



SPRING 2021



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Dear Friends of the Botanic Park,

As the 2021 season is now upon us and all the work we have planned is coming to life, I reflect upon the mission we serve, "To create a place of serenity that celebrates and conserves the plants, trees and birds of the Yampa River Valley and similar ecosystems worldwide."

The Botanic Park is a hidden gem, nestled below the trees that tower over the gardens. One can walk into the Botanic Park and leave behind whatever is weighing on their mind and find a place of serenity and find joy in the flowers and birds that are the life of the gardens. Botanical gardens hold plant collections to display and study. But the Yampa River Botanic Park holds more than just plant collections. It holds a vast collection of stories. It holds the spirits of all the lives it has touched throughout the past 24 years. Memories have been made. Marriages have been unified. Loved one's lives are celebrated in the gardens, trees, sculptures, and benches. And it is the plants and trees that flourish and provide the stage for these stories.

- *I brought you a cutting of my grandmother's Seven Sisters Rose that is over 120 years old from Kansas. I am glad to see it is still in the Rose Garden and Jeff's Garden.*
- *My wedding was the first one in the Botanic Park and my best friend got married there that day too!*
- *I loved coming to the Music on the Green concerts with my dad.*
- *I see a sign recognizing an old friend – can you tell me more about that garden?*
- *I remember my daughter performing with the Piknik Theatre group, the kids really love the live outdoor performances.*

This season will be yet another one, creating stories and making memories. As we continue to improve the garden and plant collections, we will see three garden renovations (see News from the Shed). And as we continue to improve the visitor experience, we will see our gates transform into entrances (see Entrance Renovations).



One of the things I am most proud of is the organization's ability to partner and share resources with so many other nonprofit organizations. More goals can be achieved, and more impact made, as we work together to host programs and events (see Calendar of Events).

Passport Through the Botanic Park, our new signature event, was truly inspired by our native and global plant collections. The event and the auction items promise to create memorable stories (See Passport Through the Botanic Park).

We are grateful for our donors, members, volunteers, and staff who without them, we could not continue to be this hidden gem. And we look forward to seeing you in the Botanic Park this season making memories.

With Gratitude,

Jennifer MacNeil
Executive Director

HELLOS AND GOODBYES

By Sandi Molen, Membership and
Visitor Services Coordinator



The Botanic Park welcomed three new members to its Board of Directors this season.

Madison Keeffe grew up in Steamboat Springs. After graduating with a BA in Economics and English, Madison moved back to her hometown where she now works for Mountain Valley Bank as an Ag/Commercial lender. “Growing up in Steamboat throughout my childhood I had the opportunity to visit the Park and experience the events,” she said. “Though these are cherished childhood memories, one of the beauties of the Park is that, at any age, it provides a place a beauty, serenity and tranquility. I look forward to contributing and helping others create such incredible memories.”

While visiting Steamboat Springs before retiring here last year from Dallas, Evelyn Cole, like many visitors to the mountain resort, discovered the quiet peacefulness of the Botanic Park. “I visited the Park and was impressed with its beauty and serenity,” she said. “I felt a deep connection to the Park’s mission and the vision of Bob and Audrey Enever. I knew then that I wanted to contribute to this organization and help support its mission.” YRBP had begun the search for a new treasurer late last season and with more than 35-years-experience in accounting, Evelyn was a perfect fit to take the reins from Bill Sauter, the Park’s long-time treasurer who has stepped down but who remains on the Board of Directors.

Cales Givens joins the Board with more than 30-years-experience in landscape architecture, planning and design and with extensive experience in master planning and leading planning and design projects involving community participation. The Botanic Park looks forward to Cales’ expertise this season for several new and exciting projects including replacing the



Evelyn Cole, Madison Keeffe and Cales Givens



Oregon Junco

gates at both entrances with more functional and artistic gates. “I am very much looking forward to working with founders Bob and Audrey Enever and all the Board Members and staff of YRBP,” Cales said.

