



## The Gardens' 2022 Annual Report



"This garden should be a mandatory visit for every single public garden leader anywhere. Great job, everyone!"  
*Attendee at the North American Rock Garden Society Annual Meeting, 2021*



All floral photographs courtesy of Jan Curtis

Durango  
Botanic Gardens  
  
2022  
Annual Report

- **Leading** in information and adaptation to climate change
- **Growing** as an all-volunteer organization
- **Educating** youth in horticultural practices
- **Building** community
- **Advancing** the science of horticulture
- **Demonstrating** best gardening practices
- **Supporting** local artists and the Creative Economy
- **Providing** free access to beautiful gardens

You, our members, donors, and friends helped make 2022 a truly eventful year at the Durango Botanic Gardens. Membership keeps growing exponentially, the new Literary Garden is already the talk of the town, and the gardens—now stretching from behind the library to the entrance—are more verdant and beautiful than ever. New art installations add a touch of human creativity to nature's handiwork.

**[View it here.](#)**

## We Participate in Colorado Gives Day

There are many ways to support our entirely volunteer group of gardeners that maintain the Durango Botanic Gardens, including Colorado Gives Day, Tuesday, December 6.

Colorado Gives Day has grown to be Colorado's largest 24-hour giving event, raising more than \$362 million for nonprofits across the state since it began.

ColoradoGives.org is home to Colorado Gives Day, where we can make good things happen for our community.

Please consider donating to the Durango Botanic Gardens through Colorado Gives or directly through our website.



**Colorado Gives Day**

**Donate to DBG Directly**

### Santa and Mrs. Claus are Coming to the Durango Botanic Gardens on Noel Night

Durango's Noel Night is coming December 2, 2022 and the Durango Botanic Gardens are in the Christmas spirit. Stop by the Gardens from 5:30pm to 9:00pm to see our luminaria display and enjoy some refreshments. We have it on very good authority that Santa and Mrs. Claus can't wait to visit our new Literary Garden and may even do a reading from "Twas the Night Before Christmas."

A festive poster for "Noel Night at Durango Botanic Gardens". The background is decorated with red and green Christmas ornaments and patterns. The text is centered in a white box with a red border. The title "Noel Night" is in a red, cursive font, followed by "at Durango Botanic Gardens" in a smaller red font. Below the title, the text reads: "Join us on Friday, December 2 for a magical night at the Durango Botanic Gardens." followed by a list of activities: "Luminaries will light your way.", "Hot chocolate, spiced cider, and Christmas cookies provided on the library patio to warm up your evening.", "SANTA and Mrs. Claus are making a special appearance to read Holiday stories to children of all ages!! Visit with SANTA from 6pm-8:30pm.", and "Plenty of free parking at the library!".

**Noel Night**  
**at Durango Botanic Gardens**

Join us on Friday, December 2 for a magical night at the Durango Botanic Gardens.

- ◆ **Luminaries** will light your way.
- ◆ **Hot chocolate, spiced cider, and Christmas cookies** provided on the library patio to warm up your evening.
- ◆ **SANTA and Mrs. Claus** are making a special appearance to read Holiday stories to children of all ages!! Visit with SANTA from 6pm-8:30pm.
- ◆ Plenty of **free parking** at the library!

## Wind Harp Installation Between the Crevice and Grass Gardens

Thanks to the Creative Economy Commission and the Arts & Culture Funding from the 2022 Lodger's Tax, the Durango Botanic Gardens has received a substantial grant to purchase a world-class piece of metal art. We applied for and received funds to purchase the Infiniti Wind Harp II, created by Ross Barrable of Harmony Wind Harps, in nearby Pagosa. This fascinating piece of art combines design with musicality. The stunning work in metal features 18 nylon strings and stainless-steel tuning pins that will capture wind movements in the Animas River Corridor and transform them into a variety of natural, pleasing musical tones.

***Read the blog post***



*Infiniti Wind Harp II will be installed between the Crevice Garden and the Grass Collection.*

## Thanks Again Bulb Sale Buyers

Our 2022 Bulb Sale was a Bloomin' Success with 12,100 bulbs sold, none left over. Thanks to our Bulb Sale Team and ALL VOLUNTEERS. The Bulb Sale Team is headed by Sharon Matheson, Melanie Palmer, Connie Market, Jill Salka, Shirlee Krantz, Lynn Hughes, and Tish Varney.

