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Mailing address: 518 S. 7th Ave, Wausau, WI 54401
Gardens address: 1901 N. 4th Ave, Wausau, WI 54401
Phone Number: (715) 261-6309

Plant Yourself Where You Want to Bloom

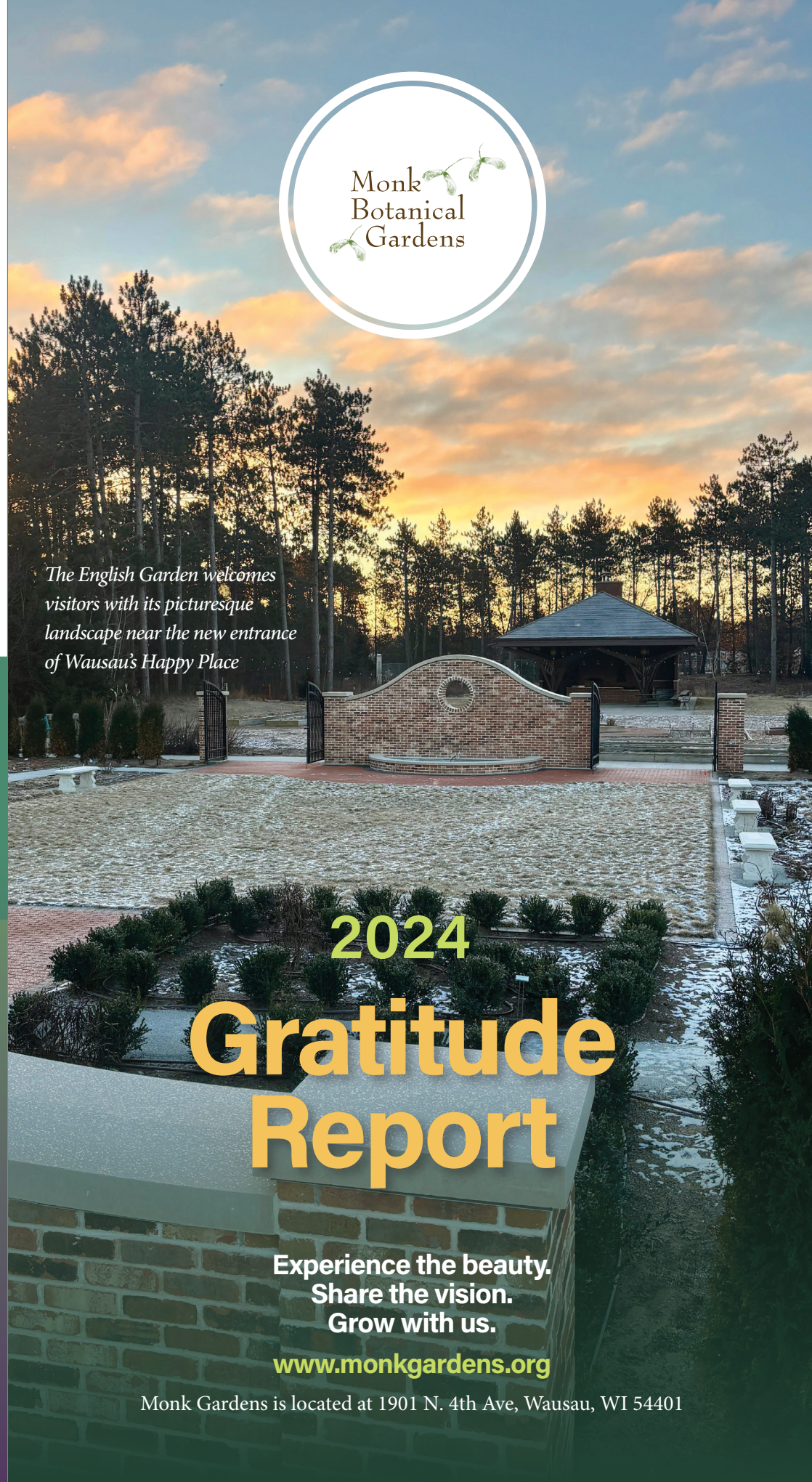
Whether you attend a program for the very first time, try out a volunteer role that gets your hands a little dirty, or invite a neighbor to join you for Blossom of Lights, 2025 is YOUR opportunity to BLOOM at MONK BOTANICAL GARDENS!

THANK YOU for your generous support in 2024!

Monk Botanical Gardens cultivates well-being in people, communities, and the environment with experiences that engage, educate, and inspire. Visit **Wausau's Happy Place** today!

Please Note: The Garden is transitioning from a Calendar Year to a Fiscal Year; the next Gratitude Report will come out Summer of 2026. Follow our newsletter and website for updates along the way.

   www.monkgardens.org



The English Garden welcomes visitors with its picturesque landscape near the new entrance of Wausau's Happy Place

2024 Gratitude Report

Experience the beauty.
Share the vision.
Grow with us.

www.monkgardens.org

Monk Gardens is located at 1901 N. 4th Ave, Wausau, WI 54401

From the Executive Director



Dear Friends and Supporters of the Gardens,

2024 was certainly a year of invigorating growth, transformation and prosperity - with only more great things to come in 2025 and beyond! Before I recognize the truly remarkable efforts, accomplishments, resilience, and collaboration of the Gardens staff, donors, contractors, members, and board, I'd like to offer a brief introduction.

My name is Jennifer Plisch, your new Executive Director. I grew up in the garden alongside my grandmother and explored horticultural interests as a member and leader of 4-H. I have a bachelor's degree in Social Work and a master's degree in Non-Profit Organizational Management. Having lived and worked in Marathon County and north central Wisconsin my entire career, I bring 25 years of direct service and regional nonprofit leadership experience to this role. My dedication to the vision and mission of the Gardens - both historically and futuristically - is unwavering. In order to move the Gardens forward, I know that it will require community input and the forging of new relationships. I promise you that my door, a concerning ear, and my mind will always be open. I invite you to reach out and introduce yourself to me anytime!