While the Botanic Park welcomes its new board members, it is saying goodbye to three cherished and dedicated board members. Kerry Kaster will continue championing the Fairy House Garden, Stumpyland, and has already made new improvements in the Children’s Garden. Carol Dowden has stepped down from the board but will continue sponsoring and maintaining Dorothy’s Garden. Mike Baran of Gecko Landscape and Design has also stepped down from the board.

Thank you, Kerry, Carol and Mike for your time and dedication to the Botanic Park!

ENTRANCE RENOVATIONS

By Jennifer MacNeil, Executive Director

For more than two decades the Main Gate and the Core Trail Gate have served a very functional purpose – to let visitors in and to keep the wildlife out. The weighted closers that Bob Enever invented have done the trick. They close the gates behind people, so people don’t forget. As we never lock our gates to the public during the season, this has been vital to keeping hungry deer, elk, beaver, and moose out.

This season we will be transforming the “gates” into “entrances!” We hope by creating a design that blends form, function, art, and architecture that we will create a more inviting experience. It will also be easier for wheelchairs, strollers, and bikes to enter. I wish I had a design to show off in this newsletter, but that is a work in progress. What I have seen so far promises to amaze and wow! Be on the lookout for more updates about this exciting project.

We are grateful for the support of an anonymous donor who is committed to kicking off an upcoming fundraising campaign with a generous gift.



Slate-colored Junco.

BIRDS IN THE PARK

*Photos and Text by Bob Enever,
YRBP Co-Founder*



Dark-Eyed Junco

Juncos are very hardy winter visitors and are common locally, even on the coldest winter mornings. All juncos flash white outer tail feathers in flight, which is an easy identifier, all have gray heads and dark eye-patches and all are ground-feeders that fly into trees or shrubs when alarmed. You will not see them at perch-feeders, but they are common ground foragers around bird feeders of every kind and around decks and yards cleared of snow where they might find tiny seeds or other morsels of food.

The Dark-eyed Junco is a member of the sparrow family. Strictly North American, it is a collection of sub-species that spreads itself from northern Florida to Labrador and from southern California to far-western Alaska and everywhere in between. There are at least six regional populations and more local variations. In Steamboat Springs, we see several of these sub-species and the photos above show two that are common here and easily distinguished.

The Oregon Junco is a buff-sided bird with brown wings that breeds in coastal areas between southern Alaska and southern California but winters inland in the southwestern states as far north as Northwest Colorado.

The Slate-colored Junco male is dark gray all over but the female, shown here, is less dark. It is the most widely-dispersed junco; it breeds across Canada and Alaska and winters across the USA. It is one of the group of gray juncos that until fairly recent years were loosely referred to as Mexican Juncos. This group also included what are now the Gray-headed, the Red-backed and the White-winged, all of which have small geographic niches.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Yoga on the Green: May 29 – September 4.
Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays from 9 – 10 am.
Weather permitting. Meet on the Green.

Guided Walking Tours of the Botanic Park: *
Fridays & Sundays, 10 am. Meet at the Main Gate.

Social Gardening: * Mondays & Wednesdays,
9 am. Meet at the Shed.

Children's Storytime: Fridays, June 4 – August
27, 10:30 am. Meet in the Children's Garden.

**Fairy Garden House Contest & Children's
Garden Celebration:** June 11, 12 pm.
Meet in the Children's Garden.

Lulie's Wildflowers and Watercolors:
June 15, July 19 and Aug. 3. 11:30 am.
Meet on the Green.

Frida Kahlo's Garden Installation:
June 18 – August 11.

Passport Through the Botanic Park:
June 19, 5 pm. Reservations only.

Music on the Green: Wednesdays, June 30 –
August 18. 10 am on the Green

Steamboat Symphony Orchestra:
July 13, 23, Aug. 12, 7 pm on the Green.

Piknik Theatre Festival: July 25 – 29 and
August 1 – 5, 5:30 – 7:30 pm. Meet on the Green.

Glow in the Park:
August 22, 6:30 pm. Meet by Peter's Pond.

