



LEACH
BOTANICAL
— GARDEN —

IMPACT
REPORT
FY2025-2026



A message from our Interim Executive Director

There's a direct route through the center of the Garden. It leads past the pollinator garden and Aerial Tree Walk, down the main steps, and to the entrance of the Manor House that looks out over Johnson Creek. When I'm in a hurry, I take this path.

When I have time, I take the meandering path that routes through the forest trails, past the carved basalt sculptures, the Douglas fir 'tree knees,' the new East 5 trail, and then lands at the East Terrace adjacent to the Carriage House.

On this meandering route, I often encounter other guests delighting in their own explorations, stooped over, examining an unusual plant, or staring up at the impressive tree canopy, smiling. That part makes me happy.

This last year was a wild ride. Those of you who follow along know the precarious financial position in which we found ourselves in January, and the impressive rally, buoyed by Leach Garden supporters, that turned the tide on our situation to let us confidently move forward with the Pedestrian Bridge installation, the East 5 trail opening, and the arched willow entrance into the Far Meadow. Nothing was certain in January. Now we can see our way forward well into 2027 and beyond.

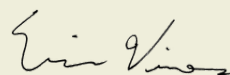
There is much to celebrate, much to appreciate. Survival would be enough, but we also saw record attendance, an increase in membership, and some heartwarming coverage by the press and our social media supporters that showed

how a garden in the middle of SE Portland impacts lives. Many people told us it was their first time visiting the Garden and they loved it. We never tire of hearing that!

Our survival came from sacrifice and generosity. We had to layoff 50% of our staff in March. We eliminated 90% of our public programming. We cut back visitation hours and raised the price of admission. Volunteers stepped in to help the gardeners with weeding, planting, and watering. Donors stepped up with additional contributions. And the board members stepped up with increased meetings, planning, and advising.

Throughout, the staff remained resolute in their commitments to the Garden and the community. They showed up, worked hard, stayed cheerful, and sought creative cooperative partnerships to allow Leach Garden to thrive into the future. There would be no Garden without this team showing up every day to make the space welcoming and beautiful.

So this year was hard. That indirect path, with the unexpected twists and turns, the highs and lows, all forged a greater clarity about what's needed in the future to make Leach Garden an ongoing success. As we look to next year and our efforts to secure a new long term Executive Director, and the financial base needed for long term stability, we feel proud of what we've accomplished together, and optimistic about what we can bring to the community in the future. Thanks for being part of our story.



ERIC VINES

INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
LEACH BOTANICAL GARDEN



HORTICULTURE

Nurturing & Growing

As Fiscal Year 25-26 started, the team was settling into its new structure with the hiring of an additional Horticulturist. A major effort was undertaken to clean up the dilapidated nursery and greenhouse. In the fall, many plants were added to the collection with a focus on spring-blooming bulbs. Through the winter, the team worked on shrub pruning, pathway repair, and fence building projects.

By March 2026, half of the horticulture staff was laid off, with the remaining staff having their hours cut by 25%. Once again, the department was restructured in an attempt to cover all necessary work with the reduced staffing levels. The team added more volunteer days and recruited more volunteers to fill the sudden gap.

With the install of the pedestrian bridge across Johnson Creek, a major cleanup effort was undertaken in the Garden area south of the creek which had previously been unreachable to guests for many years. Work continued on nursery and greenhouse cleanup, albeit at a much slower pace than before. By mid-spring, planting season had arrived and there was a huge push to redesign garden beds around the Manor House and elevate the overall aesthetic throughout the Garden.

In total, approximately 1,700 plants were added across 165 distinct species.

Following these efforts, the team turned their attention to helping with the necessary work to open the East 5 Community Habitat Enhancement Project, including pathway construction and fence building. In June, the Garden welcomed its new Horticulture Intern, Rowan Van Niekerk, who worked through the summer months on all aspects of public garden maintenance, education, and record keeping. In July, the team also welcomed its Seasonal Horticulturist, Mali Fischer-Levine. By September, focus was already shifting to fall planting season, with major improvements planned for prominent garden beds around the Manor House and the Garden's main entrance.

