

# Friends of the Domes

## “Friend” Leaves Lasting Legacy

Diane S. Lindsley,  
Horticultural Director (Retired)



**Richard Risch**  
Conservatory Director, 1981-1995  
Friends of the Domes Board Member

Richard Risch died on June 15. I knew him for 36 years. We worked together since 1975. We had very different working styles, but shared a deep love for plants and the important mission of conservatories. He was the artistic dreamer who had bursts of creativity. I was the one who figured out how to realize those dreams. So, when Richard said...“I have an idea”... I thought “Oh, My” but hopped on his roller-coaster anyway.

After a series of serious illnesses last year, leaving his lungs compromised, you could say Richard was living on borrowed time. He could have spent

that time doing a number of different things, but he chose to spend a good deal of it at the Conservatory, an institution to which he was deeply committed; with the Friends of the Domes, with whom he had volunteered since his retirement years earlier; and with the Conservatory staff who he also cared for deeply and respected for their knowledge and abilities.

When he asked if I would help him with revising the plant collections policy and renewing the Desert Dome, I had no idea where that would lead, but soon he had me scampering up hill-sides and gingerly picking my way around spines as I tried to locate plant labels. Together we identified hundreds of specimens in the Desert Dome and transition house, which then lead him to make plans for major re-landscaping and new educational display panels.

This all sounds like a lot of work...and it was...but we had so much fun because we had the luxury of concentrating on plants and education and did not have to worry about much else as we had to in the past when we were Directors. He loved working with the staff and visitors, sharing his amazing, extensive knowledge of plants from the Baobabs of Madagascar to Bonsai from Japan. There were days when he really

didn't want to go home, but fatigue set in so we would sit among the plant collections much like the visitors, reminisce, dream and laugh until closing time. It was simply the “best of times” for those four months.

As much as we all wanted it, as much as we all prayed, we could not keep Richard with us. But we can keep alive his commitment and love for plants, his spirit of volunteerism in Friends of the Domes, his unselfish sharing of information and plants, his creativity, and his sense of humor. Do I miss him? Of course, and I will think of

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### 2012 Floral Shows Announced!

Fantasy Garden Train Show  
January 14 – March 18

Tulip Mania (Spring Show)  
March 31 – May 28 (Memorial Day)

Summer Winds (Summer Show)  
June 9 – September 9

Don Quixote (Fall Mum) Show  
September 22 – November 4

Let it Snow! (Holiday) Show  
November 17 – January 6, 2013

# From the Friends of the Domes

By Phil Rozga, Acting President

When things go wrong, we look for someone to blame. Too often we do not compliment the people who make sure that things go right. The Friends of the Domes has a membership exceeding 1,000, united only through limited contact and occasional events. Members learn about the events at the Domes primarily through this newsletter and our website. Various Friends' activities at the Domes would not be possible without our staff of part-time workers.

It's about time that we recognize their dedication and reliability. Here is a list of our staff and their principal responsibilities: Bridget O'Donnell edits the newsletter; Mary Philipp manages the

Gift Shop; Sally Buckland is our book-keeper and Sally Sullivan assists her; Darlene Dorsett handles the membership chores; Liz Fehring supervises the volunteers; Monique Hewitt, Susan Oster and Bernice Sparacino all clerk in the Gift Shop.

While I'm handing out accolades, "kudos" to Steve Libby and Roger Krawiecki for the success of our second annual Art Fair. Both artists and visitors told me that it was one of the best in the city. Most of the Board, along with family members they recruited, spent the better part of three days helping out. All the workers received T-shirts for their efforts.

The new entrance for the Domes was completed in time for the Fair.

However, despite Herculean efforts by Sandy Folaron and Steve Libby, the new sign could not be installed prior to the Fair. It is coming soon (and may be in place by the time you read this).

Everyone who knew Richard Risch, the former Director of the Domes, has a story to tell about him. Richard was a man of many interests. One, which has not been mentioned in other memorials, was his love of music. When Milwaukee had a classical radio station, one of the daily features was a musical quiz. The winner received tickets to an upcoming musical event. Richard called in the correct answer so often that a rule was adopted that a contestant could win a prize only once a month. Richard won a prize each month!

## Garden Wisdom



Photo by Bridget O'Donnell

"...a good legacy...wondrously alleviates the sorrow that men would otherwise feel for the death of friends."

