

BLAIR STREET GARDENS
NEWSLETTER and NOTICE of ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 2019

THANKS TO YOU, our contributors, for another successful season at Blair Street Gardens. With your help, Blair Street Gardens Committee, Inc. continues to maintain three gardens at or near the intersection of John Nolen Drive and Blair, Wilson and Williamson Streets in downtown Madison.

- Gateway Garden on the 600 block of Willy Street
- MGE Garden on S. Blair Street
- Wilson Green on the 400 block of E. Wilson Street across from the Nomad World Pub (formerly The Cardinal Bar)

As we begin our 2019 season, please join us at the Annual Meeting on Monday, March 25 to plan activities and elect Board members and officers.

NOTICE of ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, March 25

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

807 Jenifer Street

(across from BB Clarke Beach)

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| • Elect
board &
officers | • Adopt
the
budget | • Plan for
2019 |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|

THANKS TO THE BOARD

Thank you to the 2018 Officers and Board members - Ellen Henningsen, President; Mary Knapp, Vice-President; Kevin Earley, Secretary; Eileen Somers, Treasurer; and Gary Tipler, Board Member. Even a small organization like BSG requires the attention of a Board of Directors, plus the Board's volunteer time maintaining the gardens is invaluable. Thanks for your service.

VOLUNTEERS MAINTAIN THE GARDENS

For the 2018 gardening season, 10 volunteers contributed 70 hours during 6 work days (various Saturday mornings from 9 am – noon). Additional hours were donated on an ad hoc basis. Although we have reduced the number of volunteer hours needed, additional volunteers are always welcome.

We will be scheduling dates soon for spring clean-up. The work always goes faster with more volunteers! The schedule is usually half days on a Saturday morning, and a few hours on a weekday evening. Check our Facebook page or website for the schedule. To receive e-mails about the schedule, email us at the address below. Or look for the signs posted at the gardens.

BEQUEST RECEIVED

Many of our contributors never miss making a yearly contribution to Blair Street Gardens. One of our longest contributors was Gabriele Zu Rhein, M.D., a renowned neuropathologist and professor at the University of Wisconsin Medical School. Sadly, she passed away in 2016. We were surprised to learn that her estate plan included a bequest to Blair Street Gardens. We greatly appreciate her generous gift.

GATEWAY GARDEN UPDATE

Reiner Family Tree

In 2016, we replaced the spruce tree which anchored the Gateway Garden at the corner because it was misshaped, too large for the site, and in the wrong place. But the replacement tree, also a spruce, became diseased, and it was replaced this past fall with a third spruce. All three of the trees have been

BLAIR STREET GARDENS P.O. Box 1333 Madison, WI 53701-1333

info@blairstreetgardens.org

www.blairstreetgardens.org

www.facebook.com/Blair-Street-Gardens

Beautifying the Gateway to Downtown Madison

donated by the Reiner Family to commemorate the first Christmas tree in Madison, erected in 1855 in their family home which once stood near the garden. And each Christmas season, the family strings the tree with lights - a welcome site during the holidays. Thank you to the Reiner Family.

Memorializing a Loved One

Opportunities to memorialize a loved one with a memorial tree or bench are available. The benches, designed by local artists Michael Burns and Kevin Earley, are made of white oak and aluminum. The design was inspired by shadows created by sunlight filtering through leaves. Memorial benches are offered at \$8,000 and memorial trees at \$1,000. If you are interested, see our website for more information or contact us at info@blairstreetgardens.org

Little Library Installed

As reported last year, Avant Gardening & Landscaping donated and installed a Little Library at the Gateway Garden. Located next to the memorial bench, it's usually full of books, so please stop by to take some. Donations of books are also welcome.

Willy & E. Wilson Streets Reconstruction

This spring and summer, the City will be reconstructing Williamson and E. Wilson Streets from S. Franklin Street to S. Blount Street. This is a separate project from the planned, but not yet scheduled, reconstruction of the intersection of John Nolen Drive, and Wilson, Williamson and Blair Streets. The City has assured us that the street reconstruction will not impact The Gateway Garden itself. However, the grade level area at the point of the Garden (west of the retaining wall) will become a staging area for pedestrians and bicyclists. We anticipated this so did not include this area in the new

garden. Information about the project is at <http://www.cityofmadison.com/engineering/projects/williamson-and-e-wilson-st>

MGE BED UPDATE

Our second garden nestles next to the MGE building on S. Blair Street. Last season, MGE generously donated the labor and plants for the garden. We appreciate MGE's continuing contribution.

WILSON GREEN UPDATE

BSG's third garden is called Wilson Green, and is located on E. Wilson Street across from World Nomad Pub (formerly The Cardinal Bar). It includes a large, raised perennial bed which we continued to maintain this past season. For years, it also included an annual bed, but we removed that bed last summer to reduce expenses and volunteer time. The perennial bed is now more prominent. With the pathway and bench, it's a pleasant spot to relax.

BOARD MEMBER NEEDED

If you are interested in helping guide Blair Street Gardens over the next season, please consider joining the Board of Directors. Responsibilities include 1-2 meetings a year, plus being available for input via e-mail or phone. If you prefer, you can participate on an informal basis. If interested, e-mail info@blairstreetgardens.org.

AND THANKS -

Thanks to Kate Nagel of Business Support Solutions, LLC, for volunteering her time and expertise to maintain our website.

AND DON'T FORGET -

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