friends • winter 2012 newsletter • special issue

Inside:  Long Live Peonies! • The Native Landscape Reader • Maize and Blue Grown Here • and more
Celebrating 50 Years on Dixboro Rd.

The 1957 gift of 200 acres of land by Regent Frederick Matthaei, Sr. and his wife, Mildred Hague Matthaei, inspired their dream of a university botanical gardens “second to none in this country.” A half century later, Matthaei Botanical Gardens continues to fulfill that dream, building on the past and branching out to the future.

In the main, our mission today parallels the goals articulated by Wagner and Geoffrey Norman. Yet times change and while the Gardens retains many of its historical values, the particulars have evolved to address the world we live in today.

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The landscape at the Matthaei site has always been ecologically diverse—something that set it apart from the Gardens’ previous locations. Rolling hills, wetlands, river settings, and prairie provided a beautiful site for what was to come. And yet building on this foundation while respecting its natural heritage has always been a part of the Gardens’ mission. Today, a variety of spaces are integrated into that diverse Michigan landscape.

Recent collaborative projects include the Bonsai and Penjing Garden, the Discovery Trail, and by providing strong educational, collaborative, and outreach opportunities with the University and local communities. Whether studying our resident population of eastern massasauga rattlesnakes, restoring diversity to our lands by removing introduced species that compete with the natives for resources, or providing an immersive summer internship opportunity for U-M students, we’re stewarding our properties for future generations.

We also fulfill a dual purpose within the University, says University of Michigan President Mary Sue Coleman. “The Matthaei Botanical Gardens enhance the University of Michigan academically and aesthetically,” Coleman says. "In medicine and science, plants and botany are integral to the process of research, discovery, and invention. Botanical gardens also are indispensable as places where people reconnect with nature, places of beauty and spiritual calm in an increasingly urban world.”

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It’s a matter of capturing hearts and minds. And if our mission connects with the past, it also makes room for a future in which stewardship, conservation, and education play prominent roles at Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum.

We invite you to join us in celebrating 50 years on Dixboro.

The Gaffield Children’s Garden is among the special places here that connect people, especially children, with nature. A generous gift from Tom and Jeanette Gaffield provided the catalyst for the garden, which opened in September of 2009. Today the Children’s Garden is one of the most popular spots at Matthaei and a destination for families and children from across the region.

Plans for the Bonsai and Penjing Garden are now a reality. Construction on the garden site—located behind and to the west of the conservatory—has begun. The garden will feature studio spaces and viewing and display areas that will allow us to exhibit much more of our bonsai collection.

University Connections: The Gardens continues to partner with university faculty and students on research projects, art and architecture installations, exhibits, and more. Recent collaborative projects include the installation of 2001, are now iconic features of the Gateway Garden, sundial Coombe Structure, created by U-M architect-ure professor Vivian Lee and winner of the 2010 Architecture Magazine R+D Award.

Connecting to Our Core Values Today

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More subtle but perhaps as insidious, many of us suffer from what Richard Louv, author of Last Child in the Woods, calls “nature deficit disorder.” For a variety of reasons we, and children in particular, are spending less time outdoors—to our detriment.

We address these issues by carrying out our mission of caring for nature and enriching life, and by providing strong educational, collaborative, and outreach opportunities with the

University and local communities. Whether studying our resident population of eastern massasauga rattlesnakes, restoring diversity to our lands by removing introduced species that compete with the natives for resources, or providing an immersive summer internship opportunity for U-M students, we’re stewarding our properties for future generations.

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Spring Exhibit
Our spring exhibit celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the dedication of the Botanical Gardens. The exhibit will feature images that capture the early history of the Gardens, from the dedication day to the building phases to the construction of the conservatory and its first plantings. Visitors will also learn about the many ways the Gardens has since changed and grown, thanks to the labor and generosity of many donors, members, volunteers, and dedicated staff over the years.