Annual Meeting and Celebration:
A Members Only event, by invitation only.
September 12, 4 – 7 pm.

Fall Bulb & Peony Benefit:
Late September. Dates to be determined.

* Sign-Up Requested
<https://signup.zone/yrbp-volunteers>
and <https://signup.zone/yrbp-programs>

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DJ Edwards	Susie & Chuck Mann	Jane Toothaker	Van & Katie Fletcher <i>In memory of Kent Fletcher</i>		
Bruce Enever & Donna Lewis	Jenny Maxwell	Taylor Tyree	Robert & Mary Franklin <i>In memory of Maria Gouvea</i>		
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PASSPORT THROUGH THE BOTANIC PARK

Savor the sweet aroma of native plant collections while drinking in creative culinary plates and unique wines from around the world during the Inaugural Passport Through the Botanic Park on Saturday, June 19.

“As we all know, a centerpiece is an important element to any event, but when your centerpiece is a renowned botanic park, the event will be something spectacular,” commented Executive Director Jennifer MacNeil. “With community support, we hope this inaugural event grows into something truly unique and one that blooms every season for years to come.”

Passport Through the Botanic Park, presented by Alpine Bank, invites adventures/travelers to explore stations throughout the gardens that pair flora facts with delightful food and wine, including the event's signature specialty drink, Bubbles & Blooms. Menu items include Colorado beef sliders, Argentinian beef & veggie empanadas and Dolmades. The magical evening sounds of the park will be accented by live performances from local classical musicians John Sant'Ambrogio (American Cello), Steve Boynton (Solo Guitar), Belinda Rossi (Flute), a duet by Teresa Steffen Greenlee (Violin) & Elissa Greene (Cello) and flute trio of Katherine Knapp, Sophie Flam and Asher Komor.

Explore more through an online silent auction featuring Rocky Mountain experiences, fun home and garden themes, food and drink and more! The online auction opens June 10 at 7am with nearly 100 items and packages and closes June 20 at 12pm.

Visit yrbp.org for a link to the online auction.



THE FIRST TO BLOOM

By Sonia Frangel,
Vice President, Board of Directors



Snowdrops, also called the flower of hope, are the first flowers to bloom in Sascha's Rock Garden which is located near the Core Trail in the Botanic Park. Snowdrops, whose botanical name is *Galanthus*, are the sign that winter is over. Surprisingly, as delicate as they look, they are not bothered by snow and frost.

The tiny pearl-like flowers bloom out of an arching stem, the flowers are honey scented and they are such a welcomed sign among the rocks. The snowdrop's bulb contains an alkaloid used in 70 countries to manage Alzheimer's. The ancient Greeks believed in its powerful mind-altering effect.

*Please do not ingest this plant as it can cause vomiting and other hazardous side effects.



Annual Fairy Garden House Contest Delivers a Fun and Creative Activity

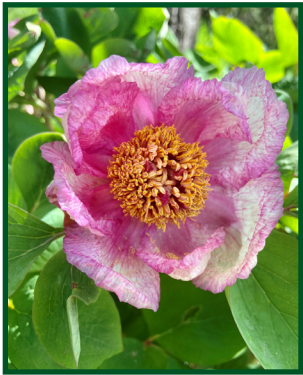
This annual contest is open to children of all ages, but one builder must be under 12 years of age.

Entries are due no later than June 10, 2021. Judging will take place 12:00pm on Friday, June 11, by the Yampa River Botanic Park Design Committee. Winners will receive an annual membership to the Yampa River Botanic Park and other special prizes.

All the submissions will be featured in the Botanic Park's new Fairy Garden Village throughout the summer.

NEWS FROM THE SHED

*By Gayle Lehman,
Lead Horticulturist*



This season promises to be exciting, including first up – a new Fairy Garden Village in the Children's Garden! Rams Masonry is in gratis creating stone "islands" that will be the new home for the fairy garden houses. And Kerry Kaster is hard at work with renovations in the Children's Garden where he is transforming the play structure into a steamboat with paddle wheels, smokestacks, and a little library to learn and explore.

