

THE GARDEN

MCKEE BOTANICAL GARDEN | SPRING 2023



SPECIAL WORLD WAR II DEDICATION

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SPRING IS IN THE AIR!

A Message from Christine Hobart, Executive Director

I cannot believe spring is already here! It feels as if the *Festival of Lights* in December and the *Annual Motor Car Exhibition* in February were just yesterday, yet now it is already spring. Before you know it, our *Annual Waterlily Celebration* in June will be a thing of the past.



We recently held our Annual Membership Meeting and welcomed a sold-out crowd, our biggest attendance ever for this meeting. During the meeting, I reviewed a few highlights from this past year. For those of you who were not able to attend the meeting, I would like to share some of these highlights with you.

During the last fiscal year (July 2021- June 2022), we welcomed a record 136,000 visitors to the Garden! Just to give you an idea of how much we've grown, when we first opened McKee over twenty-two years ago, we had 20,000 visitors. Since our reopening in 2001, we've welcomed over one million visitors! I love looking out my office window and seeing the parking lot filled with cars and crowds making their way to the entrance! We have really become a destination...for everyone!

Our membership has also blossomed, exceeding 7,000 for the first time ever! We are most appreciative of your support and enthusiasm, as well as your recognition of the significance of McKee and all the ways the Garden enhances our community.

Last year, the Garden's one hundred fifteen volunteers gave over 6,500 hours, which includes twenty-four volunteers who served 100+ hours. Our volunteers do a tremendous job assisting in so many capacities from office help, special events, gardening, and so much more! We could not have made it this far without their continued support and dedication.

THE GARDEN

As an integral part of our botanical mission, our plant collections continue to improve and expand. Our historic landscape architect, David Sacks, was recently on site working on the soon to be completed revitalization project. *The Garden Folly* is looking spectacular with new stonework, which features our custom kaleidoscope sculpture and seating area for rest and relaxation. The coming year will give way to a lush and vibrant Garden filled with areas of new growth and eye-catching pops of color.



Speaking of eye-catching pops of color, our current exhibition, *Garden of Glass* by Jason Gamrath, has contributed significantly to our increase in attendance. Thousands have come to the Garden to admire Jason's amazing glass orchids, waterlilies, and plants throughout the Garden.

The Children's Garden continues to delight children of all ages as they explore, discover, and fall in love with nature. We also have a new billboard featuring the Children's Garden, located just south of Indrio Road, that travelers headed north on I-95 will see and be enticed to visit our magical Children's Garden.

During the past year, we received several public relations and marketing honors and acknowledgments. McKee was featured in:

Wall Street Journal—"Why Laid-Back Travelers Love Florida's Treasure Coast"

Southern Living Magazine—"Great Romantic Getaways in Florida"

We have also had many feature stories in *Vero Beach Magazine*, *Vero Beach* 32963, and the *Treasure Coast Newspaper/Press Journal*.

The Garden ended last fiscal year with a positive change in net assets resulting in another fiscally sound year for us. We continue to grow and prosper as more and more people from across Florida, the United States, and countries around the world all learn about how special McKee Botanical Garden is and has always been. We are definitely on the map!



I wanted to let you know that a copy of our annual report is available on our website: www.mckeegarden.org. As a part of our conservation efforts, instead of printing and mailing the report, we are posting it online. Speaking of our website, it is a wealth of information. Not only can you find our events, exhibitions, and educational programs, our new system also allows you to purchase and renew memberships online, and sign up for classes and events. I do hope you will use this wonderful resource that is at your fingertips.

continued on page 4

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THE GARDEN

MCKEE LEGACY SOCIETY

We thank the members of the McKee Legacy Society for their generosity, vision, and commitment to ensuring the Garden thrives for generations to come.

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Thank you for your dedication and commitment to our mission.

To discuss making a planned gift to McKee that is aligned with your individual estate planning goals, please contact Christine Hobart, Executive Director at 772.794.0601 or hobart@mckee garden.org



Earlier this year, we received our largest gift in the history of the Garden—\$5 million to support the endowment and our capital project fund! This positions our endowment at \$7.8M, allowing us to continue our mission: *to nurture and enhance a historic garden, in a unique setting, for the education, enjoyment, and of all*, and ensuring that the Garden will remain in perpetuity for generations to come.