Long Live Peonies!
In 2012 the Peony Garden celebrates its own milestone: 90 years. Donated in 1922 by Dr. W. E. Upjohn, founder of the Upjohn Pharmaceutical Company and designer of former Arboereum director Aubrey Tealdi, the garden opened to the public in 1927. Today’s Peony Garden is the largest collection of heirloom peonies in North America and a destination for peony lovers from Michigan and beyond. The peony’s significance in Asian culture and art also lends great cultural importance to the garden. Stay tuned for more information on the festivities, and don’t miss the Peony Festival, June 2–10.

The Pleasures of the Peony
Roslyn Hammers, a U-M History of Art alumna and expert on peonies in Chinese culture, will speak March 27 at 7 pm in the Helmut Sterns Auditorium in the U-M Museum of Art on the topic of peonies in Chinese art. Peonies have always stirred passions. According to Professor Hammers, “as early as the Tang dynasty (618–907) the allure of the peony had become obsessive, bordering on mania.” We are cosponsoring Dr. Hammers’ talk with the U-M Center for Chinese Studies, the Confucius Institute, U-M Chinese Studies, the Confucius Institute, U-M, and the University of Michigan, where she studied commercial recreation and event management.

Maize & Blue Grown Here
Matthaei Botanical Garden’s visitors will notice a new garden near the west entrance sprouting dramatic slabs of granite and planted with deer-deterrent, showy native and ornamental plants in the U-M maize-and-blue color scheme. Many thanks to the Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services, which provided $1,500 towards the cost of the garden and a full day of volunteers to labor as part of their Community Building themed Accelerated Action Day last fall. Thanks also to U-M School of Art and Design Professor Enrico Foscari, who donated the granite slabs. Come back this spring to see the show as the plants mature.

Conservatory Admission and Parking at Matthaei
The Botanical Gardens has long been the only U-M museum to charge admission, but that will soon change. Beginning January 9, 2012 we’ll be ending the Conservatory admission fee. In lieu of an entrance fee, visitors will pay to park much like they do on Central and North Campus. Friends members will continue to park for free.

The move will bring us a noble source of revenue while aligning us with general U-M practices with regard to parking and museum entrance fees. The parking fees will also contribute to our general cost of operation and help spread the expense of upkeep for all of the Botanical Gardens more equitably.

The system will be based on a U-M parking operation, with central pay kiosks. Parking will cost $1.20 per hour—the University’s standard rate—up to a maximum of $5 for a full day. Friends members will simply enter their parking-space and member numbers at one of two kiosks located near the front entrance of Matthaei and next to the sidewalk past the west entrance portico. If you don’t have your member card or number with you, the front desk staff will be happy to look it up.

Staff Transitions
Please join us in welcoming Steve Parrish to our Natural Areas team. Steve will be working for the next year on the Eastern Massasauga Habitat Restoration and Education project funded by a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. He comes to us with a degree from the U-M School of Natural Resources and Environment and several years of local conservation work. Also welcome Nicole Smith, our new events coordinator. Nicole has a degree from Central Michigan University, where she studied commercial recreation and event management.

April 2
Folktales & Fantasy
Listen to a folktales and then create your own legend story collage, complete with items found in nature. 12-YE-05

April 3
Windowsill Wonders
What can you grow on a windowsill? A lot! Discover the not-so-secret ingredients for starting a windowsill garden of your own. 12-YE-06

April 4
Treasures & Trails
Come ready to spend a few nature-packed hours at Matthaei as you create your own eco-treasure hunt. Choose from different scavenger hunts and adventure backpacks and explore the Conservatory and Trails. 12-YE-07

April 5
Herb Power
This winter season, celebrate the soothing, warming, exhilarating power of herbs and potpourris as you make herbal teas, sachets, and more. 12-YE-01

April 6
Potpourris & Bubble Baths
Join us on a guided walk in the conservatory to learn about herbs and other fragrant plants, then make a potpourri or bubble bath to take home. 12-YE-08

