org/invasives/codesN.html) are an excellent introduction to the steps each of us can take in reducing invasive plants in our communities. (Or visit the City of Ann Arbor website, a2gov.org, and type in “Invasive Plants” in the search field.)

MBGNA is proud to follow the Code for Botanical Gardens and Arboreta, and will be formally adopting it as part of our operational procedures. Key parts are the use of noninvasive species, our continued removal of invasive ornamental plants from our collections and public activities, and their management as a priority in our natural areas.

You, too, can participate by reviewing the voluntary code for the public. Then ask the nurseries where you shop or the landscape professionals you hire if they are aware of the codes and are working with them. Together, we’ll all make a great difference.
Winter 2010 Community Education

Monday Vinyasa Yoga at the Gardens
2 six-week sessions; Mondays noon–1 pm; auditorium at Matthaei
For students with an understanding of yoga fundamentals who enjoy a flowing sequence of postures coordinated with music. Class conducted at a moderate pace, with emphasis on the integration of breath and movement to increase strength and flexibility. Use the west entrance and bring a yoga mat and bath-sized towel. Instructor: Janine Bennett. Fee: MBGNA members and U-M students $48; nonmembers $60.

Winter I Mondays, Jan 11, 18, 25; Feb 1, 8, 15 #10-AE-01
(no class Feb. 22 and March 2)
Winter II Mondays, March 8, 15, 22, 29; April 5, 12 #10-AE-02

Winter Wednesday AM Hiker
Three Wednesdays: Jan 27; Feb 3 & 10; 9 am–noon; various locations
Join Ellen Weatherbee on exhilarating outdoor winter hikes that focus on plants, habitats, and the effects of cold on natural environments. Appropriate clothing and footwear will be emphasized, making any winter situation comfortable. First session meets at the west lobby of Matthaei. Fee: MBGNA members and U-M Students $86; nonmembers $108.00. #10-AE-04

Walking to Wildflowers
Wed. April 21, 4:30 to 6:00pm; Matthaei Botanical Gardens
Join staff horticulturist Connie Crancer on the first of a series of hikes at Matthaei to seek out seasonal blooms and fruits found along our trails and natural areas. Fee: Free but registration is required. #10-AE-15

The Local Table
Back by popular demand for 2010: The Local Table, a series of classes, workshops, and field trips that encourage us to take a new look at where our food comes from. The classes below represent our winter 2010 lineup. Visit our website in the spring of 2010 for more exciting classes or for more information: mbgna.umich.edu

Growing Shiitake Mushrooms
Sat., Jan. 23, 1:30–3:30 pm, Matthaei Botanical Gardens
Learn to grow this popular and versatile mushroom on oak logs in a hands-on workshop that takes participants step-by-step through the process of mushroom inoculation of cut logs. Participants will inoculate their own shiitake log to take home. Workshop led by local mushroom grower Shane Mulholland. Fee: MBGNA members and U-M students $36; nonmembers $45. #10-AE-03

Growing Mushrooms on Paper
Sat., Feb. 20, 1:30–3:30 pm, Matthaei Botanical Gardens
Learn how to utilize materials like unwanted phone books to grow delicious and healthy mushrooms—the planet’s premier recyclers—in your own home. All participants will receive individual mushroom-growing kits for growing mushrooms at home. Workshop led by local mushroom grower Shane Mulholland. Fee: MBGNA members and U-M students $36; nonmembers $45. #10-AE-05

Yard Hens
Sat., Feb. 27, 10 am–noon, Matthaei Botanical Gardens
Judy and Bob Dluzen, who have a flock of fifty-five hens at home, will explain the basics of raising chickens, including where to get chicks, how to care for them, what they eat, how much room they need, and potential problems. Fee: MBGNA members and U-M students $10; nonmembers $12. #10-AE-06

Chicken Coops
Sat., March 6, 10 am–noon, Matthaei Botanical Gardens
Shelter from the elements, nesting spots, and safety all need to be considered when building a coop for your home flock. Learn about chicken-coop construction with yard-hen expert Bob Dluzen. Fee: MBGNA members and U-M students $10; nonmembers $12. #10-AE-07

Growing Oyster Mushrooms on Logs
Sat., March 20, Workshop, 1:30–3:30 pm, Matthaei Botanical Gardens
Delicate oyster mushrooms, native to many temperate forests, can be cultivated using natural logs, straw, and different paper substrates. In this workshop you’ll grow oyster mushrooms on wood using the totem pole method. Participants will learn about the process of inoculation and then take their mushroom totem pole home. Workshop led by local mushroom grower Shane Mulholland. Fee: MBGNA members and U-M students $36; nonmembers $45. #10-AE-09