These are very exciting times for the Garden, and we are already looking forward to next year's exhibition, *A Tropical Flock of Avian Avatars by the Myth Makers*, which will feature ten amazing and unique, environmentally friendly and monumental bird sculptures made from bamboo and mixed media. This exhibition will open on November 1, 2023, and will be on display through April 28, 2024. In addition, we already have set the date and theme for next year's *15th Annual Motor Car Exhibition* featuring "Rods and Customs" to be held on Saturday, February 10, 2024 so mark your calendars. ■



We look forward to seeing you in the Garden!

Christine Hobart
Executive Director

THE GARDEN

MCKEE ON THE MOVE

By Marion de Vogel

History of McKee Botanical Garden

The fascinating history of Arthur McKee and Waldo Sexton's Garden legacy has been presented to numerous groups recently in Vero Beach, Florida and in Millbrook, New York. As Vero Beach welcomes out-of-state seasonal visitors and new residents, interest in McKee Botanical Garden's storied history has grown. Marion de Vogel, great granddaughter of Arthur McKee, has compiled a multimedia presentation of the ninety-one year history of McKee, which includes equal parts Florida history, garden design, and the best kind of community activism. This interesting presentation has recently been made to McKee's members at the annual meeting in February, the John's Island Garden Group, The Mooring's Garden Club, The Colonial and Holland Dames, the Millbrook Garden Club, Riomar Country Club, and the John's Island Garden Club. ■



SCHEDULE A PRESENTATION

If your Garden Club or Group is interested in scheduling a presentation by Marion de Vogel, please email info@mckee garden.org or call 772.794.0601.

Flamenco in the Garden

February found McKee's Avant Gardeners enjoying *Flamenco in the Garden* over cocktails in the Spanish Kitchen. Luis Alfredo Garcia's flamenco guitarists and two fabulously talented flamenco dancers, all from Orlando, added authentic music and dance to the occasion. The renowned chef, Michael, of Michael's on 7th, and his son, created Spanish hors d'oeuvres, which were passed with Sangria to the sixty or so guests. These periodic [Avant Gardener](#) events introduce a small



piece of McKee's history to Vero's young professionals who may not have grown up visiting McKee, or may not be familiar with McKee's long and colorful history. When built in 1940, the Spanish Kitchen was used for entertaining, as was the Hall of Giants, and now we are excited to continue the tradition. [Avant Gardeners](#) are identified and hosted by a group of Vero's top professionals who are excited to share and pass along their passion for McKee Botanical Garden with their contemporaries. ■

THE GARDEN



RIGHT: JOHN MATTHEWS,
GENERAL MATTIS AND
FORMER VERO BEACH MAYOR
TONY YOUNG

BELOW: THE COMMEMORATIVE
PLAQUE PLACED UNDER A
BANYAN TREE IN THE GARDEN



WORLD WAR II COMMEMORATIVE DEDICATION

On Sunday, February 5, the 26th Secretary of Defense, General (Ret) James Mattis led a commemorative ceremony for WWII Pilots at the McKee Botanical Garden. Eighty years ago, following the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, a U.S. Naval Air Station was commissioned in Vero Beach.

Arthur McKee voluntarily closed McKee Jungle Gardens to the public so the dense jungle area could be used in cooperation with the Navy for training Naval pilots in jungle survival. On December 29, 1945, an article in the *Vero Beach Press Journal* described the unique contribution to the war effort as follows: *So many plants imported here during years past and now growing wild in the gardens are those which fliers would find if forced down in the South Pacific waters. The gardens proved of unmeasured importance and contributed much to the safety of these fliers of the naval air arm...*



In his remarks, General Mattis, speaking from experience said, "The jungle is neutral. Yes, it can kill you. But armed with knowledge, the jungle can hide you, even nurture and sustain you. It can be your friend...it all depends on knowledge and training. Thus, did Arthur McKee look at this jungle oasis that had been saved from development, and see how he could provide an edge for our airmen's survival. In so doing, he raised our men's courage when they climbed into the cockpits overseas, flying into dogfights and on bombing raids over jungles in defense of our nation and our way of life."