EDUCATION + PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Engaging Communities

This past fiscal year the Public Programs team saw major shifts, as necessitated by our February 2026 emergency call for public funding support. Reduced staffing meant that we relied on working with volunteers to offer low cost community programs. These included Honeybee Hikes for pre-school age children, and our experienced and knowledgeable Docents who led visitors on a variety of unique tours, including the Social Life of Trees and The Garden Highlights Tour, as well as providing Open Houses in the Manor House and the Stone Cabin.

Here are some highlights of our programs from the past year:

- In September 2025 we hosted an Easy Equinox Soundbath.
- In Fall 2025 we hosted a three-part lecture series titled “A Deep Dive into Pollination.”
- In October 2025 we hosted “Returning Fire to the Landscape,” a free workshop with Cuauhtemoc Villa, as well as Boo!Bash, a community fall celebration with 645 guests attending.
- Through the winter months we kept guests caffeinated with complimentary coffee from our sponsor, Coava Coffee Roasters, along with Manor House Open Houses.
- In June 2026 we partnered with artist Patrick Norton to offer a benefit printmaking workshop.
- From June to August 2026 our Honeybee Hikes program welcomed 199 participants.
- In July 2026 we hosted a Sip and Picnic event with lawn games and picnicking for all ages.
- Our summer 2026 partnership with Multnomah County Library welcomed visitors with storytimes in Russian, Vietnamese, English, and Spanish.





VOLUNTEERS

Service and Stewardship

We currently have over 70 active volunteers—gardening groups, the gift shop team, Garden docents, event support volunteers, board members, visitor services assistants, and more. The Garden is the beautiful, thriving, vibrant place that it is because of the dedication, hard work, and joy that the volunteers bring to it.

The Garden Gift Shop's amazingly capable volunteer team handled \$180,028.17 in sales during the 25-26 fiscal year (up from \$128,718 for the 24-25 fiscal year). The volunteers provide a friendly, welcoming atmosphere, as well as answering questions, providing directions, and sharing membership information, making the shop important both for the revenue it generates, and for being the visitor services hub in the lower garden.

From fall 2025 to spring 2026, intern Luca Cotter joined us through the Tivnu Program for a gap year of service.

Although there is no way to accurately capture the value of volunteers in terms of a monetary number, it is another way to fully appreciate their contribution to the Garden. Multiply the 7,263 volunteer hours provided during the 25-26 fiscal year by \$37.66* and the total monetary value to LBG Friends is \$273,524.58. Along with that is so much more that can't be calculated—the delight and pride in the Garden that the volunteers have, the sense of community they share with each other and with staff, and our shared hope for a bright, sustainable future for the Garden.

**The value of a volunteer hour in Oregon is taken from the Value of Volunteer Time report issued by the Independent Sector in conjunction with the University of Maryland's Do Good Institute on April 21, 2026.*

EAST 5 COMMUNITY HABITAT ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

Healthier Ecosystems & Communities

“The East 5 is a space for learning, healing, and reciprocity, where you can slow down and be a piece of the whole,” as described by Sara Volk, Community Science Program Manager with Johnson Creek Watershed Council.

Much has happened in the East 5 over the last fiscal year. For starters, we changed the name! The project was renamed from the Back 5 to the East 5 Community Habitat Enhancement Project. The project's new name honors the East Portland Community and reflects the cardinal direction of the 5-acre restoration site in relation to the whole garden.

Here are the accomplishments we've made:

- We've added around 600 native plants
- A 450-foot mulch maintenance path was installed by Wisdom of the Elders LLC
- 175 feet of interior fencing was removed
- A 467-foot pedestrian trail opened to the public in summer 2026. The pedestrian trail provides the first public access to the East 5, as well as the ability to traverse from the entrance to the lower garden terrace without using stairs. This trail was funded by the Metro Nature in Neighborhoods grant.
- We hosted 21 Environmental Education events with K-12 schools and school programs, 8 higher education projects, 34 mission-aligned events with partner organizations, and 70 land tending events.

