

BLAIR STREET GARDENS
NEWSLETTER and NOTICE of ANNUAL MEETING
MARCH 2020

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

As we begin our 2020 season, please join us at the Annual Meeting on Monday, March 30 to plan activities and elect Board members and officers.

NOTICE of ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, March 30, 2020

6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

111 S. Hancock Street

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| • Elect
board &
officers | • Adopt
the
budget | • Plan for
2020 |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|

THANKS TO THE BOARD

Thank you to the 2019 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.

YOU CAN DONATE NATIVE PLANTS TO OUR GARDENS – DEADLINE IS MARCH 20

We invite you to donate native plants to our gardens through the Plant Dane Native Plant Program, a project of Dane County's Land and Water Resources Department. For a minimum donation of \$9, donors can purchase plants for Blair Street Gardens grown by a local grower. Plants are \$2.25 each and must be ordered in multiples of 4. To order, go to: <https://ripple-effects.com/Order/Donate>. Look for the Project field, then click on the down arrow and select Blair Street Gardens. Then select the number of plant sets you'd like to donate (each set is 4 plants). The plant varieties will be selected by BSG. *The deadline to donate is March 20.*

Plants will be used to refresh the gravel garden at The Gateway Garden, and the perennial bed at Wilson Green. Donations through this program would be greatly appreciated, and are an inexpensive way to maintain the gardens.

VOLLUNTEERS MAINTAIN THE GARDENS

During the 2019 gardening season, 5 volunteers contributed 38 hours during 7 Saturday mornings to maintain the gardens. Many additional hours were donated on an ad hoc basis.

We will be scheduling dates soon for spring clean-up. The work always goes faster with more volunteers! 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 signs posted at the gardens.

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

info@blairstreetgardens.org

www.blairstreetgardens.org

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

Beautifying the Gateway to Downtown Madison

GATEWAY GARDEN UPDATE

Willy & E. Wilson Streets Reconstruction

This past summer, the City reconstructed Williamson and E. Wilson Streets on either side of the Gateway Garden. The City fenced off the gardens, so only minor damage was done which we will be repairing this spring. Unfortunately, the City will not be reimbursing BSG for the damage. The grade level area at the point of the Garden (west of the retaining wall) was paved and is now a staging area for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Reiner Family Tree

Once again, we will be replacing the evergreen tree that sits near the point of the Gateway Garden. A spruce was originally planted many years ago 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. In 2016, we replaced that spruce tree because it was misshapen, too large for the site, and in the wrong place. But the replacement tree, also a spruce, became diseased, and was replaced in 2018. And now the third tree is dying, and will be replaced. Hopefully the 4th time will be the charm! Thank you to the Reiner Family for continuing to support the Gardens and for lighting the tree every holiday season.

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

MGE BED UPDATE

Our second garden nestles next to the MGE building on S. Blair Street. MGE has been generously donated the labor and plants for the garden for several years. In 2019 employees from MGE replanted the garden with pollinator - friendly plants. MGE worked with UW Extension to select native wildflowers that will help attract bees, butterflies and other beneficial insects. 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. 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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