

SAN FRANCISCO BOTANICAL GARDEN

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



YEAR IN REVIEW: BY THE NUMBERS

JULY 1, 2017 – JUNE 30, 2018



ANNUAL PLANT SALE

29% increase in attendees at the Garden's Annual Plant Sale, and a **35%** increase in year-over-year net revenue—the proceeds of which help support the operation of our nursery.



VOLUNTEERS

1,852 volunteers who work individually or participate in corporate, school, and service organization projects.

44,830 hours contributed by volunteers to virtually every aspect of the Garden's operations.



VISITATION

458,900 visits to the Garden—a 5.6% increase over the prior year and a 129% increase since 2010.



LIVING COLLECTIONS

13,964 accessions in the Garden's living collections, comprised of **8,958** different kinds of plants, 12% of which are of wild collected origin and represented by 1,458 taxa.



TOTAL ADMISSIONS REVENUE

\$1,205,603 total admissions revenue, from fees paid by nonresident visitors—an 11% increase over the prior year. All admissions revenue is reinvested in the Garden.



YOUTH EDUCATION

12,942 children interacting with nature through the school-year, summer and family programs.



DOCENT TOURS

530 free daily docent-led tours and weekend interpretation stations staffed by volunteer docents.



LIBRARY

13,131 visits to the Helen Crocker Russell Library of Horticulture, Northern California's most comprehensive horticultural collection, a 28% year-over-year increase.



MEMBERSHIP

2,963 households, representing individuals, couples and families from San Francisco, the Bay Area and beyond who support the Garden through their memberships—a 10.5% increase year over year.

Images courtesy of:
Travis Lange (1, 5),
Saxon Holt (2, 4, 7, 8),
and Natalie Ngo (3, 6, 9).

Cover image:
Examining a 'ghost leaf' from
a cloud forest magnolia (*Magnolia
macrophylla* var. *dealbata*).
Courtesy of Natalie Ngo.



Dear Garden Supporters,

We are pleased to present this year's annual report on the San Francisco Botanical Garden. Over the past year, we've made significant improvements to the Garden and attracted new visitors from the city and around the world. It's been a record-breaking year for the Garden with 458,900 visits. On Christmas Day, 10,689 people visited the Garden—also a new record! And on a sunny Sunday during Flower Piano, we experienced our second busiest day ever at 9,696 visitors. While two-thirds of our visitors experience the Garden free of charge, our continued growth in revenue from out-of-town visitor admission has enabled critical Garden improvements and maintenance—the first wave of much more to come.

In addition to the increase in visitation, we're also receiving overwhelmingly positive feedback through surveys and social media ratings. As a *public* public garden, we are especially proud to serve our community and appreciate that the best measure of success is the joy, inspiration and awe we bring our visitors. Participation in our youth education programs remains very active with nearly 13,000 children exploring the natural world at the Garden. Membership continues to grow, helping us fund our core programs. And our tributes program, providing commemorative benches and pavers, was quite active this past year, demonstrating just how much people love this Garden.

MISSION

The mission of San Francisco Botanical Garden is to create, sustain and interpret a distinct, documented collection of Mediterranean, mild temperate and tropical cloud forest plants displayed in designed gardens and to provide a place of exceptional beauty and natural sanctuary. San Francisco Botanical Garden Society builds communities of support for the Garden and expands people's understanding and appreciation of plants.

VISION

San Francisco Botanical Garden will be cherished and supported locally and recognized internationally for beauty, diversity of plant collections, educational programs and inspiring conservation.

SAN FRANCISCO BOTANICAL GARDEN SOCIETY *Established in 1955*

San Francisco Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum

Golden Gate Park
Ninth Avenue at Lincoln Way
San Francisco, CA 94122
415.661.1316
sfbg.org

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A thriving Garden depends on strong partnerships and collaboration. Volunteers, interns, members, donors, trustees, and sponsors all leverage the time and talents of our program staff and horticulturists. For example, volunteer "Green Teams" have expanded this year providing more hands for weeding, pruning, mulching, planting and cleaning up the Garden—and you can see the difference they make.

Our Board of Trustees and Leadership Team have prioritized additional opportunities to refresh, renovate and rebuild Garden sections and infrastructure in the coming years. With the continued generosity and engagement of our supporters, as well as investments from new funders, we hope and plan to do even more next year.