THE GARDEN



LEFT: THE VERO BEACH
PIPES AND DRUMS WITH
GENERAL MATTIS

McKee's board of directors, staff, volunteers and retired and active military representatives attended the dedication ceremony. The Vero Beach Pipes and Drums and the Neptune Spear Division, U.S. Naval Sea Cadet Corps Color Guard added ceremonial distinction to the occasion.

A plaque with the following inscription:
**IN HONOR OF THE WORLD WAR II PILOTS
BOUND FOR THE SOUTH PACIFIC WHO
RECEIVED JUNGLE SURVIVAL TRAINING
AT MCKEE JUNGLE GARDENS 1943 – 1945,**
was placed just north of the Garden's library (underneath a banyan tree, next to the koi pond at what was once the entrance to the garden) to commemorate the men who participated in the training and the significant contribution the Garden played during this historic time. ■



GENERAL MATTIS PICTURED
WITH NEPTUNE SPEAR DIVISION,
U.S. NAVAL SEA CADET CORPS
COLOR GUARD



NICK AND LOGAN GEESLIN WITH CLAUDIA OWEN AND BOB FORMISANO.



PAMELA COOPER, MARION DE VOGEL AND EARL MORGAN.

THE GARDEN

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18TH ANNUAL GCA DAY AT MCKEE

By Susan Levy

Returning from a two-year COVID hiatus, McKee Botanical Garden hosted the *18th Annual GCA Day* on Thursday, March 2. The event attracted approximately one hundred women, all current or past members of GCA clubs (Garden Club of America) across the nation. In fact, all twelve zones were represented, as were fifty-four of GCA's one hundred, ninety-nine member clubs. The ladies gathered in the spirit of friendship to lend support to McKee Botanical Garden. The day offered an inspiring lecture, a delicious luncheon in the Hall of Giants, and an optional walk through the Garden, where a remarkable installation, *Garden of Glass* by Jason Gamrath, awaited them.



Early Nature Artists in Florida was the topic discussed by guest lecturer Chris Fasolino, an art historian, author, and nature lover. For six years, Chris has been a popular lecturer at the Vero Beach Museum of Art, as well as a lecturer on English and art history at SUNY, the State University of NY at Plattsburgh. Chris is well known for his articles appearing in Vero Beach Magazine. The enlightening presentation discussed Florida as a tropical Eden irresistible to early naturalists such as Mark Catesby, William Bartram, and John James Audubon. Chris's energetic style, coupled with his wide range of knowledge and keen wit, thoroughly captivated the audience.

After the lecture, guests enjoyed a luncheon served by Elizabeth D. Kennedy & Co, in the historic Hall of Giants, once home to the McKee family's exotic animal collection.

Thank you to the GCA Day Committee members who made this event possible: *Ilona Benham, Lyn Callen, Barrie Fahey, Connie Ferguson, Katie Heins, Stephanie Hurtt, Kitty Kirby (Event Co-Chair), Lee LaPointe, Chris Larson, Susan Levy (Event Co-Chair), Ellie Lloyd, Susie Markert, Karen Meyer, Mary Ellen Partel, Marcia Poutiatine, Dawn Morton, Kate Schmidt, Pam Terp, and Mary Lou Young.* ■



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*DECEASED
 AS OF FEBRUARY 2023

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

McKee Botanical Garden offers a wide variety of corporate sponsorship opportunities throughout the year, including our *Annual Art Exhibition*, *The Magic of McKee Festival of Lights* in December, which had over 17,000 people in attendance over ten nights, and the *Annual Motor Car Exhibition* in February, which is the Garden's single largest one-day event attended by over 3,000 members and visitors. For more information, please email info@mckeegarden.org or call 772-794-0601.



THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE MEMBERS

\$1,000

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 DALE SORENSEN REAL ESTATE
 MEGHAN CANDLER GALLERY
 STRUNK FUNERAL HOME

\$500

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THE GARDEN



MCKEE DELIGHTS OVER 17,000 MEMBERS AND VISITORS DURING THE MAGIC OF MCKEE FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Over 17,000 members and visitors attended the *Magic of McKee Festival of Lights* this past December. The Garden was transformed into a gnome-filled winter wonderland where thousands

of brightly colored, professionally installed lights by

Elite Christmas Lighting illuminated the Garden walkways, trees, and canopies. While Mother Nature behaved most of the twelve nights, two nights had to be cancelled due to inclement weather, however this did not affect our amazing attendance.



A tunnel of rainbow-colored lights twinkled above guests as they entered through the pergola where a giant twenty-foot Santa in the Main Greeting area welcomed them. This year's event featured a new exclusive McKee floating giant snow globe filled with festive décor that reflected on the Main Pond near the Stone Bridge. Families enjoyed frolicking in the "snow" flurries that fell from above in the beautifully decorated Spanish Kitchen. The historic Hall of Giants was transformed into a miniature "Gnome Ville." Families of gnomes slumbered in their beds awaiting Santa's arrival; enjoyed a festive, family-style meal with other "gnomies;"

THE GARDEN



built snowmen and tossed snowballs at each other; and hit the slopes atop the giant mahogany table. The Gnome Forest was abuzz with gnomes busily climbing ladders and decorating dozens of holiday trees alongside bunnies, birds, squirrels, and other wildlife.

Festive, holiday-themed decorations, including a plethora of pandas, could be found tap dancing on a giant piano, playing a bamboo-piped organ, and performing a holiday concert in the Garden Folly.

The Royal Palm Grove was adorned with over 25,000 red- and white-striped palm trees forming "Candy Cane Lane." Guests also had an opportunity to visit Santa and Mrs. Claus, watch outdoor holiday-themed movies, and sample festive treats from the Garden Café.

The 1924 Wurlitzer Band Organ and McKee's nostalgic model train display returned once again to thrill and delight visitors of all ages. Additional entertainment was held on several evenings featuring the First Methodist Church Handbell Ensemble, South Vero Imagine School Tangerines Ensemble, Claudia Ball, Vocalist, and Arianna Jemison, Vocalist.

We would like to thank our sponsors, all the volunteers, Train Guys, Board members, and staff members who work so hard to make the holidays so bright for our members and visitors. On behalf of all of us at McKee Botanical Garden thank you for attending the Festival of Lights and we look forward to seeing you next year! ■



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

WINTER WONDERLAND
THE BENEDICT FAMILY

CANDY CANES & SUGAR PLUMS



RUDOLPH
NEW LEAD

DON'T BE A GRINCH



NORTH POLE



WONDERLAND EXPRESS
THE UELTSCHI FAMILY



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THE GARDEN

DON'T
MISS OUT

THERE'S STILL
TIME TO SEE
THIS AMAZING
EXHIBITION!

GARDEN OF GLASS



By Jason Gamrath

JANUARY 20–APRIL 30, 2023



This colorful and thought-provoking exhibit celebrates the beauty, wonderment and power in the natural world through the medium of glass. The exhibition features 10 stunning glass orchids, waterlilies and plants standing anywhere from six to fourteen feet tall on display throughout the Garden. Master glass artist Jason Gamrath is pleased to present his first outdoor garden exhibit in Florida.

Each bright and colorful glass sculpture is intended to accurately represent its living counterpart on a macro scale, bringing to light the beauty that exists within the micro scale of nature. Both delicate and monumental, these one-of-a-kind sculptures convey the complexity of their living counterparts, engaging the viewers in new ways of looking at nature through the fragility of glass art. Small plants, although minuscule in comparison to our human-sized way of existing, are overwhelmingly perplexing when held inches away from one's face. Most people will seldom grasp this seemingly secret perception of existence. Jason explains, "When I scale life forms up to be larger than a person, they can be observed with this perspective from across a room due to the overwhelming physical presence they command. It is my hope that when people admire my large-scale renderings, they become curious and captivated by the hints of realism I incorporate into my designs. I encourage people to attempt to observe with the same eyes through which I humbly and graciously experience our natural world." ■



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14TH ANNUAL MOTOR CAR EXHIBITION