-MIGUEL DE CERVANTES

## Buy Engraved Paver & Support Exciting New Project

This is your opportunity to make a donation to the exciting greenhouse and community room project scheduled to begin in 2012. Purchase a paver to honor a loved one or celebrate a special event. A wonderful, lasting gift for the upcoming holidays! Your donation of \$125 for an 8" x 4" paver includes 3 lines, 13 characters per line. Go to [milwaukeehomes.org](http://milwaukeehomes.org) for an order form. Donation is tax deductible.

# Marketing the Conservatory

By Steven R. Libbey,  
FOD Board Member

In our June meeting, the Friends of the Domes Board approved funding of a new digital billboard on Layton Boulevard in front of Mitchell Park Horticultural Conservatory, the Domes.

Letting the drive by public know that big improvements have happened, great events are coming and the Domes continue to improve, as “a place to be any day” requires dynamic

marketing outreach. That is what our new sign is all about.

Large LED digital display boards, centered in a botanical themed, sixteen-foot tall monument sign, will be a beautiful street-side representation of the FOD, Milwaukee County Parks and the Domes.

We are very close to installing the sign, which may be in place by the time you read this newsletter. Original plans for installation by August 1st (in time to feature the Milwaukee

Domes Art Festival in the inaugural billboard campaign) were unfortunately delayed by complications of the electrical build out required to power the sign.

Thanks to all FOD members for making this huge improvement possible via your continued membership and support. Without your financial and volunteer support this project would not be possible.



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## From the Director's Chair

By Sandy Folaron

Fall is in the air and we are raring to go! The front plaza has been completed and

now offers our visitors a place to picnic, relax and enjoy the backdrop of the Domes. The project is a completely green initiative, with a permeable paver system that captures the “grey water” run off from the Domes, along with all the rain collected in a basin, that can be retrieved to use to water our new planting beds. Even our fountains are using recaptured and recycled water! A green roof is next on our project list that will tie directly into the plaza. Good stuff and certainly a better visual and esthetic look when entering the Conservatory.

Next on our list for 2012 is the linking to the Hank Aaron Trail from the Menomonee River Valley. Look for the new bridge behind the Domes that will

connect us to the trail. There will also be a marker and bike rack area near the 27th Street Viaduct that posts information about the trail and specific points of interest. An artist (stone sculptor) has already been chosen to produce a piece of work, staged at the trailhead, that will reflect the history of the valley and the significant part it played in the development of Milwaukee.

This summer was also a busy one for our horticultural staff working on a Plant Collections Policy and finalizing our inventory for new Conservatory signage. This endeavor was a long, long overdue initiative that was made possible with the help and support of the Friends of the Domes Horticultural Committee. Look for big changes in the Desert Dome with the addition of seasonal plants and a new paint job for the pathway rails and the Ramada.

Don't forget the upcoming events for friends and family, Beer Under Glass, Ghosts Under Glass, Rainforest Night,

and the return of the popular Music Under Glass (of course!) on Thursday nights from November 3 through March 22, 2012. These are all great ways to experience the Conservatory and in turn, support our efforts in recreating this Milwaukee icon as a new destination and experience for our visitors.

Lastly, I would like to echo the sentiments of all those who shared their thoughts about Richard Risch on page one. He was an amazing cheerleader for this Conservatory and his knowledge and history as a past Domes Director served to guide and inspire me to carry on holding the "torch."

His influence, inspiration and life's work will be enjoyed by generations of visitors to come. I can only hope to aspire to the path he set in motion.

Richard and his family remain in our thoughts.

See you at the Domes!

# 2011 Milwaukee Domes Art Festival

By Steven R. Libbey,  
FOD Board Member, Milwaukee  
Domes Art Festival Director



What more could you ask for? A lobster BLT, great music and fine art in a Gold Medal

Winning Milwaukee County Park, and so much more.

One of the primary missions of the art festival is exposing more people to all of the improvements at the Conservatory. In our second year, the Milwaukee Domes Art Festival took a huge step in the right direction, with a continuation of the incredible art event of our inaugural year plus many improvements and wonderful new features. Having exhibiting artists inside the Domes allowed attendees to get out of the heat and enjoy the horticultural conservatory without disconnecting from the outdoor art festival experience.

