



2024 Volunteer
Yearbook & Report



CONTENTS

01
Dear
Volunteers

02
Volunteer
Reports

05
Volunteer
Recognition

08
Volunteer
Highlights

18
Yew Dell
Highlights

22
Our
Team

Dear Volunteers...



PAUL CAPPIELLO, Ph.D.
Executive Director

To our amazing Yew Dell Volunteer family,

In her typical efficient approach, Amanda has only given me a little bit of space, so I thought maybe I'd just go with this –
You People Rock!

Ok. Maybe I can expand that a bit . . .

While it's tempting to say that we wouldn't be here without you, that's not entirely true. We have an equally awesome staff and they're all pretty darned good at what they do. But one thing certainly is true. Without our generous and talented volunteers our gardens wouldn't look as good, our plants wouldn't be as happy, our visitors would be less well informed, our programs and events would be less ambitious. But the biggest difference is that our days at work would be much poorer. And that's the truth.

Thank you for your commitment, for the varied life experience you share with us and our visitors, and for helping to make Yew Dell the jewel that it is.

AMANDA ALLRED

Volunteer & Website Coordinator

What a banner year! We had unprecedented (let's use that word in a positive light) numbers of community members donate their sweat, energy, and willpower to Yew Dell in 2024!

It was such a joy to see group volunteers from throughout the region and country discover joy in nature; to witness new creative endeavors take root and blossom; and to see new friendships growing amongst our dedicated volunteers.

Thank you all for making 2024 a year to remember!



2024 AT A GLANCE

Each dot below represents one person who donated time to Yew Dell each day in 2024.

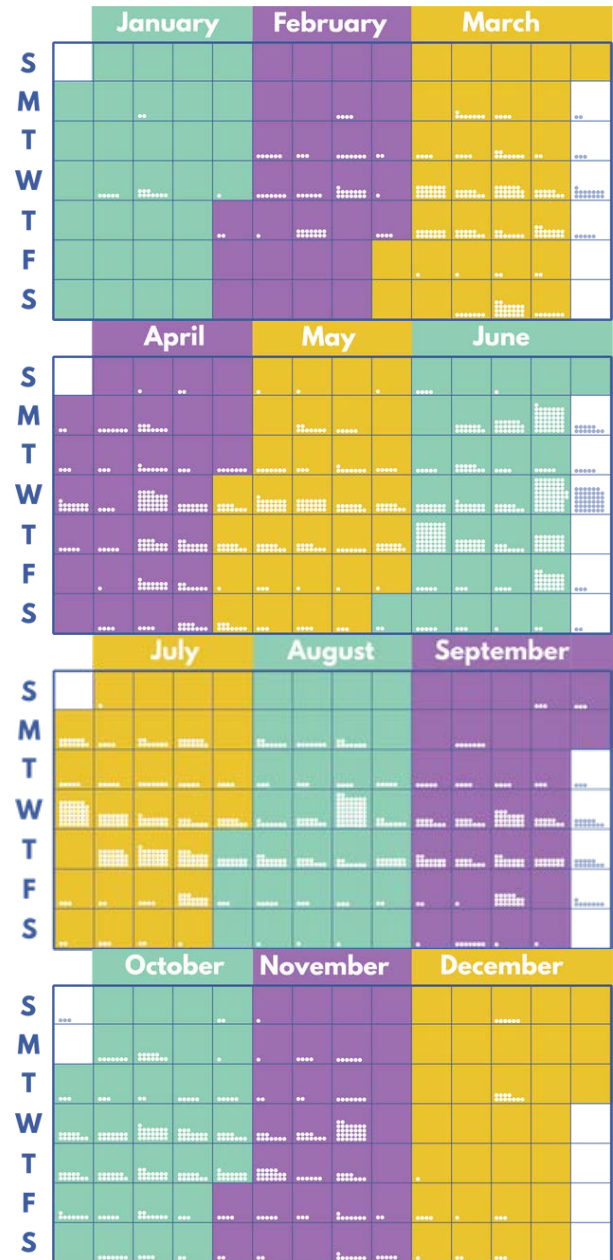
620 Individual Volunteers*
2,427 Volunteer Shifts
5,086 Donated Hours
25 Volunteer Groups
 - 335 group volunteers
 from 13 states

How it compares

	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
Average hours donated per volunteer	8.1	14.0	13.9	12.4	21.0
Volunteered more than once in the year	63%	76%	69%	54%	71%
Volunteered after attending orientation	67%	70%	73%	60%	68%

You may be saying, “Boy, those comparison numbers are odd, I thought the program grew!” You would be right, which is why context is so important. In 2024, we saw a record number of volunteer groups, comprised of one-time volunteers that made up 55% of our total volunteer count. You can see more information about our volunteer groups on page 22.

