



John Seaton, Conservatory Operations Manager  
Henrietta Yardley, Horticulturist/Grower  
Mark Omi, Horticulturist/Volunteer Coordinator

**Looking for Oak Park Conservatory Gardening Classes?  
You'll find them under Adult Special Interest on page 56.**

## Special Events

### Visit the Conservatory

#### Conservatory Tours

The Oak Park Conservatory is open to the public Monday from 2-4pm and Tuesday-Sunday, 10am-4pm. Guided tours of the Conservatory for groups of 10 or more can be set up by calling 386-4700, Monday-Friday, 8am-4pm. Please give a 3-week notice for guided tours. Saturday and Sunday tours, 12-3pm, are available by appointment ONLY.

#### Plant Clinic

Residents can call in with their gardening, plant identification or diagnostic questions Monday, 2-4pm, in fall and winter. A potting service is also offered at this time. Please phone first, 386-4700, and bring your own containers. Donations are accepted for this service.

### Volunteers Needed !

Help the Conservatory staff beautify over 80 park sites throughout the community this summer. Volunteers are expected to contribute 3 hours per week, from 9 am -noon, or from 1-4pm, Monday through Friday. Interested gardeners will learn many new skills and be involved in the growing of a wide range of fall, winter and spring display crops. No prior plant knowledge is necessary. There are jobs for all skill levels. For more information, please call Mark Omi, the volunteer coordinator, at (708) 725-2452.

### Conservatory Docents Needed

Put a spring in your step and learn to interpret the unique habitats of the Desert, Tropical and Fern Rooms at the Conservatory. Become a Docent for children and adults! Weekday and weekend volunteers are needed. Plant enthusiasts encouraged to apply! For information on upcoming trainings, contact Tina Gulley-Augustus at (708) 725-2460.

### Spring Perennial & Seedling Exchange Saturday, May 10

Join other gardeners to share favorite plants! with the Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory sponsored annual plant exchange. Drop off material from 10am to noon at the Conservatory. Pick up plants from 12:30 to 2pm.

### Garden Walk 2008 Saturday, Jun 28, 9:30am-3:30pm

*Sponsors: Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory & The Garden Club of Oak Park and River Forest.*

Eight private gardens in Oak Park and River Forest will be on display. Garden guides must be picked up at the Oak Park Conservatory at 615 Garfield Street on the day of the walk. Tickets are available in advance for \$15 at the Oak Park Conservatory and at the Oak Park Visitors Center, 158 North Forest Avenue. Tickets are \$18 the day of the walk and can be purchased at the Oak Park Conservatory, where the walk begins. The Garden Walk will be held rain or shine. No ticket refunds will be given.



### John Seaton Retirement Garden Party Sunday, June 8 from 1-5pm at the Oak Park Conservatory

It's John Seaton Recognition Day on June 8 at the Oak Park Conservatory. Please join us to wish Mr. Seaton a fond farewell as he retires from the Park District of Oak Park after 24 years of distinguished service. Drop in anytime between 1pm and 5pm. Light refreshments will be served and a presentation will be made at 3pm. This event is sponsored by the Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory.

**Kids: Come visit the Conservatory with your family and Become a Plant World Traveler!**

Be a Plant World traveler, and share the fun with your friends! Grab the family and explore the Fern, Tropical, and Desert biomes June through September. Special activity booklets (for ages 4-7 and 8-12) will be offered to family visitors to aid in the exploration and enjoyment of the Conservatory. Complete the activities in the booklet at the Conservatory and get your "passport" stamped! Then when you return to the Conservatory with your friends, show your "passport" to get a prize!

**You can find Conservatory Nature Camps for kids on page 21 !**



## A Growing Gift of Nature: The Adopt-A-Tree Program!

Looking for a unique way to commemorate a birth, celebrate a special occasion or remember a friend or loved one? The Adopt-A-Tree Program may be for you! This program, under the auspices of the Memorial Trust Committee, allows you to adopt a tree or donate a new tree in a park in recognition of a special person or event in your life. A special plaque is placed at the base of the tree with your personalized inscription.

With many park renovation projects currently underway or in the planning stages, there is a wide variety of trees and locations to choose from. This summer alone, major improvements will be made to Fox and Longfellow Parks. Donations of additional park amenities are also welcome including benches and other landscape features.

For more information about this program or if you would like to get involved in the Memorial Trust Committee, please contact John Seaton at (708) 725-2450 or Henrietta Yardley at (708) 725-2451.



## What's Growing at the Conservatory ...

The Conservatory staff, aided by numerous volunteers, has been starting seeds since January. Thirty different varieties of annuals and tender perennials are being grown in our three greenhouses and will be planted out in our park beds starting in mid May. Cultivar selection starts each August when staff will visit the park beds to evaluate which varieties have performed well under our Oak Park conditions. The winners are added to the next year's list along with some new introductions and then seeds are ordered. Seed ordering generally is completed by September. Some old favorites will reappear again this year; Ageratum Blue Horizon, Marigold Marietta Red, Pen-nesetum or Fountain Grass and Verbena Imagination can always be counted on to perform well and in the case of Asclepias or annual milkweed, draw a crowd of butterflies.

The new introductions to our park beds will be interesting to watch. The beds at Scoville Park will contain Amaranthus Joseph's Coat, Hibiscus Red Shield, Verbena rigida Santos Purple and broom corn. Did you like the large silver-leaved cardoon last year? It will be back but in smaller numbers. One plant goes a long way. And if you did like the look of the ornamental cardoon, it will be sold at this year's Herb and Scented Plant sale on May 3 at the Conservatory. But if you are a purist and know cardoon as a vegetable – we will be selling that variety also!

## Conservatory Floral Shows

**May: Martha Washington Geraniums, Ranunculus, Clarkia and Schizanthus**

**June: Early Summer Flowers, Hydrangeas**

**July - September: Tropical Foliage**

Every month, come experience a new breathtaking floral display at the Conservatory - an exhilarating respite from the everyday world!



**For Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory (FOPCON)  
call Jacquelyn Paine at 725-2460.**

SIGN UP ONLINE TODAY! Visit [www.oakparkparks.com](http://www.oakparkparks.com) to register for classes!