



WEGERZYN GARDENS
FOUNDATION

2023
REVIEW



MISSION

To conduct fundraising, increase awareness, and support the programs and continued development of Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark, a facility of Five Rivers MetroParks. A 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization.

VISION

Wegerzyn will be a conduit of community support enabling Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark to be a preeminent regional public garden that fosters personal connections to nature through horticulture.

2023 BOARD



Jessica Wagner



Mary Gordon



Loretta Hill



Libby Freeze



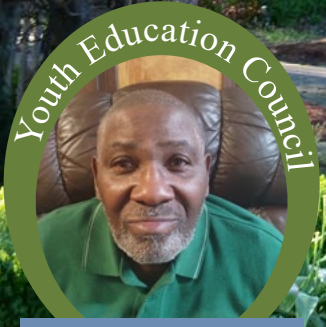
Donna Zobrist



Lisa Brown



Jackie McArdle



Richard Wilson



Rich Gillette



Elliott Haller



Katie Herzog

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Note from the President4

Special Events & Projects

Water Feature5

50 Reasons6

Witch Hazel Walk7

50th Anniversary Video7

Fundraisers

Gift & Garden Shop8

Bus Trips8

MayFair.....9

Garden Party9

Membership 10

Annual Funding

Taxus Pruning 11

Fall Family Adventure 11

Volunteer

Councils/Committee12-13

Financials

Revenue/Expenses 14

Legacy

Legacy Members..... 15

A note from the President:

It has been a pleasure serving as your Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation president these past two years. It was a privilege to get to know some of our wonderful volunteers and witness their commitment to not only Wegerzyn Gardens, but also the Foundation. Their willingness to serve was a true inspiration to me the last 24 months.

2023 was an especially meaningful as our beloved gardens turned 50! This review serves as a recap of activities, initiatives, events, projects during our golden anniversary. I hope seeing all of the incredible accomplishments and work of our volunteers and members will inspire you to serve and support our Foundation for the next 50 years and beyond!

Jessica Wagner

If interested in joining our board or one of our councils or committees {Membership Council, Fundraising Council, Horticultural Council, Adult Educational Council, Youth Educational Council, MayFair Committee, or Garden Party Committee} please contact the foundation.



Email: contact@wegerzyngardensfoundation.org

Phone: (937) 277-4839



Special Events and Projects

Opening of new Children's Discovery Garden Water Feature

The Children's Discovery Garden made a splash – literally – this spring with the opening of a revamped water feature! Similar to a splash pad, the new fresh water system will gurgle, bubble, spray, or pop depending on the rocks. It will require less maintenance allowing MetroParks staff to focus on other areas of the park. It also has an auto shut off feature to encourage kids to explore other areas of the gardens while the system resets. The entirety of the \$164,000 project was proudly funded by the Wegerzyn Gardens Foundation.



Special Events and Projects

50 Reasons (and counting) to love Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark

We celebrated Valentine's Day with a love letter to Wegerzyn. In honor of our 50th anniversary, we listed 50 reasons to love the Gardens and even found some colorful greenery to form a heart.

- ♥ Annual Garden Party
- ♥ Arbor Lawn
- ♥ Beautiful Potted Annual Arrangements
- ♥ Benjamin Wegerzyn's Legacy
- ♥ Bug House
- ♥ Children's Discovery Garden
- ♥ Commemorative Benches
- ♥ Community Garden Plots
- ♥ Dayton Playhouse
- ♥ Dedicated Volunteers
- ♥ Dragonfly Pond
- ♥ English Garden
- ♥ Fall Family Adventure
- ♥ Federal Garden
- ♥ Five Senses Garden
- ♥ Fossil Cave
- ♥ Foundation Support
- ♥ Fountains
- ♥ Garden Design Ideas
- ♥ Garden Sculptures
- ♥ Giant Bird's Nest
- ♥ Giant Pedestal Oak
- ♥ Giant Sand Table
- ♥ Great Horned Owl Nest
- ♥ Habitats for Wildlife
- ♥ Inspiration for Gift & Garden Shop
- ♥ Knowledgeable MetroParks Staff
- ♥ Marie Aull Nature Trail
- ♥ Memorial Garden
- ♥ Music Maze
- ♥ Part of American Horticultural Society
- ♥ Photography Sessions
- ♥ Places to Picnic
- ♥ Places to Play and Pretend
- ♥ Pollinator Habitats
- ♥ Prairie Garden
- ♥ Reforesting Efforts after 2019 Tornado
- ♥ Skeeter's Garden
- ♥ Starting Point for Foundation Bus Trips
- ♥ Stillwater River Trail
- ♥ Straw Bale House
- ♥ Swamp Forest Boardwalk
- ♥ Tree Diversity
- ♥ Victorian Garden
- ♥ Water Features for Kids
- ♥ What's In Bloom in June Membership Walks
- ♥ Wheelchair Accessibility
- ♥ Whimsical Topiaries
- ♥ Witch Hazel Collection
- ♥ Woodland Garden



Special Events and Projects

Witch-Hazel Walk

Nearly two dozen Foundation members toured the gardens for one of our most popular early spring events: the witch-hazel walk! Wegerzyn Horticulturalist from 1995-2012, Chris Jenson led the tour and explained the variations of the plant, bloom time and pruning. Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark is home to one of the largest collections in the United States.