**Includes group volunteers*



Volunteer Matrix

The much-anticipated launch of our first-ever online Volunteer Management System, **Volunteer Matrix**, arrived in 2024!

This wonderful system allows for much more streamlined communication, registration, reporting, and overall organization of our volunteer program. Many of the stats you see in this document were easy to gather using its power.

For volunteers, in addition to scheduling or cancelling shifts, you can see when friends are volunteering, review past hours, and sign up to be alerted of future opportunity postings. Have you explored your volunteer profile?

Event Stats

>1,000 paper tubes collected for crafts

20 Yuletide shifts filled
(several volunteers worked multiple nights!)
Nearly 2,000 googly eyes used on incredible creations from multi-eyed spiders, Buddy the Elf, snowpeople, Galinda and Elphaba, to Santa and Honey Claus!

> 40 families & a Brownie Troop attended Children in the Dell
~ 700 Cultural Pass visitors greeted

10 Group tours
288 Wandering docent interactions

27,675 bulbs planted (perennial and annual)

240 bags of pine straw in garden beds
(6 pallets of 40)

191 volunteer hours spent on database clean up

~3,000 ft² turf removed for paths and garden beds

~3,089 Annuals planted*

5 garden areas added or expanded

* including a mass planting of 675 Coleus 'Wasabi'

~60 yds³ (4 dump trucks) of mulch spread on paths and in the Arboretum

6 trailers, 2 Toro-fulls, and 3 golf carts of invasive species removed from the Entrance Gardens...

...in ONE day - thank you, Humana volunteers!

In the Gardens

2023 "Of the Years"



Volunteer of the Year

Jim Gerdes attended weekly workdays nearly every single week of 2023 barring trips to Disney with his family or weather getting in the way. He brings a smile to everyone's face and make immense impacts on the grounds with every single shift.



Youth Volunteer of the Year

Abby Potter took initiative and reached out to us to discuss ways she could learn more about the ins and outs of Yew Dell and gardening because they "just love plants!" It was a true privilege and joy to work with her through the summer of 2023 and see her passion grow.

2023 Golden Tub Trug Winners

We created this award last year when we jokingly pointed out how a GAP group had filled so many buckets of garden detritus that they deserved an award.



Horticulture

The Entrance Garden Adoption Group helped lay the foundation for the Garden Adoption Program several years ago. In 2023, they took on a new garden area and through weekly efforts, helped plant brand new annual displays, conquered weeds in our new grass bed, and embraced camaraderie along the way.



Behind the Scenes

Since mid-2022, **Maria Marguils** has been working diligently behind the scenes with our team to document several of our gardens for curation, taking GORGEOUS photos along the way. Because of her organization, consistency, and passion, we are that much closer to making our plant database public-facing!

2024 Monthly Volunteer Spotlights



Yew Dell Board



*Arvin Young Adult
Transition Program*



Dianne Bynum



Carol Baldwin



Debbie Boklage



Kathy Watkins



Madison Young



Youthworks



Carol Evans



Beth Linder



Kathryn Pasquenza



Germaine Russo

YEW must be NEW!

Below is a list of all of the volunteers who attended orientation in 2024. Welcome to the Yew Dell community!

Kristy Bachman • Megan Baker
Rose Baldrige • Hannah Beker • Hannah Bubnar • Grace Carswell
Mary Coomes • Adriana Duke • Donna Garrett • Matthew Gilbert
Meghann Gilbert • Jeanne Hines • Lori Hoetker • Pat Hudson
Alessandra Hurley • Isabella Ingram • Veronica Ingram • Candice Johns
Audrey Johnson • Deb Kastelic • Miriam Klein • Misty Kupka • Quinn Levenson
Beth Linder • Navin Madras • Gretta Manni • Tyler Mathison
Stacy Meyer • Lynn Nicholson • Rose Russell • Trisha Sikkema
Deborah Soffes • Maison Steffe • Natalie Vrbetic • Aurora Williams
Cindy Woodard • Lorelei Young • Madison Rae Young



GAP

Garden Adoption Program

Each season a team of volunteers dedicate their time to maintaining certain gardens throughout Yew Dell, an opportunity starting early on, in which all seasons are seen, and a lot can be gained from watching the garden grow!