It is with deep appreciation that we share this annual report.

With gratitude,

Stephanie Linder
Executive Director

SAN FRANCISCO
BOTANICAL GARDEN SOCIETY

Matthew Stephens
Garden Director

SAN FRANCISCO
RECREATION & PARKS



VALUES

San Francisco's unique Botanical Garden inspires visitors with the extraordinary diversity of rare and unusual plants that can be grown in coastal California. Through its programs and displays, the Garden cultivates the bond between people and plants and instills a deeper understanding of the necessity to conserve Earth's biological diversity. As a public/private partnership between a community-based nonprofit organization and the San Francisco Recreation & Parks Department, and a beloved San Francisco institution, we are committed to transparency, cultural diversity, inclusion and environmentally responsible practices. We are proud to be a *public* public garden, accessible to all and grateful to the funders who help sustain us.



SAN FRANCISCO RECREATION & PARKS

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Garden Director



Annual Report Production

Brendan V. Lange,
Editor & Project Manager
Sarah Katsikas, *Designer*
Leah Nichols, *Designer*

This publication is printed on recycled paper with soy ink.

BOARD LEADERSHIP



**LISA
SERWIN**

The Garden welcomes new Trustee, Lisa Serwin. Lisa was named one of the top 20 women in finance to add to your board by Business Insider and is a co-founder of C-Sweetener, a nonprofit that helps match senior women in healthcare with mentors so they can thrive in C-suite leadership positions. In a few short months Lisa has brought her high energy and enthusiasm to the Garden to aid in the redesign of the Garden's website—due to launch this fall—as well as to grow the Garden's board and sponsorships. Lisa recalls, "When my husband and I first moved to San Francisco, what we missed most were the trees, and so the Botanical Garden became our happy place. I am thrilled to play a small part in ensuring the Garden's legacy for years to come."



**HELEN
MCKENNA
RIDLEY**

The Board of Trustees recognizes Helen McKenna Ridley's 13 years of service as her second Board tenure came to a close this year. Helen's contagious passion for youth education and captivating storytelling surrounding science and nature will be greatly missed by the board, though Helen will still frequent the Garden to lead inspiring docent tours, which she has done for over 20 years. Helen notes that "the Garden has been a place of beauty and sanctuary. I have loved gardens, plants and the outdoors for my entire life. I cannot help sharing the importance and the wonder of plants and nature with friends, students and visitors."



**ELIZABETH K.
BROOK**

The Garden says goodbye to Elizabeth K. Brook and thanks her for three years of service. Elizabeth brought a wealth of knowledge to the board as a strategic thought leader with fresh and thoughtful opinions that guided the Board's Governance Committee and the leadership of the Garden. Elizabeth has also been a strong advocate for public events like Flower Piano as a way to bring new and younger audiences to the Garden.

GARDEN COLLECTIONS

The Garden's collections have been growing for decades while the specimens within our collections have continued to mature. We have added different kinds of plants and have created new sections that represent more geographic areas and thematic focuses. Additions continued this year with beautiful examples such as the windflowers (*Anemone coronaria*) starting the flowering season even earlier in the Mediterranean collection meadow and wild snapdragons (*Antirrhinum majus*) extending it. Both additions are well known to horticulture but when included in our naturalistic design, you feel more transported to the wild shores of southern Turkey or a forest in the eastern Mediterranean rather than in a cultivated garden.



wild snapdragons (*Antirrhinum majus*) bloom in the Garden.

Major growth also necessitates more tending. This year maintenance increased more than it has in decades. Simple, yet visually impactful improvements like cleaner edges at turf, water features, planting beds, more weeds pulled and mulch spread than in recent history and a new, complex irrigation network that automatically waters 64% of the Garden all contribute to improve the collection's health as well as elevate the Garden as a leader in water conservation.

These improvements make for healthier plants and clearer vistas, allowing all visitors to better appreciate the Garden's many stunning specimens, such as the nikau palm grove (*Rhopalostylis sapida*) near the freshly refined Wildfowl Pond edge or our impressive Canary Islands strawberry-tree (*Arbutus canariensis*) in the South Africa collection. With your financial and volunteer support we continue to cherish the Garden's mature and newly planted specimens that add to the Garden's naturalistic designs and San Francisco charm.

