

BLAIR STREET GARDENS
NEWSLETTER and NOTICE of ANNUAL MEETING
SPRING 2025

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTION to Blair Street Gardens. Some of you are first-time donors, many of you have given for years. How wonderful to visit our post office box, retrieve the envelopes, and see the generous checks with many new names, and many familiar ones as well. Thank you all. With your help, Blair Street Gardens Committee, Inc. maintains two 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 Williamson Street
- **Wilson Green** on the 400 block of E. Wilson Street

As the 2025 gardening season edges closer, we **invite you to attend the Annual Meeting on Thursday, March 27 at 5:00 p.m.** to plan activities and elect Board members and officers.

NOTICE of ANNUAL MEETING

Thursday, March 27
5:00 – 7:00 p.m.
807 Jenifer Street

- Elect board & officers
- Adopt the budget
- Plan for 2025 & beyond

THANKS TO THE BOARD

Thanks to the 2024 Officers and Board members - Ellen Henningsen, President and Acting Treasurer; Mary Knapp, Vice-President; Kevin Earley, Secretary; and Gary Tipler, Board member – for their dedication to the gardens.

GOOD NEWS ABOUT BSG'S FUTURE

As you may remember from last year's newsletter, several members of the Board announced their retirement after years of service but at the time there were no replacements. Thus, an option being discussed was dissolving the organization.

Fortunately, our outreach efforts – a booth at the Orton Park Festival and yard signs at both gardens - were successful! Several new energetic and creative individuals have volunteered to help with gardening and administration. We now expect to be able to continue maintaining the gardens for years to come.

Thanks to Eli Tsarovsky of Capitol Neighborhoods Inc. for organizing well-attended volunteer events. Thanks to **Taylor Blair** of Period Garden Park for creating the QR code and Google form that facilitated the recruitment of new volunteers. Thanks to **Tom Marmet** and **Michael Friedman** for their computer and webmaster skills. Thanks to **Liz Zona** for her social media skills and for joining the Board and to **Gregory Roliardi** for joining the Board.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO KEVIN EARLEY

Our deepest appreciation goes to **Kevin Earley** who served on the Board for years, contributing his wit and energy, as well as his gardening and mechanical expertise. Although now retired from the Board, Kevin will continue to volunteer his gardening skills. Thank you Kevin.

- OVER -

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

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

Beautifying the Gateway to Downtown Madison

- **CONT'D from OTHER SIDE** -

SOON YOU CAN DONATE TO BSG ON-LINE!

Thanks to our new volunteers with their tech and social media skills, we'll be improving and expanding our social media presence. A new website, more frequent posts on Facebook, and a new Instagram account are all in the works. **And you'll be able to make donations to BSG online!** Look for the launch in late spring.

GATEWAY GARDEN UPDATE

The reconstruction of the "hairball intersection" at Willy Street and John Nolen Drive resulted in some damage to a retaining wall at The Gateway Garden which we repaired last fall.

The hornbeam tree that died the summer of 2023 did not die because of that summer's drought, as we originally thought. Turns out it was nibbled to death by rabbits who had dug a burrow nearby. Not sure if we'll replace it.

The conifer at "the point" of the gardens commemorates the first Christmas tree in Madison, erected in 1855 in the home of the Reiner family which once stood near the garden. The Reiner family lights the tree every holiday season. Thank you to the Reiner Family for continuing to support the Gardens.

WILSON GREEN UPDATE

We continue to maintain the large, raised perennial bed. Gary Tipler led a pruning workshop there this fall, demonstrating how to properly prune conifers to promote health and growth.

The city is planning to improve the lakeshore along John Nolen Drive, starting at the western end. Any improvements that might impact

Wilson Green are not planned for at least 5 years or more.

LAKEFRONT PORCH IS OPEN

Congratulations to the volunteers who have created a marvelous gathering place on top of the Crowley (pumping) station next to Wilson Green. Now designated as a city park, it's a nice complement to Wilson Green.

VOLUNTEER TO MAINTAIN THE GARDENS

Thanks to Capitol Neighborhoods Inc., we held several successful volunteer events in 2024 at both gardens. We weeded, pruned, mulched and picked up litter. If you want to receive a notice before each event for this season, email us at info@blairstreetgardens.org. Or look for signs posted at the gardens. You can also volunteer on your own schedule – if interested, email us.

TREASURER NEEDED

Do you like to count money? Blair Street Gardens Committee is looking for a volunteer to handle the duties of Treasurer. Duties take about 2 hours a month, and include maintaining financial records and mailing lists, handling mail, paying bills, processing contributions, etc. If interested or for more information, email BSG at info@blairstreetgardens.org.

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