April 14
Super Seedlings
What a great way to celebrate Earth Day! Discover heirloom varieties of seeds that have been passed down from grandparents to grandchildren. Explore how you can create a small garden at home. Plant seeds to take home and sprout and help plant seeds that will grow into seedlings for the Gaffield Children’s Garden. 12-YE-10

May 12
Down and Dirty - Kids’ Composting
Learn the secret to making the most of your vegetable scraps and leaves. Compost makes superior soil for the garden. Decorate your own countertop compost bin and start composting today! 12-YE-09

March 17
Blustery Day
As March winds signal spring, take a hike to look for signs of the season. Later, warm up inside while you compose a spring poem, make paper flowers to take home, or decorate a paper kite. 12-YE-03

March 31
Faire Gardens & Troll Houses
Fairies and trolls are visiting us in early spring! Welcome them by helping us construct faerie dwellings for the Conservatory and the Gaffield Children’s Garden. Also, build a fairy garden and a troll house to coax fairies and trolls into visiting your home. 12-YE-04

May 14
Make Way for Spring! School Break Getaway
Kids and parents, join us for a week of fun during spring break, April 2-6. Escape to the tropical wonderland Conservatory Gateway to the Botanical Gardens! All Make Way for Spring classes begin at 10 am and cost $5.00, which includes materials and activities.

May 25
Down and Dirty - Kids’ Composting
Learn the secret to making the most of your vegetable scraps and leaves. Compost makes superior soil for the garden. Decorate your own countertop compost bin and start composting today! 12-YE-11
**Winter 2012 Community/Adult Programs and Classes**

**JANUARY**

- **Sun., Jan. 8, 2 pm**
  - **Roses of the World**
    - Sponsored by the Huron Valley Rose Society
    - Tonight’s program features the video “Roses of the World,” narrated by Sean McCann.
    - Refreshments provided, Q&A and information sharing.

- **Mon., Jan. 16, 7-45 pm**
  - **Belle Isle—Then and Now**
    - Sponsored by the Michigan Botanical Club, Huron Valley Chapter
    - A discussion about this Detroit landmark.

- **Tues., Jan. 17, 7:30 pm**
  - **The Great Lakes Compact: Are There Holes in the Bucket?**
    - Sponsored by Huron Valley Group, Sierra Club
    - Great Lakes Echo commentator Gary Wilson talks about the 2008 Great Lakes Compact and efforts among the bordering states and Canada to protect our freshwater resources.
    - Gary discusses the compact’s challenges and other emerging Great Lakes issues.

- **Wed., Jan. 18, 7:30 pm**
  - **Washtenaw Audubon Society**
    - For program topic and speaker visit washtenawaudubon.org or call 734.677.3275.

- **Sat., Jan. 21, 11 am**
  - **Unusual Dendrobiums**
    - Sponsored by Great Lakes Judging (Orchids)
    - A presentation and discussion of some of the lesser-seen Dendrobium species and of Tolumnia, colorful species and hybrids of the Oncidium alliance of orchids.

- **Sat., Jan. 21, 1:30 pm**
  - **Dwarf and Unusual Conifers**
    - Sponsored by the Great Lakes Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society
    - A discussion about conifer identification and habitat, including pictures of the many available variations in color, texture, and shape, and options for the use of conifers.

- **Wed., Jan. 25, 7 pm**
  - **Washtenaw Audubon Society**
    - For program topic and speaker visit washtenawaudubon.org or call 734.677.3275.

- **Sun., Feb. 18, 7 pm**
  - **Beekeepers (A2B2)**
    - Sponsored by Wild Ones, Ann Arbor Chapter
    - Interested in learning about the amazing, complex world of honeybees? Tonight’s program answers questions for those considering keeping bees.
    - Info: rimendel@sbcglobal.net.