40 Car Collectors' Favorites

On Saturday, February 11, McKee Botanical Garden was bustling with over 3,240 visitors and car enthusiasts who came to enjoy the *Annual Motor Car Exhibition*, a Garden favorite and its most well attended single-day event. This year's exhibit featured over forty *Car Collectors' Favorite* automobiles from private collections, and a wide array of motorcycles. Mother nature graced us with beautiful weather. McKee members and visitors mingled, meeting the car and motorcycle owners and asking questions about their prized possessions. The automobiles on display included: a 1950 Jaguar XK120, 1952 F-1 Ford Pickup, 1957 Thunderbird, 2023 Aston Martin V-12 Vantage, 1913 Case, 1957 Pontiac Chieftain, 1957 BMW Isetta, and 1957 Chevy Bel Air, just to name a few. The cars and motorcycles were chosen by invitation only and were selected by Car Show Committee members John Schumann, Jr., Norm Ridgely, Jerry Weick, Wayne Sandlin, Chuck Roberts, Richard Kesler, Bill Maule, and Dave Prossick. The committee also determines the theme for each annual show. The theme for next year's exhibition is *Rods and Customs*, and the event will be held on Saturday, February 10, 2024. ■

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20TH ANNIVERSARY REVITALIZATION PROJECT UPDATE

By David Sacks, Landscape Architect

Each year the Garden serves as a verdant tropical backdrop to our annual sculpture exhibitions. This year is no exception as visitors have been awed by the stunning *Garden of Glass* exhibition, which has been on display since January. In addition, as a part of the 20th Anniversary Revitalization Project, McKee Botanical Garden has recently added two remarkable permanent art installations celebrating the beauty and intrigue of the natural world.



At the recently completed Palm Grove Patio, sculptor Robert Anderson's interactive Garden Kaleidoscope (*pictured above*) has finally been bolted into its permanent home. Planted out by our horticulture staff with a few colorful small plants, the rotating bowl creates a delightful kaleidoscopic display when viewed through Anderson's handcrafted brass scopes, which are mounted at a variety of heights to engage visitors of all ages. Paved with Florida cap rock, sliced into two-inch-thick pavers, the organically shaped patio complements the adjacent "Palm Grove Folly" structure (2003). Additional plantings and seating will soon complete this lovely new gathering space.

Also wrapping up construction are five site-specific, permanent artworks created specifically for McKee by internationally renowned Miami artist and educator Xavier Cortada (www.cortada.com). Each five-foot tall column is wrapped in a floristic glazed tile "mural," and capped with a sculptural ceramic planter that will

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hold seasonally changing displays. These works celebrate experiences of connection to Florida's botanical and natural world. Cortada's titles for these pieces include *Reverence*, *Joy*, *Love*, *Strength*, and *Resilience*. One additional installation, preliminarily titled Flower Constellation, is currently in development.

On the planting front, Director of Horticulture Andreas Daehnick and Landscape Architect David Sacks have initiated discussions with Fairchild Tropical Botanical Garden's Million Orchids project, and are working to define a conservation and education role for McKee that could help revive regional populations of native orchids, engage visitors and community residents in the program, and also enrich the Garden's displays of native orchids and bromeliads. Stay tuned for more developments in the months ahead. ■



THE GARDEN

GARDEN WISH LIST

If you wish to donate, the Garden is in need of the following items, which can be purchased online at Amazon or Lowes.



CRAFTSMAN 2000 SERIES TOOL CHEST / 26-IN W X 19.75-IN H



DEWALT CORDLESS COMBO KIT (DCK675D2) 20V MAX* BRUSHLESS 6-PIECE TOOL KIT



MCKEE BOTANICAL GARDEN: MANY DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS; MANY DIFFERENT NEEDS

By Andreas Daehnick, Director of Horticulture

One of the major goals at McKee Botanical Garden is that when you enter the property, you will begin to leave the hustle and bustle of urban life behind. In addition to the Garden's recognition for interesting and beautiful plants, the ponds and waterways are also managed, not just for the waterlilies that show off so grandly in the summer, but also to be a resource that attracts wildlife, wood ducks, tri-color heron, belted kingfishers, the great horned owl (often seen standing at the ponds edge and fishing for a meal), otters, dragonflies, and fish.