-Sayde Heckman, *Garden & Arboretum Manager*



GARDEN *Groups*

More than Gardening



I was weeding in the garden and greeted a couple who came wandering down the walk. We talked a little and of course I pointed out the Fairy Forest and told them that they were allowed into the [Glasshouse]. Later he was sitting on a bench in front of the barn and I sat with him and talked a while. Then he told me that she had cancer and he told her that they would take a trip and she could go wherever she wanted.

**They lived in Georgia.
She wanted to come to Yew Dell.**

I gave them a tour to places that visitors rarely see and explained some of the history of Yew Dell Botanical Gardens.

You can never tell what brings a person here, and how much they'll appreciate it. Every visitor has a story of why they are here. Once they're here, their day is better.

-Bruce Murray, *Volunteer*



VOLUNTEER *Workdays*



VOLUNTEERS GALORE!

What a year for the gardens! With the growing garden staff, we were able to divide and conquer with staff rotating weekly workdays and leading projects in their garden zones all throughout the season.

Volunteers had the opportunity to work with and see more of the gardens at Yew Dell from the Arboretum to the Rain Garden, we gardened it all!

-Sayde Heckman
Garden & Arboretum Manager



NURSERY

Volunteers

We have a stellar group of volunteers who work in the nursery on a weekly basis. In 2024, they worked alongside staff to nurture and maintain the baby plants that go on to stock our Online Plant Market, Gift Shop, gardens, and bulk orders from the community. They also worked to prepare plants for the Castle Gardens planting in Spring 2025; dividing, seeding, and up-potting thousands of plants. Thank yew!!

-Amanda Allred, *Volunteer & Website Coordinator*



DOCENT *Activities*

Our adult groups love having Docent-led tours as part of their Yew Dell experience. Thanks to Docent interest, we typically have multiple signups for each tour, which means separate tellings of the Yew Dell story through personal lenses. I love overhearing folks from different segments of the same group share what they learned with other attendees!

- Susan Lucas, *Event & Program Manager*



ADMIN

Volunteering

While we don't have as many administrative volunteer opportunities as in the gardens, we sure do appreciate our volunteers' dedication to helping us out when needed! New donors mean new folders to be filed, which can be a daunting task for staff. Volunteers step in when the opportunity arises to lighten the load. Carol Baldwin also helps make sure our monthly membership renewal requests get in the mail by helping stuff and stamp the mailings each month.

-Kathy Jarboe, *Database Assistant*



DECOR

Natural decorations everywhere! Staff and volunteers had so much fun this season transforming plant materials into ornaments, garlands, gnomes, and wreaths during the Decor Weekly Workdays. All of the decorations were admired over the holiday season during Yuletide alongside informational signage guiding our visitors on how the displays came to life. These are the horticultural opportunities that allow people to fall in love with plants and we thank you all for helping us in our mission!

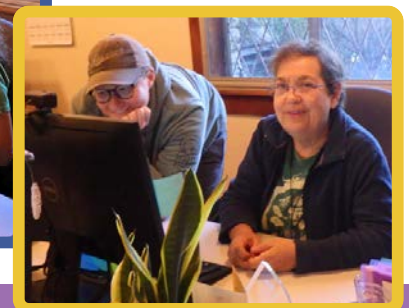
- Sayde Heckman, *Garden & Arboretum Manager*



PLANT CURATION

Behind the scenes this year a few volunteers have been hard at work consolidating a variety of old Excel Plant Record Databases; a project that will allow staff to import important historical plant record information into the improved IrisBG Plant Database.

-Sayde Heckman
Garden & Arboretum Manager



FAIRY FOREST

Committee

Our Fairy Forest Committee went above and beyond this year! They dedicated themselves to maintaining the fairy houses and the hands-on activity area, creating an inviting space where young architects could let their imaginations soar. The committee also took on the restoration of benches, upkeep of legacy houses, and added an extra touch of magic to our Fairy Day event. Thanks to their hard work and creativity, visitors of all ages were delighted and deeply appreciative of their efforts!
- Amanda Allred, *Volunteer & Website Coordinator*



As Yew Dell continues to grow, it's crucial to document and share stories of our community and work. We rely on the creativity and skills of our volunteer photographers to capture a variety of photos, from memorable moments we use in our marketing pieces to data-focused images in our archive. I am inspired by the beauty our volunteers portray in front and behind the camera!