All of this couldn't be done without the help of our volunteers who donated 3,169 volunteer support hours. We are so grateful!

In addition to all the above accomplishments PSU Social Work Capstone students constructed semi-permanent boardwalks for muddy paths near the creek, increasing the walkability of the East 5. A comment from the Bureau of Environmental Services field trip leader, Christa Shier, after a David Douglas School District (DDSD) elementary field trip: “We really appreciated having a dry place to sit to do the water testing!”





VISITOR SERVICES

Connecting People and Place

FY 25/26 was a year that called for adaptability, resilience, and a continued commitment to welcoming our community. As staffing levels and public access hours were reduced in response to the Garden's financial challenges, Visitor Services adapted while continuing to create a warm and meaningful experience for every guest. At the same time, we experienced an extraordinary outpouring of community support, with visitors expressing their gratitude for Leach and concern for its future. Over the course of the year, 39,266 guests visited the Garden, generating \$151,870 in admission revenue. Together, these visits and the heartfelt response from our community reflect the strong connection people have with Leach, along with their desire to see it continue to thrive.

Visitor Services volunteers contributed more than 250 hours of support: greeting guests, providing Garden orientation, answering questions, and assisting members. From November through March, the VS team also staffed Creekside Coffee, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere where visitors could learn about Leach's history, connect with staff, and ask questions about membership. Together, these efforts contributed to more than 650 walk-up memberships sold during the year.

Now in its fourth year, Garden for All remains a cornerstone of Leach's commitment to equitable access, providing complimentary admission to 1,860 guests. Together with cultural programs and other reciprocal and free-entry opportunities, 4,477 guests received complimentary admission, helping ensure that cost was not a barrier to experiencing the Garden. Visitor Services also supported 33 group visits, generating \$4,270 in tour revenue. One visiting group shared, "Leach truly is such a special place, a real jewel in our city." Another guest called the Garden "a treasure" that seems miles removed from the bustle of daily life.