In 2019, the Garden underwent a project to remove "exotic invasive" fishes from the ponds to create a more natural community of Florida fishes. As part of this project, predator fishes, along with a variety of other native fishes, were added to the ponds. The most notable of these are a few bowfins, prehistoric predators from the Jurassic period, commonly called mudfish. At McKee they are referred to as Smiley and Nettie. The bowfins help keep in check the "exotic invasive" and native fishes by controlling the population growth. Our bowfins, while typically a bottom dweller that ambushes prey, have become quite visible and often follow staff or visitors around the ponds. Since McKee ponds are relatively shallow, these large fish often create a wake in the water while chasing after their food.

An excerpt from the Florida Wildlife Commission summarizes the bowfin: The bowfin is the only living representative of an ancient family of fishes. It has an airbladder that functions like a lung and can be seen gulping air. They prefer swamps or backwaters of lowland streams. They live in warm, poorly oxygenated waters. Bass anglers are often surprised to find a bowfin has taken their lure. Mudfish, another nickname for these fish, strike topwater and deep-running lures, but are most often caught on live bait. It is a better fighter than some highly rated game fish. Its flesh is jelly-like, but can be prepared smoked, fried as patties, or stewed, per Florida Wildlife Commission. ■

THE GARDEN



SCHEDULE A PRESENTATION

If your Garden Club or Group is interested in scheduling a presentation by Marion de Vogel, please email info@mckee garden.org or call 772.794.0601.

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING RECAP

Our Annual Membership Meeting was held on Tuesday, February 28, in the Richardson Education Building to a sold-out crowd.

Christine Hobart opened the meeting proudly announcing that last year we welcomed over 136,000 visitors to the Garden, which is a new record, and we also exceeded 7,000 members for the first time.

Board President Pete Benedict introduced our guest speaker Marion de Vogel, a Board Member and the great granddaughter of Arthur McKee. Marion gave a historical presentation on Arthur McKee and Waldo Sexton—two of Vero's early developers and conservationists—for members to learn more about their iconic Garden legacy. ■



SATURDAYS, MAY 6, 13, 20 & 27 | 10 AM–3 PM

Pirate & Fairy Celebration Saturdays

DRESS IN YOUR FAIRY BEST OR SWASHBUCKLING GEAR

MAKE & TAKE CRAFTS
(WHILE SUPPLIES LAST)

TEMPORARY TATTOOS

GAMES | FAIRY HOUSE BUILDING

PLUS DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES EACH SATURDAY

LIVE PIRATE & MARITIME MUSIC | MAGICIAN

BALLOON TWISTER | FAIRY HAIR APPLICATIONS

VISIT WITH CAPTAIN JACK SPARROW

IMAGINE SOUTH VERO SCHOOL

TANGERINES PERFORMANCE

Explore & Discover

McKEE

BOTANICAL GARDEN

Children's Garden

FREE WITH MEMBERSHIP OR PAID ADMISSION

visit www.mckee garden.com for activity times and dates

COSTUMES WELCOME, BUT NOT REQUIRED



Volunteers are vital to the ongoing success of McKee Botanical Garden and their support to McKee is unparalleled! We are very thankful and appreciative for this team that gives so freely of their time, talents and energy!

THE MAGIC OF MCKEE IS SUPPORTED BY MAGNIFICENT VOLUNTEERS!

By Anne McCormick, Volunteer Coordinator

Each season we welcome back to the Garden an incredible group of volunteers as they join our dedicated year-round “workers.” Our membership has grown and so have our volunteer ranks, which now numbers over 150 devoted individuals!

In December, *The Magic of McKee Festival of Lights* shone bright with more than fifty volunteers contributing over eight hundred hours of time, passion, and energy to this successful event. This popular event is always memorable and a highlight to kick off the season.