Special Events and Projects

50th Anniversary Video

We couldn't let our 50th anniversary pass without an opportunity to record the perspectives of some of our past Foundation presidents. Starting with our first president, Louise Bennett, we asked them about their favorite memories, projects and how the Gardens have evolved over these last 50 years. You can watch the video by going to the "About" section on our website www.wegerzyngardensfoundation.org.

Fundraisers

These fundraisers happen only because of dedicated volunteers who devote their time and energy so we can support projects and programs at Wegerzyn. If you aren't already involved in volunteering, please consider doing so.

Gift & Garden Shop at the 2nd Street Market

The Gift & Garden Shop continues to be a staple at the 2nd Street Market. From house plants, to gardening tools and décor to holiday gifts, the shop is open Friday, Saturday and Sunday and led entirely by volunteers! Please make sure you stop by and remember, your Wegerzyn Membership includes a discount on purchases at the shop!



2023 Bus Trips

We're slowly bringing bus trips back to pre-COVID levels. This year, the Adult Education Council hosted two trips: One to Bucyrus to visit The Stalls of Pickwick Place, Toledo & Ohio Central Restored Railroad Station and Groovy Plants and the annual holiday trip stopped at the Festival of Trees in Indianapolis and the Warm Glow Candle Outlet. These trips are a great way to visit regional garden centers or attractions while connecting with other Foundation members



MayFair at the Market

After the pandemic hiatus, the annual MayFair plant sale returned at a new location: the 2nd Street Market! MayFair at the Market was held the first Thursday and Friday of May. The members-only event on Thursday gives priority to Foundation members before the plant sale opens to the general public the next day. Special thank you to the volunteers who worked tirelessly to launch this event at a new location



Garden Party

The annual soiree toasted our 50th anniversary with the Golden Garden theme. Nearly 200 guests gathered on the garden green for live music, dinner, dancing, and recollections from our Foundation historian, Jackie Simms McArdle. "Jackie toasted the Foundation's first president, Louise Bennett, who sadly passed away in 2023. Louise's dedication to Wegerzyn will be forever memorialized on a special bench that faces the Garden Green." Guests could also flip through our favorite photos, newsletters and news clippings about Wegerzyn over the last 50 years and displayed pictures of Foundation-funded projects.



Fundraisers

Membership & What's in Bloom in June Reunion Tour

The Membership council plans various member events, manages renewal notices and Foundation communication through the Garden Bridge newsletter. The annual What's in Bloom in June had a 50th anniversary twist! We invited past Foundation presidents and board members to a reunion style walk. Members could look through some historical documents, photos, and newspaper clippings chronicling Wegerzyn's founding and development over the last 50 years.

Active Members: 172



Louise Bennett



Jane Lynch



Carol Self



Sandi Simmons



David Robinson



Annual Funded Projects & Programs

Taxus Pruning

Since 2019, the Foundation has funded the annual pruning of the Taxus bushes in the formal gardens.



Fall Family Adventure

Since 2016, when the event started at Spooky Evening in the Garden the Foundation has funded this annual Five Rivers MetroParks program making it free to the public to attend. This year the Foundation had a table at the event and handed out chocolate gold fifty cent pieces to celebrate our 50th anniversary. Everyone was surprised to hear how long the gardens had been there and were thrilled to get some chocolate!



Volunteer Committees

Thank you to all the amazing volunteers that make it possible to continue to raise funds funding special projects and programs at Wegerzyn Gardens MetroPark. As a completely volunteer run board we truly could not do this without each of the volunteers that step up and help on a committee and/or the Gift & Garden Shop.

Adult Education Council

Leads, manages, and oversees annual bus trips and assists with membership council educational programs.

Chair: Donna Zobrist
Council Members: Maureen Aukerman, Tammy Braden, Rosie O'Grady, Jennie Eisnaugle, Carol Lutz, Nancy Nerny, Barbara Schenck, Kathy Turner, Tim Ziegert



Gift & Garden Shop Council

Manages and operates the retail business with proceeds going to the foundation.