Raised Bed and Trellis Construction
Sat., March 27, 10 am–noon, Matthaei Botanical Gardens
Experts Bob Dluzen and Andy Sell demonstrate how to construct space-saving raised beds and trellises for your garden. Fee: MBGNA members and U-M students $36; nonmembers: $12. #10-AE-10

Eating Well on a Shrinking Planet
Wed., April 7, 7–9 pm, Matthaei Botanical Gardens
U-M Professor Catherine Badgley talks about the challenges of feeding the human population equitably and sustainably now and into the future—which can only happen with changes in the American diet. Discussion will focus on how to effect such changes. Fee, but registration is requested. #10-AE-11
Growing Mushrooms on Stumps
Sat., April 10, 1:30-3:30 pm, Matthaei Botanical Gardens
Workshop participants will learn the different varieties of mushrooms that can be grown on stumps—one of the best platforms for growing gourmet mushrooms—and the process of inoculating a stump. All participants will receive their own mushroom-growing kit to recreate at home what they've learned in class. Workshop led by local mushroom grower Shane Mulholland. Fee: MBGNA members and U-M students $36; nonmembers $45. #10-AE-12

Sandhill Crane Vineyards Tour
Thurs., April 22, 6:30-8:30 pm, 4724 Walz Rd., Jackson, MI 49201
This April—Michigan Wine Month—take a field trip to Sandhill Crane Vineyards in Jackson to sample their delicious wines and learn about the wine-making process. Preregistration required. Fee: Tour is free and takes place at Sandhill Crane Vineyards. #10-AE-14

For the Interest of Bees
Second Tuesday of each month beginning in January, 7–9 pm, Room 125, Matthaei Botanical Gardens
This monthly meeting is designed for anyone interested in learning about the life of honeybees, their survivability, their habitat, how they fit into the community, and how to keep them. Winter kick-off meeting will cover the topic “So you want to be a beekeeper?” Please contact Richard (rimendel@sbcglobal.net) or Marin (mperusek@ymail.com) if you have any questions. Free; drop-in.

Westwind Milling Co Tour
Sun., April 11, 2–3:30 pm, Westwind Milling Co.
8572 Silver Lake Rd.
Linden, MI 48451
Gather the family and take a hands-on field trip to historic Westwind Milling Co. nearby in picturesque Linden, where you’ll learn about the milling process, the history of the mill, and the significance of local food. Price for the field trip includes Westwind’s bran or nonbran muffins and organic apple cider. Children will also receive an activity book. Please register at MBGNA and pay at the mill. Fee (collected at the Westwind Mill): Children under 5 free; all others, including MBGNA members and U-M students, $5. #10-AE-13

Here’s How to Register for Classes (see registration form below):

Phone: 734.647.7600 (During Conservatory hours: Tues & Thurs-Sun., 10 am-4:30 pm; Wed., 10 am-8 pm.)
Fax: 734.998.6205. Send completed registration form with credit card information.
Mail: MBGNA - University of Michigan
1800 N. Dixboro Road
Ann Arbor MI 48105
On-line: www.mbgna.umich.edu
In Person: Stop by the front desk at Matthaei during Conservatory hours: Tues & Thurs-Sun., 10 am-4:30 pm; Wed., 10 am-8 pm.

Make checks payable to “MBGNA.”

Note: Adult education classes are open to those at least 16 years of age. Classes meet as designated at Matthaei Botanical Gardens or Nichols Arboretum. Classes may meet off-site (call for location and directions if you miss a class). Field trips may be physically challenging—call if you have questions about the difficulty of any class or trip. Classes are popular and fill quickly—early registration is suggested.

Are you a member?
To become a member of Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum, send a separate check made out to “MBGNA.” Fees are $55 for a family membership, $45 for a single membership, and $20 for University students. (See form below.)

Refunds: Refunds given if MBGNA cancels class. Sorry, no refunds for classes with fees of $5 and less; no refunds for no-shows. For more information, visit the registration page on our website: lsa.umich.edu/mbg/learn/registration.asp

Name: ____________________________________ Phone: __________________________
Email: ____________________________________ Parent’s name (if student is under 18): __________________________
Address: ____________________________________ City: __________________________ State: ______ Zip: __________

☐ Member of Friends of MBGNA (Member Exp. Date _____________)
☐ Non-member
☐ U-M student: (Student ID Number _____________ ) Is this your first class? ☐ Y ☐ N

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List additional classes on a separate sheet and include with original form.