-Manda Barger, *Public Relations & Marketing Manager*



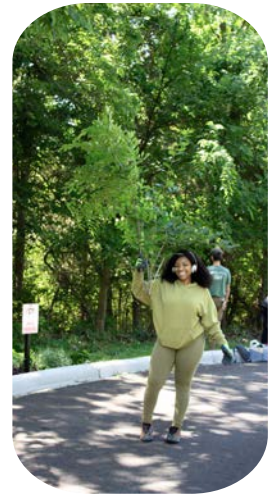
PHOTOGRAPHY



WINTER



SPRING



SUMMER



FALL



CASTLE GARDENS Construction

2024 saw the beginning of construction on our most ambitious capital campaign project so far. Contractors from E-Z Construction worked diligently to transform the area around our iconic castle to be a more welcoming, educational, and picturesque destination. We're very excited to see the final product in late Spring 2025!



CUT FLOWER GARDEN

Thank you for all of the volunteer help in the Cut Flower Garden this year! From the initial annual planting, weeding, cutting and arranging, it couldn't be done without the help of volunteers and especially Carol Evans. Carol created those beautiful bud vases you saw on the cafe tables, assisted with Yew Dell events, and even the first ever wedding that Yew Dell did flowers for!

- Jill Tinius, *Guest Services Manager*



BEYOND YEW DELL'S GARDEN WALL...

Volunteers Ed Hill, Susan Lancaster, Carol Baldwin, and Wes Krupiczewicz generously opened their gardens for us to visit in summer 2024! A common theme recognized (and appreciated!) through each visit was a chorus of "I got that at Yew Dell!" Seeing the astounding variety of designs and layouts using similar material was inspiring. Thank you!!

-Amanda Allred, *Volunteer & Website Coordinator*

HORTICULTURE STAFF



With an ever growing botanical garden and organization, our team size has had to blossom as well. 2024 saw the addition of two new positions on the Garden and Arboretum Team bring the total to 5! Another exciting opportunity for growth was for the Buildings and Grounds department to be split and a new position solely focused on both our historic buildings and new architecture!

WOODLAND PAVILION



An increasingly popular element of our gardens has been the Woodlands. Recent trail expansion and the construction of Reflection Lake has made the former pasture land of the Klein family a must-see opportunity for our visitors.



2024 saw the building of our first structure outside of bridges and walkways. The new **Woodland Pavilion** by Kingfisher Lake provides an elevated view of the lake below; perfect for bird watching. Before construction, a group of GEA volunteers were a **huge** help in getting the area cleared of the undergrowth that was **nearly 100% invasive species!**

- Jacob Stidham, *Director of Horticulture & Facilities*

EVENTS



Shout out to all our Event Volunteers for knocking it out of the park at our Plant Sales, Children in the Dell, Cultural Pass, Fairy Day, Boo Dell, and Yuletide! We call these our Signature Events, and we couldn't do them without your involvement. Your focus on welcoming and attending to our visitors is phenomenal, and you create an environment where our staffs' jobs are so much easier. As always, thanks for all that you do to make Yew Dell such a special place!

-Susan Lucas, *Event & Program Manager*



TWILIGHT IN THE GARDEN

Twilight in the Garden continues to be our largest fundraiser event of the year.

Volunteers played a huge role in the success of the event, serving on the Twilight Committee, securing table sponsors and auction items throughout the year, preparing favors for guests, and setting up the event.

In addition to all the prep work before the event, volunteers worked the event itself in numerous capacities. For the 2024 event, 26 Yew Dell Volunteers together put in a total of ~90 (logged) hours in preparation leading up to the night of the event.

Way to go Yew Dell volunteers! Thank you for your support!

- TJ Slaughter, *Director of Development*



My volunteer experiences at Yew Dell in 2024 were extremely diverse because this year was the first time I participated as a member of the following groups:

- Twilight Committee
- Waterfront Botanical and Bernheim Forest Reciprocal Volunteer Program
- Fairy Forest Committee
- Yuletide decorations team

I learned many things this year, but two of the most memorable include: soil can be destroyed if you use a rototiller, and the Yew Dell black plant signs represent perennials, and white signs represent temporary collections.