- **Wed., Feb. 8, 6-45 pm**
  - **Warraiders**
    - Sponsored by Wild Ones, Ann Arbor Chapter
    - Share your strategies, successes, or problems with garlic mustard, autumn olive, and others, and learn about imminent invaders such as Japanese hedge parley and narrowleaf bittercress.
    - Info: 734.604.4674.

- **Sun., Feb. 12, 12 pm**
  - **Discover the Pleasure of Roses**
    - Sponsored by the Huron Valley Rose Society
    - Featuring a slide program by former American Rose Society president Steve Jones on the types of roses, how to plant them, and general basic information for the beginner.
    - Refreshments provided, Q&A, and information sharing.

- **Tues., Feb. 14, 7 pm**
  - **So You Want to Be a Beekeeper! Part II**
    - Sponsored by Ann Arbor Backyard Beekeepers (A2B2)
    - Interested in learning about the amazing, complex world of honeybees? Tonight’s program continues to address questions for those considering keeping bees.
    - Info: rimendel@sbcglobal.net.

- **Wed., Feb. 15, 7:30 pm**
  - **Washtenaw Audubon Society**
    - For program topic and speaker visit washtenawaudubon.org or call 734.677.3275.

- **Sat., Feb. 18, 11 am**
  - **Size in Judging**
    - Sponsored by Great Lakes Judging (Orchids)
    - Upcoming electoral politics and legislative issues will affect the quality of Michigan’s air and water.
    - Mike Berkowitz, chapter organizer, and Richard Barron, political committee chair, speak on the coming year’s key races and issues.
    - Participants will discover ways to make a difference in local, state, and national elections.

- **Wed., Feb. 22, 7 pm**
  - **How to Look at Your Bonsai—An Artistic Perspective**
    - Sponsored by the Ann Arbor Bonsai Society
    - Hear bonsai artist Martin Schmalenberg discuss “developing a bonsai eye.” Martin takes a look at design beyond the textbook approach while seeking drama, balance, and harmony.
    - Info: annarborbonsaisociety.org.

**FEBRUARY**

- **Sat., Feb. 18, 2 pm**
  - **Bromelids in the Lost World of the Guiana Highlands**
    - Sponsored by the Southeast Michigan Bromeliad Society
    - A presentation on the bromelids and the creatures that abound in the cloud forest of the lofty mesas, isolated from human encroachment until the twentieth century.

- **Sat., Feb. 18, 2-5 pm**
  - **Paphiopedilums—New Species and Hybrids**
    - Sponsored by the Ann Arbor Orchid Society
    - University of California professor, orchid grower, and expert Harold Koopowitz discusses his specialty, Paphiopedilums.
    - Also, a show & tell of members’ orchids in bloom, a raffle table of orchids and related items, and orchid plants and supplies for sale.

- **Mon., Feb. 20, 7-45 pm**
  - **Kirk’s Fen—Exploring a Recovering Natural Area**
    - Sponsored by the Michigan Botanical Club, Huron Valley Chapter
    - Tonight’s presentation by Matthaei-Nichols staff member Connie Craner.

- **Tues., Feb. 21, 7:30 pm**
  - **The Politics of the Environment—2012**
    - Sponsored by Huron Valley Group, Sierra Club
    - A video presentation from the American Dahlia Association on new dahlias and getting seed parents and progeny and indicate what characteristics species are likely to pass on.

- **Sun., Feb. 12, 2 pm**
  - **Growing Herbs from Seeds**
    - Sponsored by the Huron Valley Rose Society
    - An Artistic Perspective
    - hear bonsai artist Martin Schmalenberg discuss “developing a bonsai eye.” Martin takes a look at design beyond the textbook approach while seeking drama, balance, and harmony.
    - Info: annarborbonsaisociety.org.

- **Sun., March 11, 1 pm**
  - **Repotting Your Plants: A Demonstration**
    - Sponsored by the Michigan Cactus and Succulent Society
    - All invited to hear a demonstration about the best practices for repotting plants, followed by a demonstration with live specimens.
    - Info: cuzzolenou@373yahoo.com.