Total

Payment: ☐ Check made payable to: MBGNA
☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover
☐ American Express

Card # __________________________ Exp. Date __________
Cardholder Signature ________________
Take a Break from Winter
School’s out Feb. 20-28. That’s a good reason for a midwinter Conservatory getaway to the Botanical Gardens! Be sure to take advantage of our admission-free Wednesdays all winter, noon–8 pm. Or join us for our “Get a Jump on Spring” workshop Feb. 23, and build your own indoor garden.

Winter Adventure Saturdays!
What better way to discover, learn, and play? Our Adventure Saturdays make winter mornings fun.
All Saturday classes are 10 am–noon and cost $5.00 per child which includes admission to the Conservatory, activities, and materials. Preregistration required.

Winter Escape
Sat., Jan. 23, 10 am-noon
Say ‘Hello’ to summer in our conservatory, the perfect spot for a mini winter getaway, where you’ll go on a scavenger hunt, build a terrarium, and take a guided tour of the conservatory. #10-YE-01

Hot Chocolate
Sat., Feb. 13, 10 am-noon
Learn all about the amazing story of chocolate, the tasty food that changed the world. Find the chocolate tree, vanilla orchid, and other treats we love to eat. Then sample and make your own chocolate treats to take home. #10-YE-02

Fanciful Fairy Gardens
Sat., March 13, 10 am-noon
Flower fairies call our conservatory home, hiding away in flowers and all the nooks and crannies. During our Flower Fairy Day you’ll search for fairies in the conservatory. After your fairy quest, build your very own fairy garden to take home! #10-YE-04

Art That Keeps You Smart
Sat., March 20, 10 am-noon
Express yourself—and explore how creating art in nature can actually improve your brain power. Learn about the color wheel during a color scavenger hunt, sketching on the trails, and watercolor painting activities! Families will leave with sketchbooks, cards, and new art skills to keep their minds sharp. #10-YE-05

To register call 734.647.7600 or go to mbgna.umich.edu

Close-up of an image: If you can’t wait for spring, visit Matthaei and create your own container garden with indoor plants and spring bulbs to take home. You can use your own favorite 6-inch deep dish or wide pot, or use one of ours. We’ll start spring early indoors! 10 am-noon; $5.00 #10-YE-03

Little Green Thumbs—Saturday Spring Garden Classes for Kids
Come for one class or all throughout the season and be a Gaffield Growers’ Gardener. We’ll have scheduled classes and drop in times throughout the spring and summer. Preregistration required.

How Does Your Garden Grow?
Sat., April 10, 10 am-noon
Find out how to start a garden when you sign up for one or all in our exciting series of kids’ gardening classes. We’ll begin by learning about seed basics and what gardens need to grow and flourish. Help plant seeds to grow in our greenhouses for planting outdoors later in the season. Or bring some home to plant in your own garden. #10-YE-06

Super Seedlings
Sat., April 24, 10 am-noon
Once they sprout, seeds grow fast. In this class you’ll see first-hand how much the seeds we started in early April have grown. Then help transplant baby seedlings into bigger pots where they’ll have room to grow. Get some ideas for your very own garden at home—either in a pot or in the ground. #10-YE-07

A Hot Idea: Cold Frames
Sat., May 8, 10 am-noon
Cold frames work real plant magic and help us get a head start on spring. They provide a cozy spot for seeds and seedlings to get an early start, protected from the cold wind and night air. The next step for our section of the Growers’ Garden is to plant cool-weather crops such as beets, peas, carrots, radishes, and lettuce in a cold frame. #10-YE-08

When Plants Go Bad
Sat., May 15, 10 am-noon
Invasive plants crowd out native species and take over landscapes. Learn what makes a plant a pest and what we mean by “native.” Come prepared to pull a real problem plant in these parts: garlic mustard, and maybe even taste a garlic-mustard salad! #10-YE-09
Get Involved—Volunteer!

We welcome volunteers to get involved in every season at MBGNA. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator at 734.647.8528 to request a volunteer application and to learn more about current opportunities. New volunteer orientations are offered every month, with additional trainings required for some assignments.