## Docent (s) of the Quarter



(L-R) Susan Ostendorp, Camilla Potter

Our docent corps is the secret sauce of the Gardens, leading tours and helping in so many ways. They are vital to our success. In 2022 we began a program to honor a docent each quarter. In the final quarter of 2022, we selected two veteran docents, Camilla Potter and Susan Ostendorp. These two ladies have given so much to our community and our gardens and we really appreciate them. Previous winners in 2022 include Sharon Matheson, Gail Lauter, and Shirlee Krantz.

## Stay Up to Date with the SOIL Newsletter

You may have read or heard about a new initiative—the SOIL Outdoor Learning Lab—that creates a new food producing community garden on the Riverview Elementary School Campus. The community garden aspect will effectively replace the Ohana Kuleana Community Garden but expand it to include other features including events and a special emphasis on introducing children to the world of food gardening.

**[Click here to read the full report](#)**



**Phase 1: Building a Community Garden, Shaping the Future**

Imagine an outdoor learning lab rooted in community engagement, education and economic opportunity, multigenerational collaboration, cultural and ecological stewardship, and healthy living practices.

In the Fall of 2021 a science teacher, a superintendent, a Parks and Rec director, a few hundred elementary school students, and a handful of community members began dreaming of what has become the Soil Outdoor Learning Lab.

A year later, business sponsors and private donors have stepped up to get the project started. Durango School District 95 has provided the real estate and stands fully behind the project. Durango Parks and Recreation has partnered to realize the community garden aspect of the project. The Hive is poised to "create & pollinate", the student scientists (kindergarten) and gardeners of Durango are getting excited to dig in, construction has begun... and now we want you to join us!

Check out the [webpage](#) to find out what the future of SOIL looks like, how to get involved, and to stay updated.

"We are excited about this opportunity for ALL of our students and ALL community members. SOIL will blend authentic learning and meaningful experience with a focus on sustainability to benefit our community and our world, making an impact for generations to come."  
—DR. KAREN CHESEB, SUPERINTENDENT, DURANGO SCHOOL DISTRICT 9-R

11/23 Site prepared and 80 fence posts set thanks to Riverview Landscaping and Soil-Tek

### Our First Event: SOIL Art Contest

You are invited to a gallery walk, public judging, and award ceremony

Who: K-12 students were invited to enter. Finalists have been selected to have their art displayed on weatherproof prints at the garden?

What: Create art to answer "How Can a Garden Help YOU Grow?"

Where: SOIL Outdoor Learning Lab at Riverview Elementary School

When: 3:30-5:00pm on Nov. 15

Why: Community + Art + Vision + Gardens = Health & Happiness

How: Drop in, vote for your favorite art, see the progress on the SOIL Outdoor Learning Lab, and enjoy refreshments provided by Hive!



continued on reverse



## **Class Gets its Swagger on in Swag, Bow-making Class**

Rani Holt, president of the Durango Friends of the Arts and DBG supporter, conducted a class at the library recently for 25 participants interested in making decorative swags and bows for the holiday season. Rani donated her time and materials for the class with all registration monies donated to the Gardens. Thanks Rani and everyone!



*Photo to the right:*

*Rani Holt leads class on swag and bow making*

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## **Docents Choose Their Plants of the Year (s)**

Melanie Palmer, curator of the Durango Botanic Gardens conducted a survey of our docents to choose the plant of the year for 2021 and 2022. Here is her report on our Docents' Plant of the Year. Click on the button below for a blog post with more details on the two winners. For 2021, the docents chose a perennial grass, Undaunted Ruby Muhly, *Muhlenbergia reverchonii* 'PUNDO1S', which has been a star in the Dryland Mesa section of the Demonstration Garden for years and is now lighting up the Elevation Grass Collection.

The Docents' Choice for 2022 is the 'Midnight Marvel' Rose Mallow, a hardy hibiscus that is in its third season. Slow to leaf out in the spring, it makes up for lost time in late summer when it is covered with deep red blooms.



*Photo to the above: Rose Mallow*

## River of Pages in the Literary Garden

Look for an interesting art installation in the Contemporary Section of the Literary Garden. The “River of Pages” is Durango artist Mary Ellen Long’s homage to authors and poets who write about nature and the environment.

Each “page,” once a book, has weathered a decade of rain, snow, sun and wind. The pages flow into her open book, a sculptural collage of plant fiber papers embellished with forest findings. Mary Ellen uses time and nature to “evolve” her art on paper and the art of paper. This is a temporary installation that will be replaced by a permanent installation in the spring with flagstones inscribed with the names of well-known nature writers.



*Photo: Mary Ellen Long*

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### Become a Member... We Need You

#### Donate

**NOTE:** Our physical location is 1900 E. Third Avenue, at the Durango Public Library. The gardens are located to the north and east of the library, along the Animas River Trail.

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