Manager: Lisa Brown
Busyers: Dulie Greer, Judi Hill, Marilyn Allen, Carol Self, Judy Steiger, Joan Ste. Marie
Cashiers: Dianne Adkinson, Janet Hess, Marilyn Allen, Loretta Hill, Donna Bauer, Jeanne Kunay, Patrick Boston, Lisa Brown, Ed Lehman, Karla Miller, Timothy Cargle, Shane Conley, Joette Derrick, Carol Engle, Kery Gray, John Snyder, Michelle Stark



Membership Council

Plans, organizes, promotes, advertises, conducts, and reviews the success of programs presented by the Foundation with an emphasis on increasing membership.

Chairs: Jackie McArdle & Cindi Hillier
Council Members: India Clarke, Carol Self, Sue Howorth, Mary Gordon



Youth Education Council

Provide support to educational programming staff in the Children's Garden

Chair: Richard Wilson



MayFair Committee

Planning and execution of the annual MayFair fundraising event.

Chairs: Loretta Hill & Mary Gordon
Council Members: Terry Calcutt, Mary Dye, Jennie Eisnaugle, Patty Erbaugh, Jane Falck, Sue Howorth, Carol Self, Judy Payne, Joan Ste. Marie, Forest Taylor Skies, Karen Veve, Lisa Brown



Garden Party Committee

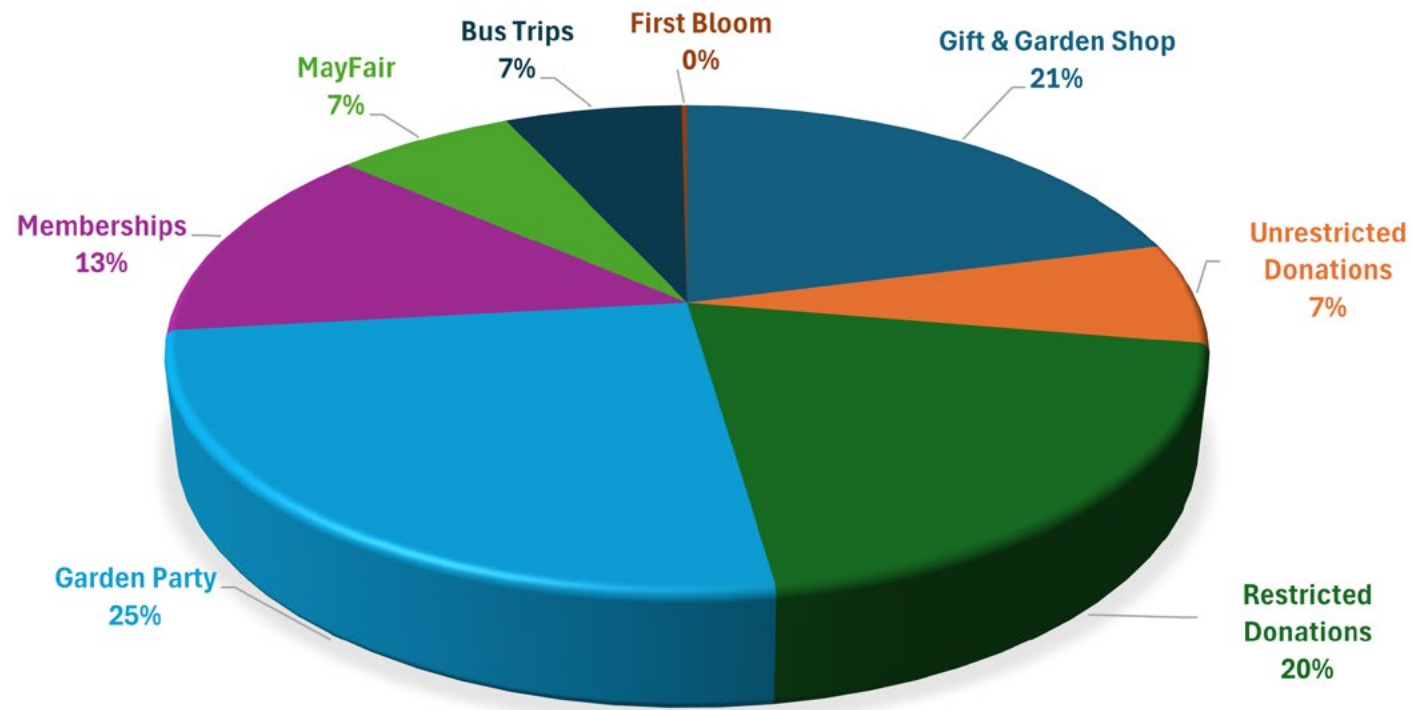
Plans and executes the annual Garden Party fundraising event.