Discovery World partnered with the FOD in two different presentations at

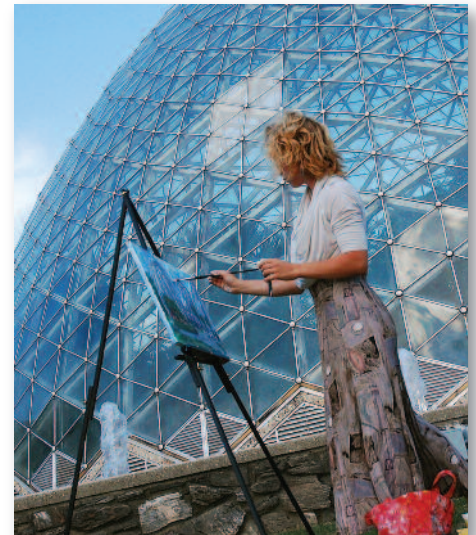
the festival this year. *The Discovery World Kohl's Mobile Design It Lab* offered guests an opportunity to create their own art. *The Discovery World Art and Archeology of Me* gave a unique glimpse of the history of the area around Mitchell Park with a 50-foot diameter display using Mitchell Park as the center point. We hope to have both back next year.

Great food from Maxie's Southern Comfort and Berke's Lakeside in Oconomowoc was enjoyed by all. The quality of art was of the highest level. Sculptor Todd Burton took home our best of show 2011. Todd's hand forged bronze and steel sculpture is amazing. Our best of Plein Air \$2,000 award went to Tom Kubala for his watercolor, Justin's Tent. Tom is the architect who designed the Milwaukee County greenhouses, scheduled to be built behind the Domes in 2012. Todd's win is a very cool side light to this year's art festival.

People in the event industry say it takes three to seven years to build awareness for an event in the mind of the general public. The Milwaukee Domes Art

Festival can be an annuity event, bringing tens of thousands of dollars to the Conservatory annually, while exposing thousands to facility improvements and helping raise attendance numbers that surpass records of nearly 100 years ago.

Photo by Steven R. Libbey



To all who volunteered both years, it sure seems like attendance was up. Revenue should be too. I will have a numbers breakdown in our next newsletter. The Milwaukee Domes Art Festival is an event with incredible value and appeal. Mark your calendar now for next year's event on the third weekend in August 2012.

## Gift Shop Art Fair... Great Holiday Gifts!

By Sarah Philipp

The Domes Gift Shop will be holding an art fair, Gifts Under Glass, on Sunday, December 4th, featuring wonderful local artists. Fair goers are invited to explore pottery, ceramics, photography, jewelry, books, glass art and many other items. Visit one-on-one with the artists, and have your books signed.

This is the perfect opportunity to get your holiday shopping done, while enjoying tasty treats! The fair will be held in the lobby of the Domes from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. Take part in this special event, while doing your part to support the Friends of the Domes.

## Gift Wrap the Domes This Holiday!

As a member of the Friends of the Domes, you can buy a gift membership (at your membership level or lower) for a new member at half price! Family, friends, co-workers, employees and neighbors will love all the wonderful sights, sounds, shows and events!

Go to [milwaukeedomes.org](http://milwaukeedomes.org) for details.

# New Teaching Technology & A Visitor from Brazil

By Paula Zamiatowski,  
Interpretive Educator

In August, we were installing new Smart Signs when Cebile Ruas from Brazil came to write a story about the innovative way we are introducing patrons to “Jaboticaba” in the Show Dome and “Cacao” and “Banana” in the Tropical Dome. Ms. Ruas writes for two Brazilian newspapers (*Estado de Minas* and *Correio Braziliense*).

The Jaboticaba shrub, native to Brazil, bears fruit the size and shape of a cherry. The whitish pulp contains one to four small seeds, has a deliciously unique taste, and can be eaten if ripened it until black and a little wrinkly. It does not ship well and is seldom available in local markets. Primarily, it is a backyard fruit grown in areas close to the coast in South America. Ms. Ruas was excited to see this plant growing here in Milwaukee.

I would love to tell you more about Jaboticaba, but I think you need to visit the Domes and try out our new Smart Signs yourself. Use your Smartphone “app” to scan the QR (quick response) code on the sign. You will instantly see intriguing information about this shrub, and a trivia game to play ([www.KidCom.com](http://www.KidCom.com)). Successfully complete the trivia, be rewarded with a virtual plant to add to your virtual garden on KidsCom.com, and watch your garden grow ([www.IdeaSeekers.com](http://www.IdeaSeekers.com)).

This new Domes feature was funded by a grant from the Evan and Marion Helfaer Foundation. The grant supports three Smart Signs, website and one year’s support from Circle 1 Network to maintain the site. We are searching for additional dollars to



purchase Smartphones that can be checked out of the Gift Shop and used by visitors.

Circle 1 Network is the publisher of KidsCom’s Idea Seekers Universe, providing smart fun for families. Online since February 1995, KidsCom was designed as an educational, entertain-

ing electronic playground for children ages eight to 15. Kids use simulations and games to learn, form teams to problem solve and be creative. They collaborate in learning labs where experts appear as avatars to present topics from horticulture to

Shakespeare. KidsCom is a favorite of children in over 100 countries. Many teachers use the KidsCom site for students in their classrooms.

