

Friends of the
KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY



GARDENS

NEWS

Spring 2024



Photos courtesy of Joan Wasser.

Kansas State University GARDENS

Constructed and maintained by the
Department of Horticulture
& Natural Resources

Staff

Scott K. McElwain, *K-State Gardens Director*
mcelwain@k-state.edu | 785-532-1397

Emily Hall, *Landscape Tech II*

Nancy Cole, *Office Specialist I*

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Supporting The GARDENS

Please email us at
ksugardens@k-state.edu
or call 785-532-3271.



From the Director of the Gardens

As we plan and sow seeds for our annual flower and veggie displays, we're looking forward to several special events this year and next. We are fortunate to have dedicated volunteers developing fundraising and educational opportunities for the Gardens, including a committee that is already working on our 150th anniversary celebration. They've come up with some great ideas for monthly events at the Gardens and we know they'll make 2025 a year to remember. If you'd like to be involved, please email valeriaccconverse@gmail.com.

Phase I of the reflecting pool's construction is set to resume in March when granite coping and veneer shipments arrive. As you can see from the progress photos taken in December, it's an ambitious project with a very complex system. I think the pool equipment vault alone is bigger than my old college apartment! We're very anxious to see the reflecting pool filled up and running. Our goal is to have water flowing and the site cleaned up before our annual Garden party in June.

While the official dedication date for the reflecting pool is yet to be determined, we hope you'll join us in 2024 for this amazing and much anticipated addition to the Gardens. Visit our website and Facebook page for regular updates on Garden projects and upcoming events.

Scott McElwain
K-State Gardens Director



The Quinlan Society

The Quinlan Society at the Kansas State University Gardens recognizes individuals who have given \$10,000 or more in their lifetime to the gardens. Plaques in the Quinlan Visitor Center at the Gardens display our Quinlan Society members. Every five years, we publicly recognize and honor our new Quinlan Society members. The next Quinlan Society recognition is in 2025, which is the 150th anniversary of the K-State Gardens.

Are you a Quinlan Society member? Are you close to being a Quinlan Society Member? The KSU Foundation can give you a total of your lifetime giving, or you can contact the Gardens at 785-532-3271. We would love to honor and recognize you in 2025. What a special time for the Quinlan Society recognition!

Thank you for your support of the K-State Gardens and a big thank you to our Quinlan Society members!

From the President of the Friends

Make a difference: Support the K-State Gardens today!

Your support as a Friend of the K-State Gardens is vital in preserving its magical beauty and ensuring it remains a place of solace and inspiration for all who visit.

The Gardens are a testament to the power of community and shared passion. Your support shows your belief in the importance of preserving natural beauty and providing a peaceful haven for everyone.

Don't miss this opportunity to make a lasting impact on the K-State Gardens. **Your gift matters!** Join us in preserving the Gardens for generations to come by making your gift today conveniently online at ksufoundation.org/give/gardens.

Thank you for your continued dedication to the K-State Gardens. Your generosity is a source of inspiration for us all.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Jenne Streeter, *President*
Friends of the Gardens Board of Directors

Don Glaser, *Chair*
Friends of the Gardens Development Committee





Annual displays at the Gardens

During the growing season, the Gardens are home to over 4,000 annuals. From the tall cannas and elephant ears to the smallest tufts of alyssum on the ground, each plant is just one brush stroke in a giant, ever-changing painting.

When I started working here in August of 2022, the annual beds were in full glory. Even as I marveled at the displays, part of me was already looking forward to plant shopping for next year. Imagine my surprise when I learned that we rarely buy new annual plants. Almost all 4,000 are saved, propagated or grown.

Why let mature, expensive plants die when they can be saved and replanted in the spring? We dig up our large grasses and herbs, divide them, pot them and place them in the greenhouse. We store cannas, elephant ears and sweet potato vine tubers in the basement.

