

BLAIR STREET GARDENS  
NEWSLETTER and NOTICE of ANNUAL MEETING  
March 2016

**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. As we begin our 2016 season, please join us at the Annual Meeting on March 23 to plan activities and elect Board members and officers.

**NOTICE of ANNUAL MEETING**

Wednesday, March 23, 2016  
6:30 – 8:30 p.m. / 111 S. Hancock Street

- |                                |                          |                    |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| • Elect<br>board &<br>officers | • Adopt<br>the<br>budget | • Plan for<br>2016 |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|

**Gateway Garden Has Been Transformed!**

Avant Gardening & Landscaping's design dramatically transformed the area into a small urban park for pedestrians and bicyclists. Re-grading eliminated the large, curved flower bed and created a larger space toward E. Wilson Street for a seating area. Retaining walls, a patio, and seating areas have been created. Several gravel pathways lead to the seating areas. Oak trees, a coffee tree, serviceberries, sumac, asters, goldenrod, and over 100 little bluestem grasses were planted in raised beds.

Our website – [www.blairstreetgardens.org](http://www.blairstreetgardens.org) – contains photos of the transformation.

We are grateful to the many people and businesses who contributed to the project.

**Thank You to the Board of Directors**

As you can imagine there were a lot of moving parts re-designing the Gateway Garden – designing, fundraising, permitting, contracting, coordinating - but it all came together thanks to the work of the Board and our many in-kind contributors. 2015 Officers and Board members are Ellen Henningsen, President; Kevin Earley, Secretary; Eileen Somers, Treasurer; and Gary Tipler, board member. Neighbor Bruce Woods, PLA, provided invaluable landscaping advice.

**Thank You to Avant Gardening & Landscaping**

Avant Gardening & Landscaping was the key to the transformation. Avant generously donated its design and landscaping services, creating an innovative and beautiful design and donating countless hours of staff time and expertise. This is an incredibly generous donation which ensured the success of our plans. Thanks so much to Liza Lightfoot, Tim Stenzel, Katey Smith, and Avant's hardworking crew. Learn more about Avant Gardening & Landscaping at [www.avantgardening.com](http://www.avantgardening.com).

**Thank You to our Grantors**

The MGE Foundation was also instrumental to the success of the project. The Foundation provided a grant of \$10,000 to purchase regrading work. MGE also donated plants and labor for the bed on Blair Street. The City of Madison Neighborhood Grant Program provided \$5,000 toward the cost of the project, and the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society granted \$500 towards the cost of plants. We appreciate the support of these generous grantors.

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

[info@blairstreetgardens.org](mailto:info@blairstreetgardens.org)

[www.blairstreetgardens.org](http://www.blairstreetgardens.org)

[www.facebook.com/Blair-Street-Gardens-360721230674519](https://www.facebook.com/Blair-Street-Gardens-360721230674519)

Beautifying the Gateway to Downtown Madison

**Thank You to our In-Kind Vendors**

Several local businesses were also incredibly generous and donated materials and services.

Thank you to the following in-kind vendors:

- Breezy Hill Nursery
- Barnes Inc.
- Johnson’s Nursery
- Jung’s Garden Center
- Madison Block & Stone
- Madison Sand & Gravel
- Midwest Decorative Stone
- Moyer’s Landscape Services
- Proscapes
- Struck & Irwin Fence
- Tree Health Management

**Thank You to the Reiner Family**

Long ago, the Reiner family home stood near where the Gateway Gardens are now. Several years ago, the Reiner family planted a spruce tree which they light every winter to commemorate their family’s residence and the first Christmas tree in Madison. That tree was removed during the transformation of the gardens because it was misshapen and poorly located. The Reiner family kindly donated a new spruce tree which they lit again over the holidays. Thanks to the Reiner family for their continuing contribution.

**Thank You to The Marquette Neighborhood Association**

Last, but most certainly not least, MNA’s support was critical to obtaining the City’s approval of the plan and to winning the Neighborhood Grant.

**Looking Ahead**

But the work isn’t done yet. We will be creating and installing wooden benches in 2016, as well as planting more native perennials. If you are interested in memorializing a loved one with a memorial

bench, please contact us at [info@blairstreetgardens.org](mailto:info@blairstreetgardens.org).

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**More Thanks**

Thanks to Kate Nagel of Business Support Solutions, LLC, for maintaining our website, and to Gary Tipler for maintaining our Facebook page. And thank you to graphic designer Spencer Walts, who contributed his impressive design skills to our October 2016 fundraising appeal.

**Board Member and Volunteers Needed**

If you are interested in helping guide Blair Street Gardens over the next season, please consider joining the Board of Directors. Responsibilities include 1-3 meetings a year, plus being available for input via e-mail. Or, if you prefer, you can participate on an informal basis. If you are interested in participating, please e-mail [info@blairstreetgardens.org](mailto:info@blairstreetgardens.org).

**Upcoming Gardening Days**

We will be scheduling dates soon for planting at the new Gateway Garden and for spring clean-up. The schedule is half days on a Saturday morning, and a few hours on a weekday evening. Check our Facebook page or [blairstreetgardens.org](http://blairstreetgardens.org) for the schedule. Or e-mail [info@blairstreetgardens.org](mailto:info@blairstreetgardens.org) to receive e-mails about the schedule. Thank you.

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