A GIFT TO THE COLLECTIONS

Frank and Mary Beth Almeda are passionate about plants, birds and the natural world and have been frequent visitors to the Garden for over 40 years. Frank is Curator Emeritus of Botany at the neighboring California Academy of Sciences, where Mary Beth assists him on a weekly basis. Frank's expertise in the field led him to be asked to join the Society's Board in 1997, where he has since played an important role by providing strategic guidance on the Garden's diverse plant collections.

"Since the centerpiece of the Garden is its collection of living plants, we wanted to leave a gift that would support new acquisitions, research and care of the collection."

—Frank & Mary Beth Almeda

As Frank and Mary Beth revised their estate plans this year, they thought it was only natural to include the organization that had been such a big part of their lives.

The Almeda gift will be known as the Collections Acquisition and Support Fund. "We hope that our gift will serve as a fund that other Garden supporters will be inclined to contribute towards," Frank added, "The Garden is a place of beauty, inspiration, and tranquility but above all we see it as a place to learn about the incredible diversity and importance of plants to life on earth."

In expressing her gratitude for this gift, Delle Maxwell, Chair of the Board of Trustees said, "This gift from Frank and Mary Beth is inspiring. Supporting field studies and collections is essential to our Botanical Garden, and this meaningful gift will go on to ensure the success of those programs."



Frank and Mary Beth Almeda at Garden Feast with Garden Director Matthew Stephens.

Moandani Jeffrey

YOUTH EDUCATION

San Francisco Botanical Garden continues to be a vital resource for schools, community groups and families in search of immersive educational experiences in the natural world. In the last year, 12,942 children participated in free Garden programs and activities, from guided walks and Children's Garden programs for school groups to summer field trip programs for community groups. A growing youth volunteer program developed outdoor education skills in teens while enriching the experience of our younger program participants. Bean Sprouts Family Days, presented by Kaiser Permanente, in the Children's Garden had greater impact than ever, serving 2,165 family members while Story Time and special children's author talks in the Helen Crocker Russell Library welcomed over 590 participants. Piloted for the first time this year were Preschool Explorer Kits designed for our smallest visitors as well as Tactile Book Boxes for children with sight impairments, both available in the Library.

"Many of my students don't have opportunities like this to explore nature: **seeing, touching, smelling, and interacting with nature.** I have students who are even afraid to sit on a grass field because it will be dirty. However, after lunch, I allowed them to roll down the small grass hill and **they felt so happy and connected to nature!**"

—Participating Teacher



"I can't believe all these different plants and trees live in the same city as us!"



"This is the best field trip so far this year!"



FLOWER PIANO

In its 4th year, Flower Piano provided a hearty dose of creativity, community and connection to nature to 54,000 visitors—about 10% of the Garden’s annual attendance—and more than 70% of Flower Piano attendees enjoyed the event completely for free. The musical diversity contributed by 100 scheduled performers over more than 139 performance hours was a prelude to the range of genres shared by thousands of visitors during open play.

New and expanded partnerships with San Francisco Symphony, Community Music Center, Rabbit Hole Theater, Oakland School for the Arts as well as new programs focused on health and wellness, further enriched the 12 magical days for families, youth and adults.

NightGarden Piano was another exciting expansion this year, growing from one to three beautifully lit, music-filled evenings in the Garden. Flower Piano is made possible through collaboration with Sunset Piano and private support—thank you!



All images courtesy of Travis Lange.

“I felt the *beauty* of the garden, and the beauty of *serendipity*. I felt the *diversity of the city*, and amazement at how you can never tell which spectator is going to sit down next and *wow* everyone. It was a welcome distraction from the real world and all its troubles. *I felt contentment.*” —Flower Piano Attendee



PLANT SALES

There is so much more happening at Garden plant sales than simple transactions. Conversations between knowledgeable volunteers, staff and shoppers provide perfect opportunities for tangible, real world horticulture education. Helpful gardening information—impossible to find anywhere else at one time and place—about the vast and unique plant palette we can grow here in the Bay Area is as valuable, if not more so, than the plants themselves.

Of course the revenue from these efforts is important, too, and devoted nursery volunteers proudly displayed over 1,000 varieties of plants to entice over 3,000 attendees at 2018's Annual Plant Sale, which had a fantastic year with sales increasing by 30%.