Propagating plants allows us to consistently keep key annual cultivars year after year. Before the first frost, we clip a few long stems from our salvias, lantanas, alternantheras and others. Each stem yields numerous cuttings — just a node and a leaf

are all we need! Not all cuttings flourish, but enough grow to display a range of our best performing annuals.

We get most of the plants we need through our collaboration with the Department of Horticulture & Natural Resources, specifically Kimberly Williams, professor of greenhouse management. She incorporates our annual needs into her course on plant production, and her students grow them from seed or herbaceous cuttings. Some of these seeds and cuttings are the latest All-American Selections winners. Others we buy on our own so we can exhibit a variety of new plants each year. Most seeds are donated to the department for use in Professor Williams' class. Our partnership gives students hands-on experience and puts the results of their work on display in the Gardens.

I'm very excited about this year's annuals. We're expanding our display to the old conservatory site, and we have an incredible lineup of interesting new plants for all to enjoy.

Emily Hall
K-State Gardens Landscape Tech

News bites

✿ The annual poinsettia and amaryllis sale was a success. Many thanks to the volunteers who assembled orders and worked the loading dock distribution center. The most popular poinsettia was Ferrara Red.



✿ Approximately 8,000 tulip bulbs were planted in the Cottage Garden by staff and the Purple Thumbs volunteers. Last year's tulips in other areas of the Gardens will rebloom.

✿ The Gardens website is getting a new look. It will be ready soon, and we hope you like it.

✿ People lined up early for the annual iris sale and shopped till they found their hearts desire. K-State irises will bloom in the spring throughout Manhattan and beyond.

✿ Suggestion: When winter melts, schedule a docent-led tour of the Gardens. Call 785-532-3271.

✿ A new and abbreviated version of the Gardens self-guided tour brochure is now available in the "bird houses" by the Quinlan Visitor Center's front door and the parking lot kiosk.

✿ Plan to attend the annual Garden Party on June 7, 2024, from 6:30-10 p.m.



Docents with nature walk prop

New nature walk through the Gardens for second graders

Four second-grade classes were treated to a nature walk through the Gardens in September. Beth Whitson, a new docent, had shared her experience as a guide at the Dillon Nature Center in Hutchinson with several other docents, and the nature walk in the Gardens was born. Beth developed the nature walk to align with the Kansas standards for elementary school science. The kids were interested and asked and answered pertinent questions. Marty Reed, another docent, made a fantastic prop for docents to use when explaining flower parts. We have the best volunteers!

AWL thumbs at work

We're excited to report that our AWL Thumbs (volunteer woodworkers) gave the Gardens' old and well used garden shed a makeover and it turned out better than putting lipstick on a pig. It was enlarged, got new "barn doors", and was reorganized for easy access to tools and supplies. Word is that the new stain brought out the artistic side of the plywood front. More improvements are planned for the spring.



Volunteer picnic

Last fall, our Purple and AWL Thumb volunteers gathered for an evening of food and camaraderie to celebrate their involvement in the Gardens. Guests were treated to a delicious potluck starring pulled pork, amazing cheese grits, fresh produce from the Gardens and other delicious dishes. There was a lot of conversation and laughter as well as a few spirited games of corn hole. Scott and Emily expressed heartfelt thanks for their hard work.



Ann Scott Memorial

The Butterfly Garden display bed is dedicated in memory of Ann Scott, a founding member of the Friends of the Gardens board who passed away in September 2023.

Ann's love and knowledge of the great gardens of England and the United States inspired her to establish Lee Creek Gardens in Manhattan and endow the plants for the K-State Gardens Butterfly Garden. She was very active on the board and in the Gardens for many years and is greatly missed.



Welcome to our new employee

Nancy Cole is working part time in the office as our office specialist, and we couldn't be happier. She's learning the ropes and taking the lead. Nancy is also a longtime Friends of the Gardens board member, bringing a rich history and an eye to the future.