The *21st Annual Gardenfest* fundraiser for the Garden Club of Indian River County was held the first weekend of February. McKee volunteers manned a booth in Riverside Park through rain and shine. Saturday, a sunny, packed day, saw our volunteers chatting with the guests, distributing information, answering questions and signing up new volunteers. Sunday morning began with a drizzle that soon turned into a downpour. Our dedicated volunteers remained at the McKee booth until the whistle was blown to pack up. Thank you for weathering the storm!

Our enthusiastic volunteers always look forward to the *Annual Motor Car Exhibit* each year. For one day in February the Garden is transformed, with our team of volunteers doing everything from checking in guests and members, to driving golf carts, to assisting the car owners upon entry to the Garden, and so much more. This event truly would not be possible without our volunteers!

Each and every day our volunteers are at work in the Garden—giving tours, working with the Horticulture team, assisting with member check in during our busy times, helping with mailings, and keeping the magic of McKee alive with their universal passion, enthusiasm, knowledge, and dedication. The value and importance of our volunteers cannot be overstated. Thank you to our wonderful volunteer team. We appreciate all of you! ■

THE GARDEN

LOOK WHAT'S NEW AT THE GIFT & BOOK SHOP

By Michele Carvell, Gift Shop Manager

It is lovely to see all our members and visitors enjoying the *Garden of Glass* exhibition. During our busier days we have added a secondary check-in station for our members. Thank you for having your license and membership card with barcode ready to expedite check-in. For members who do not have their card with them, we ask you to come into the gift shop so we can look you up on the membership roster. If you are a current member needing to renew your membership, please come directly into the gift shop for us to renew and admit you in the garden. Thank you for making it easier for our members to avoid waiting in the admissions line.

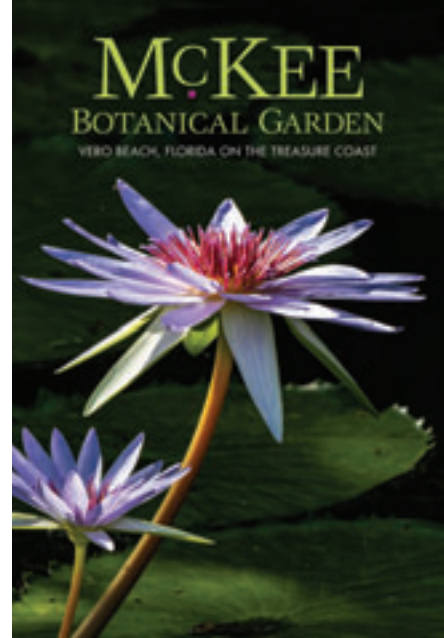


We have had many requests for the shop to carry the *Wellington Michael Shoreline Collection* brand of sterling silver jewelry, so we now offer a new collection of handmade jewelry, which is made of silver (925) and rhodium plated. Every purchase from the *Shoreline Collection* removes one pound of trash from our rivers, canals, and oceans, and each piece includes real sand embedded in resin. Don't forget, as a McKee member you also receive a 10% discount.

The *inis* brand has taken us by storm. It has been so popular that we have increased the line to now carry all the *inis* products. The soap has been on back order, but we hope to have it on our shelves again soon. *inis*, imported from Ireland, is a unisex scent enjoyed and purchased by both men and women. We now carry their new line of home and linen spray, which is very light and smells wonderful. Note: This is the only item in the gift shop exempt for membership discount.

Did you notice our new, featured soap with our Executive Director's dog, "PeanutButter Hobart," on the label? She was featured along with our soap in the *Vero Beach Magazine*. Humans can also use this soap; it is just like our other soap by the *Ipswich Bay Soap Company*, but it is unscented and perfect for those sensitive to scents.

We also try to have items in our shop that correspond to our exhibition each year so here's a hint...I think I see birds in our future. ■



GIVE THE GIFT OF A GARDEN MEMBERSHIP

A McKee membership makes a wonderful and unique gift for any occasion—Holidays, Birthday, Anniversary, or even a special thank you.

MEMBERS OF ALL LEVELS RECEIVE:

FREE daily admission to the Garden and Children's Garden

FREE access to ongoing attractions, including our exhibits and popular special events

Discounts and priority registrations to our dynamic roster of classes and seminars

10% off at the Garden Café and Garden Gift & Book Shop

FREE admission and/or additional benefits at 300+ gardens throughout North America and the Cayman Islands through the American Horticultural Society Reciprocal Admissions Program.