- **Sun., March 11, 2 pm**
  - **A Gardener’s Guide: How to Select and Plant Roses Like a Pro**
    - Sponsored by the Huron Valley Rose Society
    - Refreshments provided, Q&A and information sharing.

- **Wed., March 14, 6:30 pm**
  - **Bioreserve Projects**
    - Sponsored by Wild Ones, Ann Arbor Chapter
    - The Huron River Watershed Council’s Kris Olson explains the Bioreserve Project, a volunteer-supported effort to assess the Huron River watershed. Olson provides information to landowners and land preservation organizations to protect these areas and help maintain the health of the Huron River system.
    - Info: 734.604.4674.

- **Sat., March 17, 11 am**
  - **Recent Awards**
    - Sponsored by Great Lakes Judging (Orchids)
    - Student judge Ed Cott discusses and presents at least one species and several hybrids recently awarded by the American Orchid Society (AOS). Also, a discussion and presentation of at least one species and several hybrids recently awarded by the AOS (different from Cott presentation).

- **Sat., March 17, 2 pm**
  - **The ABC’s of Hybridizing Bromeliads**
    - Sponsored by the Southeast Michigan Bromeliad Society
    - A slide-show presentation by Paul Wingert on the basic principles of hybridizing bromeliads, his own methods, and how he grows them from seed to bloom. Paul will show parents and progeny and indicate what characteristics species are likely to pass on.

- **Sun., March 31, 3–2 pm**
  - **New Dahlia Introductions**
    - Sponsored by the Michigan Dahlia Association
    - A video presentation from the American Dahlia Society on new dahlias and getting your dahlias ready for a new growing season.
    - Info: 734.429.5796.

- **Sun., March 25, 8-8 pm**
  - **Mixed Species of South America**
    - Sponsored by the Ann Arbor Orchid Society
    - Eric Sauer of River Valley Orchids shares his knowledge of orchids and discusses his orchid travels in Ecuador. Also, a show & tell of Orchid Society and Beekeepers (A2B2) orchids in bloom, a raffle table of orchids and related items, and orchid plants and supplies for sale.
    - Info: annarbororchids@aol.com.
Winter 2012 Community/Adult Programs and Classes

MON., March 19, 7:45 pm
Ann Arbor Schools-Environmental Education Program, Introducing Kids to Positive Nature Experiences Sponsored by the Michigan Botanical Club, Huron Valley Chapter Discussion led by Ann Arbor Public Schools’ Dave Szczypel.

TUES., March 20, 7:30 pm
A 21st Century Chicago-Area Waterway System Sponsored by Huron Valley Group, Sierra Club Matt Doss, policy director of the Great Lakes Commission, discusses a developing multi-agency plan to prevent the ongoing transfer of aquatic invasive species and improve transportation, water quality, and flood management.

WED., March 21, 7:30 pm
Washtenaw Audubon Society For program topic and speaker visit washtenawaudubon.org or call 734.677.3275.

WED., March 27, 7 pm
Helmut Sterns Auditorium, U-M Museum of Art The Pleasures of the Peony in Chinese Art A talk by U-M History of Art alumna and Hong Kong University professor Roslyn Hammers on the various facets of the Song-dynasty peony as presented in paintings, poetry, and prose and the complexities and anxieties the peony evoked.

WED., March 28, 6 pm
Potluck and Discussion, American Rhododendron Society Sponsored by the ARS Ann Arbor Group Tonight’s discussion topic TBD. Check the Matthaei-Nichols website for details soon: mbgna.umich.edu.

WED., March 28, 7 pm
Bonsai Potting and Root Pruning Techniques Sponsored by Ann Arbor Bonsai Society A presentation and demonstration on potting bonsai, including what to look for when potting. Bonsai Society members will also demonstrate how they pot their bonsai. Info: annarborbonsaisociety.org.