*****Pre-registration required for all orientations

Marketing Volunteer Orientation

Thur., Jan. 14, 1–2 pm
Matthaei Botanical Gardens

Has your life been enriched by the programs, events, and visitor experiences at the Arb and Gardens? We need your help to spread the word about what happens here in every season. Join MBGNA Marketing Coordinator Joe Mooney to learn about the many ways you can lend a hand behind the scenes and in the community.

Michigan Solar (MiSo) House Ambassador Orientation

Sat., Jan. 30, 9 am–noon
Matthaei Botanical Gardens

If you have an interest or firsthand knowledge about solar energy, we have the perfect job for you! The MiSo House is a compact dwelling designed and built by a team of students from the University of Michigan Taubman College of Architecture & Urban Planning. Volunteers will be trained to greet and guide visitors as they learn about this unique design that employs passive energy methods, zero-energy consumption strategies, and smart resource utilization. Weekday and weekend shifts available.

Gaffield Children’s Garden Ambassador Orientations—two training options

Sat., Feb. 13, 9:00–noon or Wed., Feb. 17, 1–4 pm
Matthaei Botanical Gardens

Individuals and families are invited to join us as we create a welcoming atmosphere in this new garden designed especially for young visitors—and the young at heart! Volunteers will learn about basic visitor etiquette and the different elements of this unique, interactive landscape. Minors are welcome to volunteer with adult supervision. Weekday and weekend shifts available.

Trail Crew Volunteer Orientation

Thurs., March 11, 1–3 pm
Matthaei Botanical Gardens

Do you enjoy walking the trails at the Arb & Gardens? We’re looking for trail-friendly folks to help us build a new crew of volunteers who will focus on trail maintenance. Individuals and service groups are welcome to join this session to learn more about the work at hand.

Membership Volunteer Orientation

Sat., March 13, 10 am–noon
Matthaei Botanical Gardens

Our members help sustain the Arb & Gardens so that we can continue to promote environmental enjoyment, stewardship, and sustainability through education, research, and interaction with the natural world. Like to learn more about the many benefits of MBGNA membership? Join our Membership Coordinator Andy Sell and find out how you can help promote membership at MBGNA events and also work behind the scenes to keep our membership program running smoothly.

Eco-Restoration Workdays

Enjoy and learn about the beautiful natural areas at MBGNA as you contribute to our restoration efforts. Groups are welcome to join a public workday with advance notice or schedule a special service event. Public workdays are scheduled from 9 am–noon unless otherwise noted.

Arb Workdays: Second Saturday of every month; Reader Center 1610 Washington Heights.
Gardens Workdays: Third Saturday of every month; West Lobby Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Rd.
As a member of MBGNA you’ll become part of our family of friends dedicated to supporting our message of “caring for nature, enriching life.” Plus, you’ll receive exclusive members-only benefits:

- Free Conservatory admission all year round
- Subscription to our newsletter, *Friends*
- Free entrance to over 200 reciprocal gardens
- 20% off all MBGNA educational classes
- Invitations to members-only events
- Special discounts on ticketed events and bulbs
- 10% discount at the Spring Plant Sale and Gift Shop

Your contributions help us continue to care for gardens and plant collections, restore ecosystems, create public access and natural-areas interpretation, and offer more exciting arts and educational program opportunities.

Membership Opportunities

- Student (please include photocopy of ID) $20—Basic Benefits
- Individual $45—Basic Benefits
- Family (2 adults, plus children under 18, living in the same household) $55—Basic Benefits
- Sustaining $100—Basic benefits + invitation to Curator’s Tour
- Sponsor $250—All benefits above plus perennial plant from Spring Plant Sale
- Benefactor $500—All benefits above plus 2 free tickets to a ticketed event
- Director’s Circle $1000—All benefits above plus invitation to Director’s Evening

If your company matches gifts, please include their form. Memberships are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Become a Member Today!

For over two years it was a privilege to grow with Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum as a student intern. Now, as the new development associate and membership coordinator, I’m honored to build on that experience and on my passion for plants and people.

Whether you’re a friend, visitor, volunteer, or staff member, we’re all part of the Arb & Gardens family. I will advocate for our family by strengthening membership, increasing annual giving, and invigorating our memorial and tribute gifts program.

The Conservatory, trails, gardens, and natural areas inspire thousands of visitors each year. Let’s work together to see even more lives enriched by the Arb & Gardens in the years ahead!