So thank you Amanda, and thanks to everyone on Yew Dell's staff for helping me establish new friendships and providing opportunities to get involved in new ways.



- Judy Vetovitz, *Volunteer*

VOLUNTEER GROUPS



We had a blast this year working with a record-breaking number of groups from scouts to churches to corporations; with their volunteer experience largely being their first exposure to Yew Dell. We welcomed **25 groups** with a staggering total of **335 individuals** (including Youthworks), making up **55%** of our total volunteer count!



YOUTHWORKS

Sparking a passion for plants (and volunteerism) across the country!



We have partnered with Youthworks since 2019 to enhance their week-long mission trips to Louisville. Participants spend a week in Louisville volunteering at a variety of organizations in the region.

This year, we collaborated with **125 Youthworks volunteers** from **15 cities** in **11 states**. With their help, we made huge strides in elevating our Arboretum, clearing fencing, and battling crab grass throughout the property.



Meet our 2024 Team! Volunteers

On the following pages, you'll see volunteers who donated 10+ hours in 2024 or were involved in special projects.



Maggie Akers
Volunteer Since 2024



Megan Allred
Volunteer Since 2024



Kristy Bachman
Volunteer Since 2024



Megan Baker
Volunteer Since 2024



Carol Baldwin
Volunteer Since 2019



Mary Beirne
Volunteer Since 2021



Hannah Beker
Volunteer Since 2024



Debbie Boklage
Volunteer Since 2020



Rachel Bryan
Volunteer Since 2023



Hannah Bubnar
Volunteer Since 2024



Debbie Bunger
Volunteer Since 2016



Wendy Butler
Volunteer Since 2020



Dianne Bynum
Volunteer Since 2023



Audrea Caguioa
Volunteer Since 2019



Angela Callahan
Volunteer Since 2022



Mary Coomes
Volunteer Since 2024



Holly Cooper
Volunteer Since 2002



Dustin Cox
Volunteer Since 2019



Lynne Dowling
Volunteer Since 2021



Andrea Eisenbrei
Volunteer Since 2013



Carol Evans
Volunteer Since 2023



Jim Gerdes
Volunteer Since 2023



Patsy Harkess
Volunteer Since 2002



Barbara Hartung
Volunteer Since 2014



Molly Hensel
Volunteer Since 2013

2024 Volunteers



Ed Hill
Volunteer Since 2020



Judy Hoge
Volunteer Since 2023



Pat Hudson
Volunteer Since 2024



Isabella Ingram
Volunteer Since 2024



Kim Katz
Volunteer Since 2022



Dave Keller
Volunteer Since 2014



Miriam Klein
Volunteer Since 2018



Wes Krupiczewicz
Volunteer Since 2010



Susan Lancaster
Volunteer Since 2016



Lisa LeCompte
Volunteer Since 2022



Beverly Lee
Volunteer Since 2015



Sandy Liles
Volunteer Since 2021



Beth Linder
Volunteer Since 2024



Charlotte Marcum
Volunteer Since 2023



Jack Marcum
Volunteer Since 2006



Maria Margulis
Volunteer Since 2017



Tyler Mathison
Volunteer Since 2024



Stacy Meyer
Volunteer Since 2024



Janice Morgan
Volunteer Since 2005



Brook Morse
Volunteer Since 2020



Bruce Murray
Volunteer Since 2014



Robyn O'Brien
Volunteer Since 2024



Kathryn Pasquenza
Volunteer Since 2015



Maria Peppas
Volunteer Since 2024



Kate Pfeifer
Volunteer Since 2015

2024 Volunteers



Austin Pope
Volunteer Since 2019



Abby Potter
Volunteer Since 2022



Julia Reisert
Volunteer Since 2022



Catherine Reynolds
Volunteer Since 2021



Germaine Russo
Volunteer Since 2023



Henry Ryan
Volunteer Since 2022



Herb Shulhafer