SAT., March 31, 10 am – 4:30 pm

APRIL

MON., April 2, 7 pm
All about Lavender Sponsored by the Herb Study Group A presentation on the best varieties of lavender to grow in this area. Also, recipes and uses for lavender.

TUES., April 10, 2 pm
Secrets to Beautiful Roses: How to Prune Many Types of Roses Sponsored by the Huron Valley Rose Society Video presentation. Refreshments provided, plus Q&A and information sharing.

TUES., April 17, 7:45 pm
The Role of Plants in Ancient Environments Sponsored by the Michigan Botanical Club, Huron Valley Chapter Discussion led by Dr. Selena Smith.

TUES., April 17, 7:30 pm
Huron-Clinton Metroparks: Care of Our Diverse Ecosystems Sponsored by Huron Valley Group, Sierra Club We know the metroparks for their bike paths and ball fields, but a big part of their mission is land stewardship. Paule Muelle, Director of Natural Resources for Huron Clinton Metropolitan Authority, presents programs for invasive control and natural land rehabilitation.

WED., April 18, 7:30 pm
Washtenaw Audubon Society For program topic and speaker visit washtenawaudubon.org or call 734.677.3275.

SAT. & SUN., April 21-22
Ann Arbor Orchid Festival Sponsored by the Ann Arbor Orchid Society Featuring exhibitors with orchids in bloom and plants and supplies for sale. Also, free talks and demonstrations both days. Free admission. Hours: Sale area 10 am–4:30 pm Sat. & Sun.; show hours noon–4:30 pm Sat.; 10 am–4:30 pm Sun.; photographers’ hour 9–10 am Sun.. Free admission. Info: Ann ArborOrchids@aol.com.

WED., April 25, 7 pm
The Care, Cultivation, and Maintenance of Tropical Bonsai Sponsored by Ann Arbor Bonsai Society Bonsai artist Erik Wigert of North Fort Meyers, Florida, discusses tropical and subtropical material and issues related to health, maintenance, repotting, wiring, and general care of tropical bonsai. Info: annarborbonsaisociety.org.

SUN., April 29, 1-3:30 pm

Register early for the Spring-Summer 4-H Junior Master Gardener program A youth gardening program open to children ages 9-11 as of 1/1/2012. Hands-on, project-based classes provide a high-quality, learning experience that helps kids discover the fun of gardening and the importance of volunteering. Six classes, early May to mid-June, followed by two garden sessions per month through mid-September. $40 per child; application deadline April 23. Info: 734.997.1678.

Get Involved—Volunteer at Matthaei-Nichols
Our volunteer program offers diverse opportunities to learn and to connect and give back. As a volunteer, you’ll develop new skills while supporting our mission of education and stewardship through hands-on service. We welcome new volunteers to join us in every season at the Arb & Gardens.

Contact the Volunteer Coordinator for the 2012 New Volunteer Orientation schedule and more information about current opportunities: 734.647.8528; tgriffit@umich.edu. Additional training may be required for some assignments.

Visitor Services – Ambassador Trainings (preregistration required)

Gafield Children’s Garden Ambassador Training
Sat., April 28, 9 am–noon, Matthaei Botanical Gardens Garden ambassadors welcome visitors during peak bloom season and special events. As an ambassador, you’ll enjoy the beauty of the display gardens while you invite visitors to take a closer look. Training provides an overview of the Visitor Services Department, visitor etiquette, and our most popular points of interest. Additional garden tours/talks will be led by our horticulturists as the season unfolds. Weekends: 3-hour shifts, two shifts per month May–October.

Garden Ambassador Training
Sat., April 28, 9 am–noon, Matthaei Botanical Gardens

Gardens are open year-round providing a unique landscape for the study of biodiversity. Our visitor services program offers an introduction to this unique, interactive landscape.

Volunteers will be trained to greet and guide visitors as they learn about the Nichols (Michigan Solar) House, a unique “green” structure, designed and built by a team of U-M students. Weekend open-house shifts (3 hours) and special request tours run May–October.