To purchase a gift membership, visit mckee garden.org/membership or call 772.794.0601.

We appreciate your help in bringing new friends to McKee!

THE GARDEN



EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IN FULL BLOOM

By Amy Shoemaker, Education Coordinator

Spring greetings from the Education Department. This year has already been chock-full with educational programming and it's only spring. January kicked off our newest Children's Garden programming where families are enjoying Wednesday morning playgroups as well as nature stations, which are open on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Our *Eco-Explorers* class is well attended each Friday. Homeschoolers have dissected owl pellets, examined pond water and earthworms under microscopes, and explored the Garden with our very own McKee Garden expert, Nikki Stoltze. Something educational is always afoot at McKee. We have some amazing volunteers—I simply could not conduct these



Children's Garden programs without you. From talking about earthworms to facilitating art projects, volunteers are willing to help with anything and everything.

McKee's first ever *Totally Tomato Day* was held in January. We had a great turnout in spite of cold weather. Visitors planted their own tomato and basil seeds, talked to planting experts, and listened to tomato-themed music. All had a wonderful time.

Our adult workshops and lectures have also been well received. From watercolor painting classes to



THE GARDEN



flower arranging, there is something for everyone. To view the remaining workshops for this season, please visit McKee's website and select "Classes and Programs." We hope you find something that interests you.



Looking ahead, I am very excited to announce our *Pirate and Fairy Celebration Saturdays* in May. Join us each Saturday in May for live music, crafts, fairy house building, and so much more. You might even meet a pirate or two.

Finally, we have four exciting weeks of *Camp McKee* planned this summer. Our past attendees agree *Camp McKee is the Place to Be!* Each week a different theme will be presented, along with supporting activities and projects. This summer's camp weeks are going to be fantastic so be sure to sign up soon! As with all of our programs, our volunteers play a huge part in making Camp McKee weeks a success, so we thank you in advance for making these camps so memorable.

As our educational programming continues to expand, we extend a huge thank you to all of the participants, volunteers, international storytime readers, instructors, and guest lecturers who have made our winter and spring offerings such a success! I look forward to an amazing rest of the year. ■

See you around the Garden...Amy

THE GARDEN





18TH ANNUAL WATERLILY CELEBRATION

SATURDAY, JUNE 17
8:30 AM — 2:00 PM

GENERAL ADMISSION RATES APPLY

WATERLILY REPOTTING
DEMONSTRATIONS

PLANT SALES

PLEIN AIR ARTISTS

ANNUAL WATERLILY
PHOTO CONTEST

ANNUAL WATERLILY PHOTO CONTEST PEOPLE'S CHOICE
WINNER FROM 2022 BY LEE ANN DUDA

SAVE THE DATE FOR THIS ANNUAL FAVORITE EVENT!

Take advantage of the Garden's early opening (for this event only) that allows visitors a rare opportunity to witness both night- and day-blooming varieties of our waterlily collection.

Proudly on display will be one of the state's largest collections of waterlilies. Known for capturing the imaginations of artists, photographers, and horticulture enthusiasts alike, these stunning flowers are not only beautiful, but they also play a vital role in our aquatic ecosystem. During the daylong celebration you'll learn from our Garden experts about these important plants, including variety of species, colors, growing periods, and blooming frequencies. ■

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McKEE BOTANICAL GARDEN

350 US HIGHWAY 1 | VERO BEACH, FLORIDA 32962 | 772-794-0601

ADMISSION: \$15 ADULTS | \$13 SENIORS (65+)/YOUTH (13-17) | \$10 CHILDREN (2-12) | MCKEE MEMBERS AND CHILDREN UNDER 2 FREE

HOURS: TUE-SAT 10 AM-5 PM | SUN NOON-5 PM | LAST ADMISSION TICKET SOLD AT 4 PM

CHILDREN'S GARDEN CLOSES 4:30 PM | CLOSED MONDAYS AND MAJOR HOLIDAYS

www.mckee garden.org

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