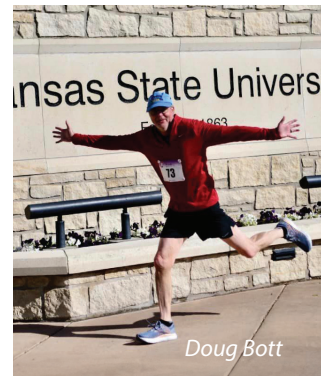
Run for the Roses

The third annual Run for the Roses is planned for April 27, 2024, from 9 to 11:30 a.m. These 5K run and 1K walk courses start and end at the K-State Gardens. The courses are slightly modified this year due to campus construction and are not USATF certified for 2024. There will be face painters, balloon art and 10,000 tulips in bloom in the Gardens to entertain spectators. More information is available on our website at k-state.edu/gardens/events/run-for-the-roses.

September Stroll 2023



Sept. 8 was a delightful evening to stroll the collections and specialty beds in the Gardens. The conservatory footprint hosted seasonal plants, and the reflecting pool construction could be viewed through the fence. Our second annual house plant sale staffed by Purple Thumbs was very popular with people lining up 30 minutes early to get the pick of the crop. Plants were provided by the Department of Horticulture & Natural Resources.



Annual Garden Party — Island of Paradise

Aloha!

Save the date — 6:30 p.m., Friday, June 7, 2024.

Join us in your tropical attire and hula on over for an evening of fun and entertainment— all in support of the K-State Gardens internship program. Stroll through the Gardens and see the progress on the reflecting pool, while enjoying food, drink and live music.

Visit k-state.edu/gardens for more information.

- ✿ Signature drink and appetizers.
- ✿ Dinner buffet and desserts.
- ✿ Open bar.
- ✿ Silent auction.
- ✿ Tropical music.
- ✿ Photo opportunities.

(RSVP by Friday, May 24)

Order Tickets,
Donate and Sponsor



Photos courtesy of Joan Wasser.

Department of Horticulture
 & Natural Resources
 2021 Throckmorton Hall
 1712 Claflin Rd.
 Manhattan, KS 66506-5506

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SAVE THE DATES

April 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
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28	29	30				

May 2024

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June 2024

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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
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July 2024

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

**All-University
 Open House**
April 6, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Tulip Photo Op
April 6, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Kids K-State Garden Club
TBA

Tulip Blooms
mid-April through early May

Run for the Roses
April 27, 9-11:30 a.m.

Tulip Bulb Sale
May 3, 4-5 p.m.

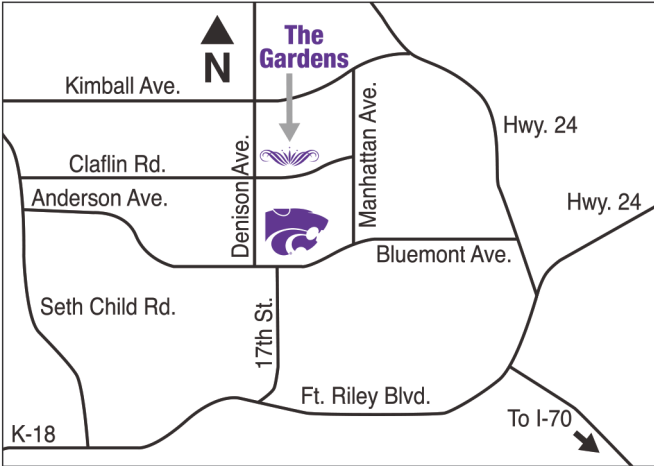
Iris Day
May 12, 1-4 p.m.

Garden Party
June 7, 6:30-10 p.m.

**Riley County Master
 Gardener Tour**
June 22, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Iris Sale
July 27, 8-10 a.m.

The Kansas State University Gardens are designed as a lifelong learning laboratory to encourage environmental involvement with the university community and the public. An ever-changing display of plants provides an opportunity for education, research and conservation.



The Gardens are on the campus of Kansas State University at 1500 Denison Ave., north of Clafin Road. The Quinlan Visitor Center is part of the historic Glenn H. Beck Dairy Barn.

k-state.edu/gardens

 Like us on Facebook:

facebook.com/kstate.gardens