Recent garden enhancements and construction are near completion. The new English Garden offers a beautiful setting for your wedding or other special events. Call today, tour a setting unlike any other in the area, schedule your date, and create an event with life-long memories! Enchanting low voltage lighting now illuminates our newly resurfaced winding paths at night, providing additional hours of enjoyment for all!

Sara's Storybook Garden, a magical space that blossomed out of tragedy and is a triumph at which to marvel, was completed in the fall. The Hobbit House, shipwreck, and lending library all stand in memory of Sara Quirt-Sann, her advocacy for children, and passion for literature. Located at the very center of the Gardens, it highlights the hard work and dedication of the Marathon County Bar Association and countless volunteers, alongside the heartfelt generosity of many donors.

Education of the environmentally curious remains at the core of our mission. Registration is open for both Sprouts Garden Preschool and Summer Camp in the Gardens. But spots are filling fast - get your registration in today! Sprouts will be offering both a full day 3K and 4K program this year!

I am humbled by the immeasurable engagement of the community in helping to move the vision of the Gardens forward, and I am devoted to growing alongside each and every one of you to further our place of solace and education in our wonderful community at Wausau's Happy Place!

See you in the Gardens,

Jennifer Plisch
Executive Director
Monk Botanical Gardens



2024 Board Officers

President - Paul David
Vice President - Mark Munson
Secretary - Paul Whitaker
Treasurer - Jon Plisch

2024 Board Members

Julie Bohr
Tabitha Erlandson
Susan Lang
Ann Lucas
Vickie Richmond Hawkins
Sheila Rossmiller
Tammy Stezenski

Staff

Executive Director - Jennifer Plisch
Facilities & Grounds Director - Patrick Murphy
Program Manager - Kaytie Ruesch
Development Manager - Linda Schill
Volunteer Coordinator & Admin Assistant - Megan Johnson
Garden Supervisor & Horticulturist - Pat Witt
Bookkeeper - Kari Buck
Sprouts Garden Preschool Team:
Lead Teachers - Amanda Valencia, Sadie Xiong
Assistant Teachers - Beth Grefe, Sarah Loth, Lauryn Rammer

ENGAGE

Local business partners invested more than **\$50,000** to support programs, sponsor events, and provide financial aid for youth education.



More than **400** garden goers purchased or renewed an **annual Membership** in 2024!



Final installations to **Sara's Storybook Garden** were completed and have been a delightful attraction for all ages!

2024 Financials (Unaudited)

Operating Revenue

Grants	\$	111,758
Memberships	\$	44,886
Contributions	\$	242,711
Sales	\$	10,133
Program Fees	\$	357,102

Total Operating Revenue **\$ 766,590**

Restricted Revenue

Capital Campaign Revenue	\$	1,958,028
In Kind Contributions	\$	79,403
Visions of Growth Endowment Fund	\$	7,784

Total Restricted Revenue **\$ 2,045,215**

TOTAL REVENUE **\$ 2,811,805**

EDUCATE



10 weeks of Summer Camp in the Gardens was offered for kids ages 3 to 15! **388** children participated; almost doubling enrollment from last year!

233 educational programs were offered in 2024; a **16%** increase in our efforts to inspire and connect participants



Received **National Display Garden of the American Hosta Society** recognition in collaboration with North Central Wisconsin Master Gardeners.

More than **\$20,250** in Memorial and Honorarium contributions were offered in 2024, allowing us to honor so many loved ones in precious spaces throughout the Gardens.



“The joy of creation lies in watching your ideas bloom into reality.”

Although what Mr. Monk shared with this community seemed to be a simple dream, it's one that has proven to require the passion, fortitude and generosity of so many to nurture it along year after year and bring it to life; and we're not done yet...

To our beloved donors, members, volunteers, and visitors

THANK YOU
for your support in 2024!

Scan this code for the full list of 2024 donors, in kind, and tribute honorees. Or go to:

www.monkgardens.org/support/donate/support-our-mission/



INSPIRE

More than **\$375,000** of local economic impact was directly related to **Blossom of Lights** visitor spending in the Wausau region.



Blossom of Lights attracted close to **5,000** event attendees; **up 40%** over last year!



278 volunteers shared **3,021** hours of service at the Gardens! Volunteering increased by **17%**!

The generosity of several **Capital Campaign** donors helped in part to establish a beautiful **Welcome Center** for enhanced guest services and to resurface more than 2/3 of the Gardens' trail system for improved accessibility. A new **parking lot** and **security fence** were also installed. In addition, a formal **English Garden** was established with a heartfelt gift from the **Thomas & Marilyn Kraemer Trust**. We truly thank this entire group of visionary donors for their **trust** and **investment** in our work!



BA & Esther Greenheck Foundation
Bell Family Charitable Foundation
Cheryl Jones
Sara's Storybook Garden Fund (CFNCW)
Dan Storey Foundation, Inc
Dudley Foundation, Inc
Dwight & Linda Davis Foundation
Edward & Lois Drott Legacy Fund (CFNCW)
Elizabeth Kraemer
Judd S Alexander Foundation, Inc
Lila Rouse

Marvin & Ruth (Rudie) Schuette DA Fund (CFNCW)
May Family Foundation, Inc
Paul Gassner
Raymond and Marie Goldbach Charitable Foundation, Inc
The Macdonald Foundation
Thomas & Marilyn Kraemer Trust
Tom & Janet Felch Family Fund (CFNCW)
Walter Alexander Foundation, Inc.
William and Mary Nell Reif
Wisconsin Public Service Foundation