Learn more at **Rainforest Night**, Friday, October 7, from 6 - 9:30 p.m. Bring your flashlight!

## Gifts Under Glass What’s New in the Gift Shop?

By Sarah Philipp



Leanne Cordisco began Christine’s Gourmet Toffee in 2009. Her vision was to create great tasting and unique candies using local ingredients. She uses only Wisconsin butter sourced from within 60 miles of Madison.

In addition to being made with all local ingredients, Leanne’s toffee is gluten-free and all natural. She prides herself on creating unique twists on candy classics, such as Usinger’s apple-

wood smoked bacon toffee, pistachio toffee, sea salt caramels and chai tea latte caramels.

Leanne’s toffee can also be found nationally. It has even been selected as one of the items for this year’s Emmy’s celebrity gift bags. You can also find Leanne and her candies at [www.popularsnacks.com](http://www.popularsnacks.com).

Why is it called “Christine’s?” Leanne and the company’s co-founder, Sam Jacobson, wanted to honor the memory of his mother, Christine, who would often give him her hand-made candies when he was a little boy.

Visit the Domes Gift Shop to enjoy Leanne Cordisco’s delicious, inventive treats, and purchase the work of local artists while doing your part to support the Friends of the Domes.

# Children's Corner



## Seeds of Autumn

Did you ever take a walk outside on a breezy autumn day and see dried maple seeds spin and whirl as they drop from a tree? Or see fluffy white milkweed seeds floating in the crisp, cool air? Maybe you found larger, heavier brown acorns that fell right to the ground near a large oak tree.



Photo by Bridget O'Donnell

Before a new plant can grow from a seed, the seed first has to leave the parent plant. Because seeds come in so many different shapes, sizes and weights, some travel farther than others. The way they travel is often very different as well.

Wispy seeds, like the milkweed, move easily through the air. A squirrel might pick up an acorn and carry it away. Other seeds might drop to the ground and remain close by. Some seeds will be carried a greater distance by water. Seeds that get stuck to the fur of an animal, or the bottom of your shoe,

can be moved from one place and dropped off in another far away from where its journey began.

With the right amount of soil, sunlight and water, the seed might take root, grow in its new home next spring and produce seeds of its own.



**Rainforest Night**  
**Friday, October 7**  
**6:00 - 9:00 p.m.**

Tours begin at 6:30 p.m., with the last tour beginning at 9 p.m. Explore our "Tropical Rainforest" guided only by the light of your flashlight. Amid lush tropical plants, you'll learn about the fascinating world of the rainforest. Enjoy an up-close and personal opportunity to see tropical birds. Sample tasty products of the tropics, like chocolate, nuts, plantains, coffee, and exotic fruits and juices. The Arid and Floral Show Domes will also be open for your exploration. Organic, fair-trade, and sustainable products will be available for purchase. No registration is needed.

## Did You Know? About Autumn Apples...

- Apples are members of the "pome" family, a fruit with seeds in the core. (Roses are also members of the pome family.)
- The science of growing apples is called pomology.
- Apples are grown on farms known as orchards.
- Apple trees begin to bear fruit at 3 years of age.
- Apple trees can be 200 years old and still produce fruit.
- Cool August nights trigger an enzyme that increases the color or "blush" of ripe apples.
- The average person eats 65 apples each year.
- Apples float because 25% of an apple's volume is air.
- In Wisconsin, 72 commercial apple orchards cover about 7,400 acres.
- 56 million pounds of apples are produced in Wisconsin each year.



Photo by  
Bridget O'Donnell

Source: The Wisconsin Ag in the Classroom Program.

# Featured PLANT:

## Bird-of-Paradise Bush (*Caesalpinia gilliesii*)

By Gail Schumann

We all enjoy the changing flower displays in the Show Dome, but have you taken the time to look at some of the perennial plants growing around the outer edge? A new plant has been added that is known as the bird-of-paradise bush or yellow bird



of paradise. This plant originated in tropical South America, especially in Argentina, but it is now widely grown and naturalized throughout dry areas of Central and South America and the southwestern states. It is unrelated to the other bird of paradise (*Strelitzia*) with the large orange flowers, sometimes used in flower arrangements, which originated in South Africa. This is another example of the confusion that common plant names can cause.