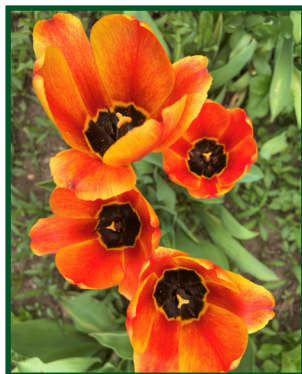
We have been cleaning out the former Fairy Garden to provide a new backdrop for Frida Kahlo's Garden, Garden Installation that will be on display June 18 – August 11. Presented by Opera Steamboat, this installation will complement the art exhibit that will be on display at Steamboat Creates. This exhibition is made possible by NEH on the Road, a special initiative of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Frida Kahlo's Garden is adapted from the exhibition, FRIDA KAHLO: ART, GARDEN, LIFE, organized by guest curator Adriana Zavala at The New York Botanical Garden.

Other garden projects include new rock work and adding more varieties of native plants in Dorothy's Garden. The Annuals Garden will be planted on June 9 with the annuals donated from Tagawa Greenhouses and grown in partnership with SOROCO High School FFA.

We are thrilled to add new staff members to our team that have backgrounds and education in horticulture and landscape design. We will also continue our Horticulture Internship program this year with a local high school student from SOROCO's FFA horticulture program.

We are adding even more expertise in the garden with the help of visiting volunteer Ann Frazier who will stay with us for two weeks and help update our plant inventory, recording, and mapping. Ann is renowned horticulturist Panayoti Kelaidis' former assistant at the Denver Botanic Gardens and is traveling to regional gardens throughout the summer to help!

It was a dry, early winter, so there is some damage to shrubs and some of the Alpine plants in the Crevice Garden. A lot of snow in February helped keep things covered and made the snow pack a bit better. We are starting into our season on the dry side. My advice to everyone is to deep water your trees – they will benefit from a long, slow drip at the base several times this summer.



Celebrate the trees, shrubs, plants and birds of the Yampa River Valley with us. Stop by the Shed and say Hi.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT The Many Hats of Mary O'Brien

*By Sandi Molen, Membership and
Visitor Services Coordinator*



Meet Mary O'Brien, one of YRBP's original gardeners. On any given day you will see Mary, rake or clippers in hand, tending and loving the garden beds, including the Medicinal Garden, one of the Botanic Park's first gardens – and one that Mary planted herself and still maintains today.

Mary is passionate about sharing her love of the plant world and empowering others in "how to become sustainable caretakers of Mother Earth."

A Colorado native and mother of two, Mary is more than just a gifted and dedicated gardener; in fact, Mary is a woman of many hats. Mary has been practicing and teaching herbal medicine for more than 30 years and is a graduate of the Chartered herbalist program with Dominion Herbal College. Mary has taught herbal medicine at Colorado Mountain College and now this season, Mary will be teaching herbal medicine at Elk Stone Farms through its Community Supported Agriculture program.

Also new this season, Mary will be leading an herbal "meet up" group of people who share an interest in learning more about how to use herbs as medicine. The group's first meeting was in YRBP's Medicinal Garden.

Mary is also a Naturalist for Yampatika. On any given warm summer day, she may be your guide hiking one of the area's many mountain trails pointing out native plants and how they could perhaps aid in healing what ails you. Or she may explain how Fireweed is not only edible but is one of the first plants to reappear after a fire. Mary is also a chemist – of sorts – with a line of her own herbal products which are sold locally. And Mary is an author who co-wrote the award-winning book: "Edible & Medicinal Plants of the Southern Rockies."

After spending much of the winter working at Ace Hardware, Mary has once again donned her gardener's hat and is more than ready to get her hands back into the earth. "I'm excited to be back in the gardens – the plants are my friends and I've missed them over the winter," she said.

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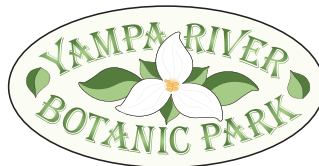
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