

Green Bay Botanical Garden: Surpasses Nature Nurtures capital campaign goal for Children's Garden expansion project

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Garden Raises \$13.3 Million, \$1.8 Million Over Original Goal

(GREEN BAY, WI) (February 3, 2022) — Green Bay Botanical Garden announced today that the community has not only met, but exceeded, the original \$11.5 million fundraising goal for the Nature Nurtures Campaign. These funds will be used to build the new 2.5-acre Carol & Bruce Bell Children's Garden. The Garden will begin additional planning immediately and anticipates construction will begin when winter conditions subside in early spring 2022, with a grand opening slated for 2023.

"We are fortunate to be part of a community that responded so enthusiastically and generously to this project," says Susan Garot, Executive Director. "Since the campaign launched in September, giving totaled more than \$13.3 million dollars for the Children's Garden – \$1.8 million over our goal!"

More than 375 donors gave during the Nature Nurtures Campaign, a 25% increase since the Garden's last campaign, which was for the Schneider Family Grand Garden in 2016 and had about 300 donors. The Nature Nurtures Campaign also exceeded the Grand Garden campaign in funds raised by over 100%!

“We can’t thank our donors enough for stepping up to support this project to create a natural wonderland for children and families to enjoy for years to come,” says Garot.

Boldt Construction, headquartered in Appleton, was selected via the bidding process to be the general contractor for the expansion, and the Garden is excited to partner with them on this unique project. Boldt is a reputable company with deep roots in this region, and they have experience on a number of projects constructed in natural settings.

Given the current environment of higher supply and labor costs and supply chain delays, the \$1.8 million raised above the Garden’s goal will be very much needed. During the bidding process, the Garden found the costs of the project came in significantly higher than originally estimated for a number of reasons, such as the cost of materials like steel, and limited availability of materials.

“Educators and parents have emphasized to us in the last few years that outdoor play and exploration is important for the development of their kids – and these past two years have certainly proven that, so the time is right for this project,” says Linda Gustke, Director of Education & Guest Experience at the Garden.

The current Nielsen Children’s Garden includes a slide tower surrounded by Mr. McGregor’s Garden, a maze, a koi pond, and the Stumpf Hobbit House restroom. The expansion will build upon these beloved favorites surrounding the **Gertrude B. Nielsen Village**, with a wide variety of new areas to enjoy.

The following unique features to be built within the new **Carol & Bruce Bell Children’s Garden** include:

- Gateway Sculpture, sponsored by the late **Edward L. Meyer, Jr. and Mary Ellen Troup**.
- Raindrop Garden, sponsored by **Judith Parish**
- **Cornerstone Foundation** Wetland Stream Garden
- Lily Pad Splash Pad, sponsored by **Gail Fischer**
- **Rosemann Family** Field Vegetable Garden

- **Green Bay Packers** Big Oak Play Area
- **KC Stock Foundation** Mushroom Jumper Play Area
- **George Kress Foundation** Tree Houses
- Council of Critters, sponsored by **Patricia Schneider**
- **Schanock Family** Hillside Tunnel & Cave, and more.

The project also includes nature-based art sculptures by well-known artists from across the country that will help to tell the engaging and educational stories of nature. Families will be able to experience the wonder of the Wisconsin wild and learn together, instilling a love of nature for all time.

Having just celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2021, the Garden looks forward to the next 25 years and more to come, and is grateful for the continued generosity from the greater Green Bay and northeast Wisconsin community.

Those interested in learning more about the expansion can contact Susan Garot, Executive Director, at 920.491.3691 ext. 102 or sgarot@gbbg.org or Cindy Berton, Director of Development, at ext. 104 or cberton@gbbg.org.

For updates on the project, visit [GBBG.org/ChildrensGarden](https://gbbg.org/ChildrensGarden). For renderings and a map of the project, visit [GBBG.org/Media](https://gbbg.org/Media).

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About Green Bay Botanical Garden

Green Bay Botanical Garden connects people with plants by providing year-round educational and recreational experiences for everyone in an environment that engages, inspires, and refreshes. First opened in 1996 and now featuring 47-acres of display gardens and natural areas, the Garden touches the lives of more than 150,000 visitors annually on average from northeast Wisconsin and beyond. For more information about other happenings, visit [GBBG.org](https://gbbg.org) or call 920.490.9457.

Editors, please note: Captions follow photos below. Interviews, virtual interviews (i.e. Zoom, FaceTime, etc.), pre-recorded videos, story leads, and additional high-resolution digital images are available by contacting the media representative at the top of this release.

Caption:

Aerial view of expanded Children's Garden. (Design rendering courtesy of SmithGroup)

Caption:

Tree Houses will become a place for nature, learning, and play for all ages. (Design rendering courtesy of SmithGroup)