All images courtesy of Travis Lange.

For more than 13 years our two spring plant auctions at the Annual Plant Sale and Garden Feast have benefited from the artistic and organizational talents of **Pat Wipf**, long time nursery volunteer and former trustee. This year Pat passed coordination of this significant endeavor to **Karen Birks**, her right hand support for many years. We are truly grateful for their contributions to these successful and sought after events.

DR. DON MAHONEY RETIRES

After 33 years of dedication to the Garden, Curator Emeritus, Dr. Don Mahoney has fully stepped into retirement. Don moved into his emeritus role in 2015 when Associate Curator, Corey Barnes was hired to manage the retail nursery operation and assist with collections management and interpretation. Plant sales have jumped leaps and bounds through their teamwork. Don now graduates to become a Nursery Volunteer, continuing to offer his invaluable expertise with those whom he has mentored for decades. Thank you, Don!



San Francisco Chronicle

GARDEN PEOPLE



Images from top to bottom: San Francisco Recreation & Parks General Manager Phil Ginsburg, keynote speaker Alice Waters, and Executive Director Stephanie Linder at what was a very successful Garden Feast in May raising more than \$500,000 in support of the Garden and its programs; Garden Feast Co-Chairs Wendy Tonkin and Sarah Earley bookend Board Chair Delle Maxwell; Carla McKay supporting the Garden in a fun bidding battle at this year's Garden Feast. Photos courtesy of Catherine Bigelow and Moanalani Jeffrey.

Saibal and Beethi Sen first visited the Garden over a decade ago with their mothers, who are both avid gardeners in India. Since then, they've joined as members and visit the Garden at least every other weekend, walking from their home in the Marina and picking up a picnic along the way to enjoy among the trees.

"We derive so much from the Garden that it is fair that we do our bit to support it, so that others can enjoy it as well." –Saibal Sen

Saibal felt inspired to become a member to ensure the Garden remains a place of joy and respite for visitors from all over the world. "It shouldn't be just for the residents of San Francisco, but for everyone who travels to San Francisco. We think our contribution as a steward is far less than the value we receive from the Garden!"



Saibal and Beethi Sen enjoying the Garden.

Support from members like Saibal and Beethi helps the Garden conserve thousands of different kinds of plants from all over the world, offer educational opportunities to children and adults and bring communities together to experience nature right here in San Francisco. 🌿



GARDEN BOOKSTORE

The Garden Bookstore had a fantastic year, beating its revenue budget by **more than 30%**! Much thanks is due to Bookstore Manager Dennis Gutmann whose keen eye and attention to detail always keeps the small but mighty store stocked with fresh and beautiful books and goods. Bravo Dennis and Bookstore team!

SAN FRANCISCO BOTANICAL GARDEN SOCIETY FINANCIAL REPORT

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

As of June 30, 2016 and June 30, 2017

ASSETS	2017	2016
Cash and Investments	5,475,430	5,965,649
Accounts and Pledges Receivable	1,339,938	370,387
Property and Equipment	776,570	779,163
Other	130,686	95,071
Total Assets	7,722,624	7,210,270
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Current Liabilities	354,551	369,418
Net Assets	7,368,073	6,840,852
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	7,722,624	7,210,270

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

As of June 30, 2016 and June 30, 2017

SUPPORT AND REVENUE	2017	2016
Contributed Income	3,006,500	2,868,474
Investment Income	949,503	(196,388)
Earned Income	303,974	245,735
Admissions Income*	562,501	551,145
Other	6,764	52,607
Total Support and Revenue	4,829,242	3,521,573
EXPENSES	2017	2016
Program Services	3,203,445	2,817,577
Management and General	658,416	554,767
Fundraising and Development	440,160	393,485
Total Expenses	4,302,021	3,765,829

Change in Net Assets **527,221** **(244,256)**

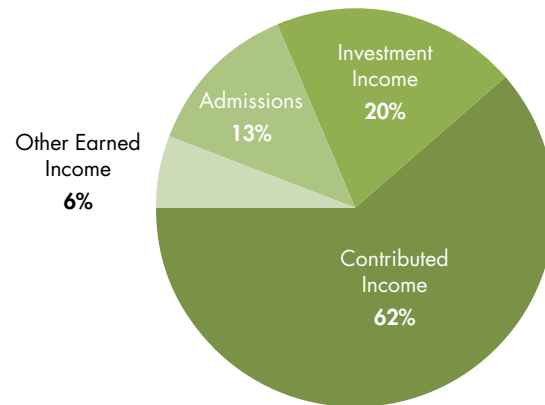
*As allocated to SFBGS by the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department

Source: San Francisco Botanical Garden Society Audited Financial Statements for the 12 months ended June 30, 2017.