Volunteer Since 2020



Kaitlyn Sibley
Volunteer Since 2019



Blake Stasick
Volunteer Since 2017



Maison Steffe
Volunteer Since 2024



Judy Steinhauer
Volunteer Since 2004



Ron Steinhauer
Volunteer Since 2006



Maxine Stoehr
Volunteer Since 2018



Fran Tiller
Volunteer Since 2007



Judy Vetovitz
Volunteer Since 2004



Kathy Watkins
Volunteer Since 2021



Parks West
Volunteer Since 2023



Dan Westgate
Volunteer Since 2021



Kathy Westgate
Volunteer Since 2021



LeeAnn Whites
Volunteer Since 2021



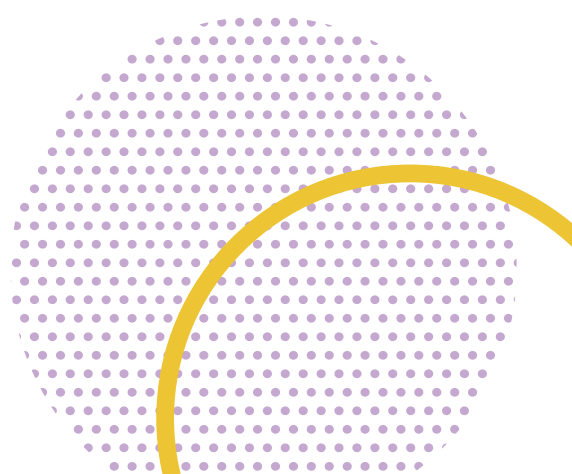
Cindy Woodard
Volunteer Since 2024



Eva Woodruff
Volunteer Since 2021



Madison Young
Volunteer Since 2024



2024 Board of Directors

Meet our leaders!



Rob Nunnelley
President



Rosemary Kirkwood
Vice President



Nell Bradley
Secretary



Barrett Birnsteel
Treasurer & Finance Committee Chair



Lisa Barr
Executive Committee



Fahr Juneja
Executive Committee



Mary Rounsavall
Executive Committee



Mary Broecker



Sue Brown



Shannon Budnick



Jana Dowds



Pat Dwyer



Martha Hargis
Twilight Committee Chair



Sarah Conan Spurlock
Governance Committee Chair



Mary Anne Thornton



Sally Vail
Development Committee Chair



Marianne Welch

2024 Staff



Lisa Allen
Visitor Center Assistant Manager



Amanda Allred
Volunteer & Website Coordinator



Madelyn Anderson
Garden Assistant



Tony Ascheman
Buildings Maintenance Tech.



Manda Barger
PR & Marketing Manager



Cosmo Bosela
Nursery Assistant



Amanda Brockie
Event Staff



Paul Cappiello
Executive Director



Rhiannon Cruz
Garden Assistant



Debbie Elmy
Visitor Center Associate



Nikki Emory
Event Staff



Storm Fraley
Garden Assistant



Patrick Gallagher
Event Staff



Sayde Heckman
Garden & Arboretum Manager



Evanthe Hettiaratchi
Event Staff



Chelsea Hicks
Gardener



Barbi Hoffman
Event Staff



Madge Huecker
Visitor Center Manager



Kathy Jarboe
Database Assistant



Alison Kurnik
Event Staff



Susan Lucas
Event & Program Manager



Jeff Margreiter
Nursery & Greenhouse Manager



Matthew McBride
Event Staff



Hayden Nicholson
Garden Assistant



Kaylea Passafiume
Event Staff

2024 Staff



Holly Rogers
Director of Finance & Operations



Beth Seibert
Event Coordinator



TJ Slaughter
Director of Development



Shannon Stark
Event Staff



Jacob Stidham
Director of Horticulture & Facilities



Jill Tinius
Guest Services Manager



Megan Wallace
Office Manager



Peggy Winkler
Visitor Center Associate

WITH YOUR SUPPORT...

...we are able to achieve our goals and aim for the stars as we plan for the future. This book offers just a glimpse of the profound impact volunteers have on Yew Dell and the wider community. Nearly every day, we witness blossoming friendships, budding plant passions, and the propagation of gardening (and life) knowledge—things that can't be fully captured in statistics or photos.

This report and yearbook is a heartfelt tribute to the plants, people, and the meaningful connections we nurture together.

Thank you for standing beside us to accomplish dreams that would have seemed unimaginable 20+ years ago. Together, we're creating a future beyond what we ever thought possible.

-Amanda Allred, *Volunteer & Website Coordinator*





THANK YOU

for supporting our mission to
spark a passion for plants and
gardening through accessible
science and inspiring beauty.