



WELLFIELD BOTANIC GARDENS

2025  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

[wellfieldgardens.org](http://wellfieldgardens.org) | (574) 266 - 2006 | [info@wellfieldgardens.org](mailto:info@wellfieldgardens.org)

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# CELEBRATING OUR 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

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A letter from our *Robert and Peggy Weed* Executive Director, Kurt Dreisilker

The past year marked an outstanding milestone for Wellfield Botanic Gardens as we celebrate our 20th anniversary. Over two decades, the Gardens have grown with steady purpose, guided by our mission and strengthened by the committed community of Elkhart and beyond. Today, Wellfield remains a beautiful destination, a gathering place for community, and a botanic garden growing into its next chapter.

During the year, Wellfield achieved several notable accomplishments, including continued development of garden spaces and infrastructure, expanded public programming and educational offerings, and sustained growth in community engagement and visitation. I hope that by now you have seen our new Visitors Center and Woodland Pavilion, where we have hosted tens of thousands of people from the region for our signature events, like Groovin' in the Gardens, Taste of the Gardens, and Winter Wonderland Holiday Lights. Importantly, we reignited our plant collections, a key component of what we offer as a botanic garden and a framework of beauty for everyone to enjoy while visiting. We also unveiled beautiful sculptures across our acreage for the community to enjoy.

These efforts supported our educational impact throughout the year. Hundreds of students and visitors participated in learning opportunities at Wellfield, including more than 1,300 students who visited the Gardens on field trips from local schools.

This brief annual report—our first—reflects the collective work of many individuals who share a belief in the power of public gardens and in our responsibility to nurture a more vibrant and sustainable world. None of this would be possible without the dedication of our staff and volunteers, and the generosity of our members, donors, sponsors, and partners.

Thank you for the continued confidence you place in Wellfield Botanic Gardens. We look forward to building on our momentum in the coming year as we pursue excellence across all that we do.



Kurt Dreisilker  
*Robert & Peggy Weed* Executive Director



Vision: Growing community through beauty and nature

Mission: Cultivating art, education, and ecology to  
nurture a more vibrant and sustainable world.

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# OUR 2025 STATISTICS

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# 42,661

Guests visited in 2025 for daily admissions, special events, classes, and workshops

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# 2,004

Households with memberships

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# 18,000+

Plants were put in the ground by our Horticulture Staff and volunteers

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# 5,207

Hours from a team of volunteers including individuals and groups



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# STAFF

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Kurt Dreisilker: *Robert & Peggy Weed*  
Executive Director

Chrisi Cornell  
Maddy Gordon  
Ariana Guerrero  
Cody Hoff  
Kate Ireland  
Don Loutzenhiser  
Kelsea Lucchese  
Rhonda Maxwell  
Heidi Meadows  
Sharon Neely  
Lisa Osborne

Jodie Papandrea  
Erin Penney  
Diana Silva  
Kyle Strain  
Michelle Stebbins  
Kelli Stutsman  
Judy Swihart  
Jen Tan  
Cheree Thews  
Ginger Thorne

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# BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Steve Brown: Chair  
Bill Halt: Vice Chair  
Spenser Gilbert: Treasurer  
Karen Nicholson: Secretary  
Mona Biddlecome  
Carl Bossung  
Dan Brekke  
Jessica Burbrink  
Ken Carr  
Teri Crabill  
Janet Evanega Rieckhoff  
Steve Fidler  
Steve Haines  
Tonja Lucchese  
Deb Pulianas  
Ilene Sheffer  
Will Weed  
Todd Yoder

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