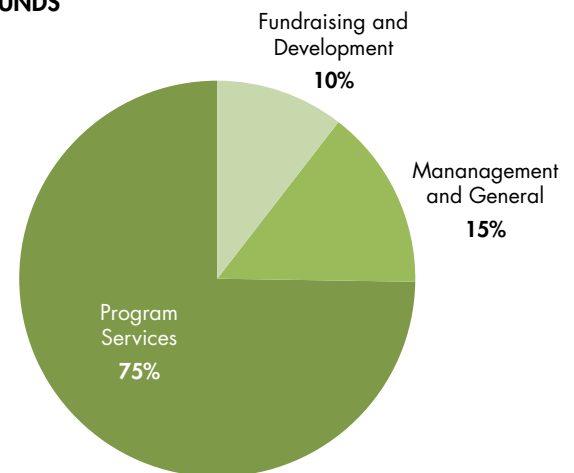
SOURCES AND USES OF FUNDS

12 months ended June 30, 2017

SOURCES OF FUNDS



USES OF FUNDS



Contributed Income: memberships, foundation grants, contributions, bequests, net revenues from fundraising events and in-kind gifts

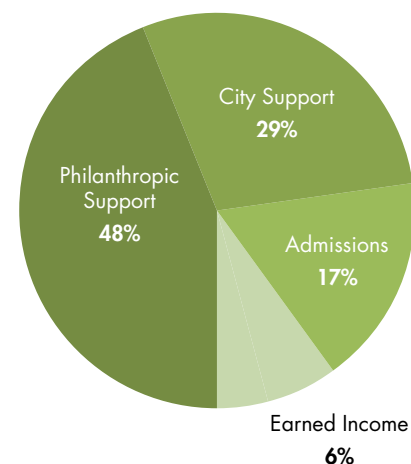
Earned Income: plant and bookstore sales, program fees and library art & book sales

Program Services: plant collections management, nursery, gardens, youth education, classes and public programs, library, bookstore, volunteer program, visitor services and other program-related activities

FUNDING THE GARDEN

In the fiscal year ending June 30, 2017, combining the work of San Francisco Botanical Garden Society and the Recreation and Park Department, it cost nearly \$6.5 million to operate the Garden. More than 70 percent of the Garden's financial support came from donors and members, and from the Garden's visitors.

Sources: San Francisco Botanical Garden Society Audited Financial Statements for the 12 months ended June 30, 2017, San Francisco Recreation and Park Department report to the Board of Supervisors, dated March 20, 2018.



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS JULY 2017–JUNE 2018

The beauty and diversity of our collections and the array of programs, tours and events at San Francisco Botanical Garden are made possible by you, our supporters. Each gift enables us to offer unparalleled opportunities for inspiration and learning. We would like to extend our gratitude to those who generously contributed to the Garden between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018. 🌿

\$500,000+

Delle Maxwell & Patrick Hanrahan

\$100,000 to \$499,999

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\$50,000 to \$99,999

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"I first visited the Garden during my audition for the San Francisco Symphony in 2011. I grew up on a farm in rural Kentucky, so having my job tied to urban areas makes me long for green space—it is amazing to have this Garden for a front yard."

"I joined as a member after I realized how much I used this space for free as a resident. Both me and my family, and our out-of-town guests, get so much pleasure from visiting the Garden. With the level of horticultural and curatorial care that goes into the collections, membership provides great value."

I was excited when I was approached as a member of the San Francisco Symphony to perform at this year's Flower Piano and it was such a blast to play in one of my favorite places! I think civic minded individuals should strongly consider supporting this treasure in the heart of our city." —Matthew Young, San Francisco Symphony Viola player





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— *Dennis and Marlene Burke*

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