Thank you! To all of the 1,609 community members, master gardeners, students, and corporate groups who contributed nearly 15,000 hours of volunteer service last year.

Clockwise from top left:
U-M Law School students unearth a mega-root;
Docents Mary Bruening & Merrle Metzler prepare for a youth program;
Bill Heston readies a bonsai;
Lynne Echlin & Pennith Goff with the bramble collection;
Gafield Children’s Garden Ambassador Pat Conry;
Ambassador and photo volunteer Albert Anthony in the Conservatory;
Rita Daniels and Janet Moilanen working with native plants in the bioswale at Matthaei;
Pete and Pat Wilcox ready to answer questions at the Gateway Garden sale.

Michigan Solar House

Sat., March 31, 9 am–noon, Matthaei
If you have an interest in or first-hand knowledge of solar energy, we’ve got the job for you! Volunteers will be trained to greet and guide visitors as they learn about the Nichols (Michigan Solar) House, a unique “green” structure, designed and built by a team of U-M students. Weekend open-house shifts (3 hours) and special request tours run May–October.

Gafield Children’s Garden Ambassador Training
Two options:
Sat., April 14, 9:00–noon or Wed., April 18, 1–4 pm, Matthaei
Join us as we create a welcoming atmosphere in this garden designed especially for young visitors. Volunteers will learn about basic visitor etiquette and the different elements of this unique, interactive landscape.

3-hour shifts available 7 days per week, 2 shifts per month May–Oct.
As the Botanical Gardens prepares to celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2012, we’d like to remind the key role our donors and Friends members at every level of giving have played in the growth of Matthaei Botanical Gardens and Nichols Arboretum over the last 50 years, and how much their support will mean in the next half century and beyond.

Over the decades development, pollution, climate change, and other factors have continued to pose an ever-growing threat to the environment here and around the planet. Whatever size gift you make will help us care for, protect, and preserve our unique ecosystems. As you’ll find the endangered American burr oak and the rare Blanding’s turtle, but also thriving populations of the threatened eastern massasauga rattlesnake. Our donors also make possible the preservation of our historically significant plant collections like the Procyon Garden at Nichols Arboretum and the Great Lakes Garden planned at Matthaei.

Just as important, every donation demonstrates your commitment to partnering with us in fostering education and learning opportunities for the University community and the public about the importance of ecosystems everywhere, and in providing an invaluable treasure for future generations to enjoy.

Please consider making a gift to help protect another piece of threatened natural habitat, provide an elementary school student with a day of hands-on learning, make a summer internship possible for a U-M college student, preserve culturally significant plant species, and much more.

Thank you again for your support!

Above: A rare Blanding’s turtle (Emydoidea blandingii) found at Matthaei last summer. The turtle is a state-listed special concern reptile and a great indicator of the value of the natural areas at Matthaei-Nichols to the conservation of rare species.

The IRA Charitable Rollover: A Tax-Free Way to Support Matthaei-Nichols
For a way to save on taxes and help support Matthaei Botanical Gardens & Nichols Arboretum, consider an IRA charitable rollover. Congress has extended through 2011 the opportunity for individuals to make tax-free gifts to qualified organizations from their individual retirement accounts. It’s a wonderful way to support our summer student internships, children’s education programs, and more. Here’s how it works:

• Your gift will count toward your required minimum distribution.
• Distributions up to $100,000 can be made in 2011.
• Your taxable income is not affected because no taxes are due on the distribution.
• It’s a simple, one-step distribution.

If you have questions or wish to read more about this opportunity, visit giving.umich.edu/IRA or call Gayle Steiner, Director of Development, at 734.647.7847.