Chairs: Jessica Wagner & Libby Freeze
Council Members: Dick Amann

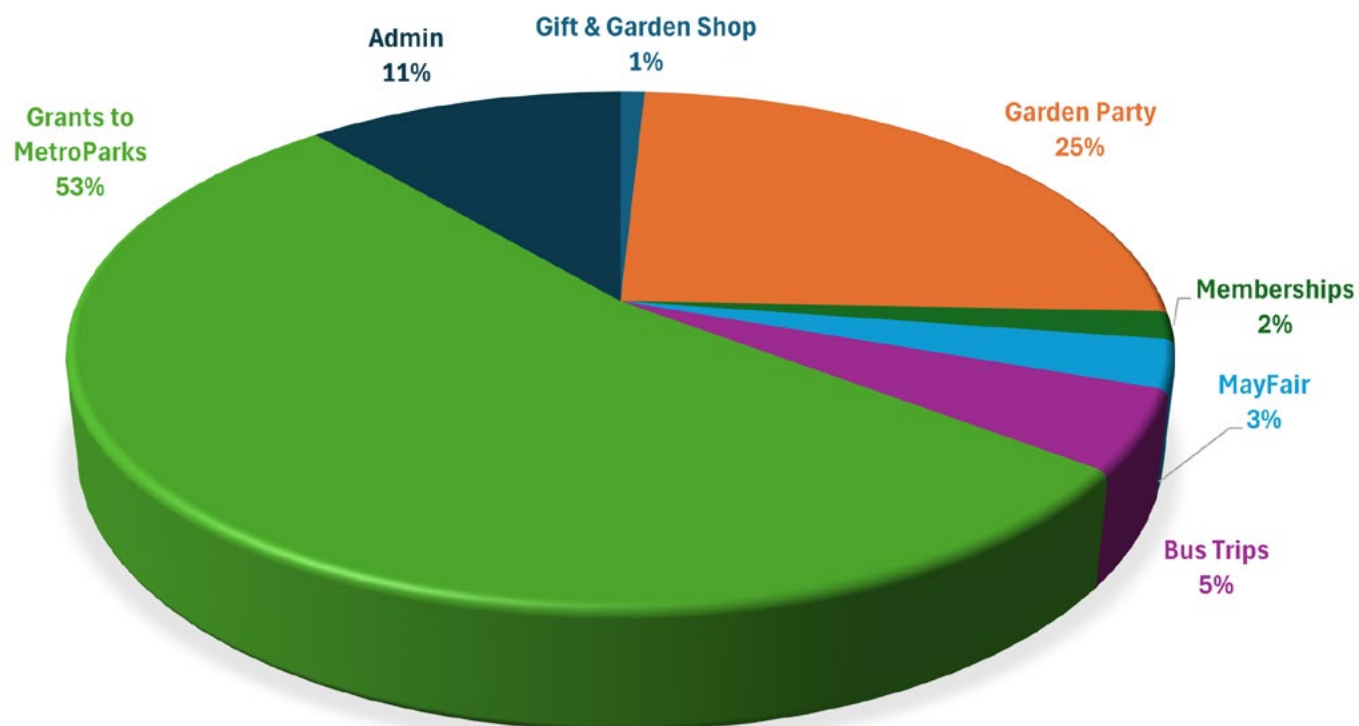


Financial Overview

Revenue



Expenses



Benjamin Wegerzyn Legacy Society Members

The Benjamin Wegerzyn Legacy Society was established to recognize individuals who have, through thoughtful estate planning, included a gift to the Foundation. These planned gifts can benefit you, your loved ones and the mission of the Foundation. All gifts, regardless of the size, will greatly help support the future of the Foundation.

Dick Amann
 Ronald and Louise* Bennett
 Marcy Corrado
 Beverly Friel*
 Mary Geiger
 Kery and Tim Gray
 Lynne Hamilton
 J Heilman
 Anonymous*
 Bruce and Sue Howorth
 John Isreal
 Chris Jensen
 Pat Katcavage
 John Kovach
 Ed and John Lehman

Jane Lynch
 Jackie and Lyn McArdle
 Marlene McLefresh
 Barbara O'Hara
 Charlotte Paugh
 Peg and Mel Peterson
 Mary Pfander
 Burt and Alice Saidel
 Carol and Mike Self
 Robert Siebenthaler
 Sandi and Tom Simmons
 Casey and Amy Skapik
 Casandra Strudwick
 Beth Young

If you are interested in learning about planned giving contact Five Rivers MetroParks Chief of Philanthropy, Alexis Larsen at 937-274-4381 or alexis.larsen@metroparks.org.

A love letter to Wegerzyn

MetroPark garden celebrates 50th anniversary.



Wegerzyn Gardens was featured this year in the Dayton Daily News. Be sure to check out this lovely article by Meredith Moss: <https://www.dayton.com/what-to-know/a-love-letter-to-wegerzyn/SZEDCDHI45FBTLILBZMFN3CBME/>

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