Our new plant has beautiful flowers with 5 yellow petals and 10 long red stamens that extend several inches beyond the petals. It blooms throughout the spring and summer months until fall. The flowers open over a 4-hour period and are fragrant. This plant is a member of the legume (Fabaceae) family, so it produces pods just like pea and bean plants. However, these pods and seeds are poisonous. When they dry out and turn tan-colored, they explosively open to distribute their seeds. Even when not blooming, the leaves are attractive. They are bipinnately (doubly) compound with small bluishgreen leaflets that give the foliage a fernlike look. Like many members of the legume family, the bird-of-paradise bush can fix its own nitrogen from the soil because of specialized bacteria living in root nodules.

There are many species of plants in the genus *Caesalpinia* in the tropical world. The genus was named to honor an important 16th century Italian botanist, Andrea Cesalpino. He collected many plants and tried to organize them based on their fruits and seeds. This was an important step forward in the use of scientific plant classification that continued with the 18th century work of Linnaeus who started our modern naming system. Thanks to Jeff Schaffer, a Friends of the Domes board member, for his donation of this interesting new plant to the Show Dome.

Photo by G. A. Cooper, courtesy of Smithsonian Institution.

## Friend Leaves Lasting Legacy

*continued from page 1*

him every time I'm at the Conservatory, but his legacy will always be with us.

*"I met Richard when we were on the FOD Board of Directors. We quickly discovered we had many common interests, including orchids. He told me about his stamp collection and graciously prepared an exhibit of his stamps featuring orchids from around the world for the Wisconsin Orchid Society's annual show at the Domes. It was very well done, beautiful and a true educational display. He enjoyed sharing his knowledge and experiences, and that's what we will miss."*

-Deanna Andre,  
Recent Past President  
Friends of the Domes,  
Board of Directors

*I met Richard over 25 years ago when he was the Director of the Domes. I was fascinated by how much he knew about plants and the Domes. Occasionally it seemed like a foreign language when he patiently explained botanical names of the plants. When he retired he wanted to write a book. Unfortunately that never happened. He definitely kept himself busy. I would run into him at the Domes, often once a week. Richard was a wealth of knowledge. I am going to miss all of the stories he shared.*

-Roger Krawiecki,  
Board Member  
Friends of the Dome

## FRIENDS OF THE DOMES 2011 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### OFFICERS

Acting President	Philip Rozga
First Vice President	Philip Rozga
Second Vice President	Richard Risch
Third Vice President	Mary Philipp
Fourth Vice President	Roger Krawiecki
Treasurer	Terrell Ford
Recording Secretary	Susan Ford
Corresponding Secretary	Barbara Mangold

### BOARD MEMBER

Amy Arndt	Carrie Gorski
Jon Bales	Elise Libbey
Connie Blair	Steven Libbey
Kirsten Boeh	Dilia Rosa Osorto Kuschel
Sally Buckland	Jeff Shaffer

### ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Sally Buckland	Bookkeeper
Darlene Dorsett	Administrative Asst.

## 2011 – 2012 Calendar of Events

September 24 – November 6	.....Little House on the Plains (Mum Show)
October 1	.....Beer Under Glass (Beer Tasting)*
October 7	.....Rainforest Night
October 15 - 16	.....Ikebana Show (The art of Japanese Floral Design)
October 28	.....Ghosts Under Glass (Halloween Event)*
November – March	.....Music Under Glass Concert Series**
November 19 – January 1, 2012	.....Holly, Jolly Holidays (Holiday Show)
December 4	.....Gifts Under Glass Art Fair
December 31	.....New Year's Eve Family Celebration*
January 14 – March 18, 2012	.....Fantasy Garden Train Show
January 14	.....Poland Under Glass
January 21	.....Chinese New Year's Celebration
January 27	.....Restaurants Under Glass***
February 11	.....Turkey Under Glass
February 14	.....Valentines Event*
February 25-26	.....Collectible All-Scale Train Exhibit
March 3	.....Germany Under Glass
March (date to be announced)	.....Irish Family Day
March 24	.....Dare to be Aware Fair
April 7	.....Green Living Festival

\*Sponsored by the "Friends of the Domes."  
Special admission rates apply.

\*\*Thursday Evenings from 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

\*\*\*Milwaukee's top 20 restaurants offer samples for tasting,  
6:30 - 9 p.m. A great night out!



DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE Visit our website [www.milwaukedomes.org](http://www.milwaukedomes.org)  
for more information and events scheduled after publication of this newsletter.

## Unique Holiday Gift Ideas!

See inside for details...

- Commemorative Engraved Pavers
- Gift Shop Art Fair,  
Sunday, December 4th
- Friends of the Domes  
Gift Memberships

524 S. Layton Blvd.  
Milwaukee, WI 53215



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