Special Membership Offer
Here’s a special gift you can’t buy in any store: a Matthaei-Nichols membership for family or friends. Even better, current members receive 10% off every gift membership along with a tax-deductible receipt from the University of Michigan. Each gift membership includes a certificate and a full year of benefits. Please phone membership manager Andy Sell at 734.615.9475 to set up a gift membership today.

matthaei-nichols’ development & member news and updates

Fifty Years on Dixboro (continued from p. 3)

The Labyrinth, officially opened in 2010, is located in a restored prairie area north and east of the main entry off Dixboro Rd. Because of its secluded location, it’s the perfect site for visitors to have a calming and restorative experience.

Extensive renovation of the Conservatory was made possible through the generosity of Robert and Marge Alpern and through the support of the University of Michigan. The Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust helped fund plant labeling and interpretive materials. Conservatory renovations include glazing with safety glass, installation of retractable energy blanket and mist fogger, automation of vent openers, and south entrance renovations for improved accessibility.

Winter Conservatory Exhibit
If you haven’t yet seen our Conservatory exhibit, “Pineapples & Pincushions – The Art & Science of Patterns in Nature,” make time this season for a visit to Matthaei. The exhibit runs through Sunday, January 8.

Discover the multitude of nature’s amazing patterns and how they inspire and provoke us. On display are beautiful, large-scale photographs of nature’s patterns; seasonal flower displays; children’s scavenger hunts and activities; and U-M student and faculty research and projects on patterns in nature. All in the soothing warmth of a tropical setting!

Great Lakes Garden: The Great Lakes Garden planned for Matthaei will showcase examples of the unique flora of the Great Lakes Region. As a conservation garden, it will provide protection for species that are increasingly rare in the wild along with education about conservation issues for stewarding these species and ecosystems where they are found in nature.

Deer Fence. Many of us here love deer, and the deer in turn love many of our plants! Several years ago, an anonymous donor provided the funds to build a deer fence, and since then the amount of damage caused by deer browsing, particularly in winter, has dropped dramatically. The fence is a little seen but invaluable part of operations here at Matthaei.

Display Gardens: Several display gardens, many of them clustered around the commons area west of the main building, are beloved by visitors and members alike. These include the Marie Azary Rock Garden, the Alexandra Hicks Herb Knot Garden, the Gateway Garden of New World Plants (a popular wedding spot), the Perennial Garden (another wedding favorite), and the Helen V. Smith Woodland Wildflower Garden.

Winter Forays
If a wind chill of 78°F is the kind of winter weather you have in mind, come out to our conservatory in the months ahead for a mini tropical vacation. Friends members at the Sustaining and above level are invited to one of three guided walks through the Conservatory at Matthaei.

Learn about the history of the Conservatory and the amazing plants that live there. Tour dates will be announced via invitation in December, so renew or upgrade your membership today! Contact membership manager Andy Sell, sella@umich.edu / 734.615.9475 for more information.

Giving Outside the Box
At a time of year when many of us are searching for a lasting and deeply personal gift, Matthaei-Nichols’ tribute and memorial gift programs provide a meaningful way to celebrate a special occasion or remember a loved one. You can dedicate a tree or a bench, create a special ceremony to remember a family member or friend, or name a trail or garden. These enduring and tax-deductible gifts support our work to promote environmental stewardship, education, and enjoyment for the local and University of Michigan communities.

The Matthaei-Nichols annual report is due out in late December and will be available on our website, mbgna.umich.edu. If you’d like a hard copy of the report, please email Joseph Mooney at jmooney@umich.edu or call 734.647.9679.

The Matthaei-Nichols Development Office
Director of Development, Mrs. Frederick C. Van Aken, 1000 S. Dixboro Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48105. To contribute to the development of the Matthaei-Nichols, call 734.647.9679.
caring for nature, enriching life

Matthaei Botanical Gardens & Nichols Arboretum
1800 N. Dixboro Rd.
Ann Arbor MI 48105

Robert E. Grese, Director
Karen Sikkenga, Associate Director

friends newsletter
Joseph Mooney, Editor
jfmooney@umich.edu

For information:
734.647.7600
mbgna.umich.edu

U-M Regents
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