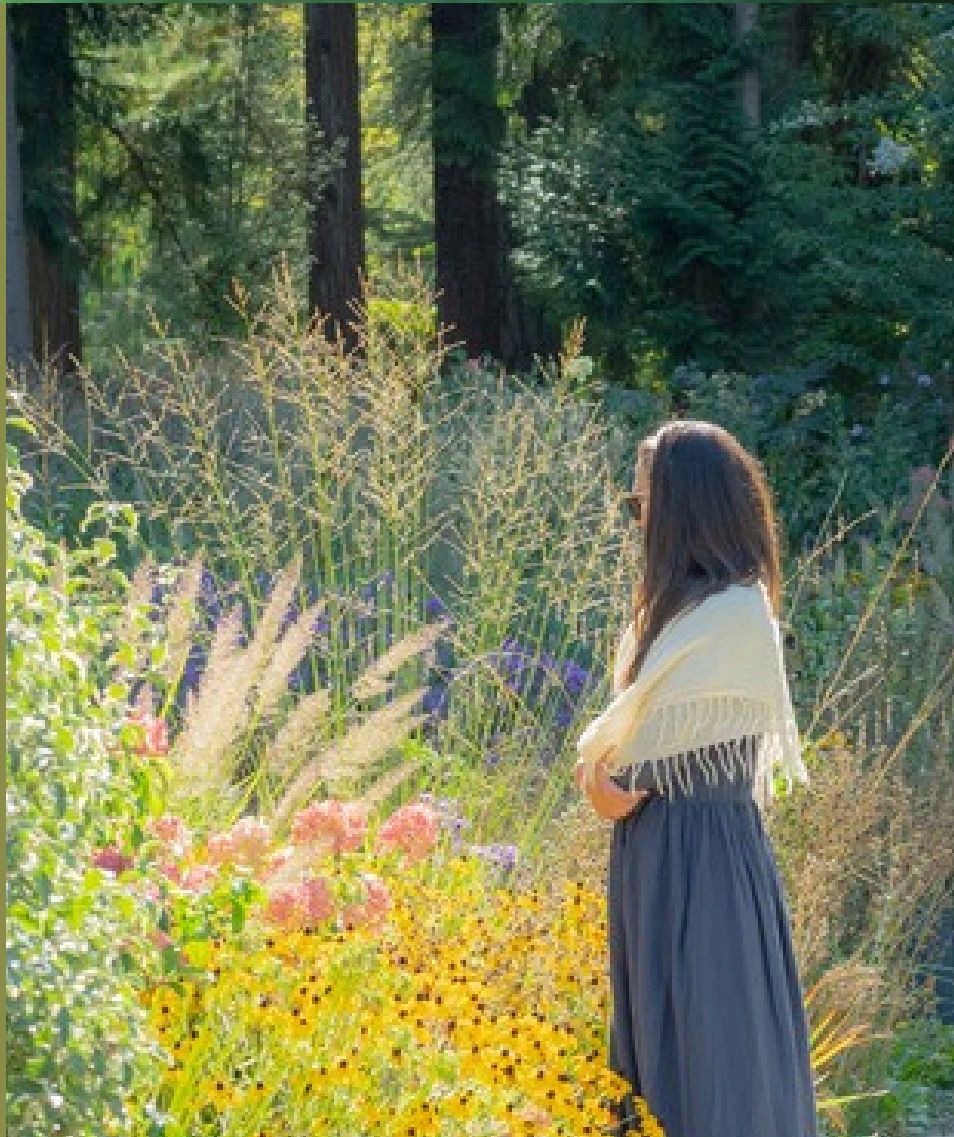
Visitor Services has the privilege of witnessing the enduring connection the Garden inspires, especially in a year of challenge. The overwhelming support of our community provided deep roots of strength, helping sustain an ever-expanding canopy of beauty, respite, and sanctuary.



Photos by Tamra Tiemeyer

39,266
TOTAL
GARDEN
GUESTS

\$151,870 IN
ADMISSIONS
REVENUE



SPECIAL EVENTS + RENTALS

A Space for Celebrations and Tributes

This year we had to pause bookings for events from February-May while the Garden's financial footing was insecure. In the fiscal year we held 29 in-person venue tours, hosted 22 wedding & reception celebrations and 3 ceremony-only events, 9 elopements, 8 community rentals, 5 proposals, 1 business retreat, 3 private celebrations, and 4 celebrations of life. Lots of memories were made!



Andrew Alexander Photography

SPECIAL PROJECTS

We celebrated the completion of three major Garden projects this year: installation of the Johnson Creek Pedestrian Bridge, the Far Meadow children's garden improvements, and the opening of the East 5 public path.

Each of these efforts began in prior years, and we're so grateful for the support of grants, donors, and partners that made it all possible.

Pictured below is a view of the Sun and Moon willow gate sculptures by local artist Rose Covert that welcomes you to the Far Meadow.





Photos by Andrea Getts

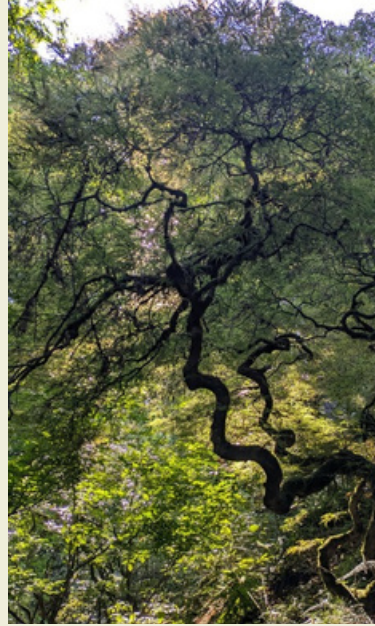
BENEFIT EVENTS

Supporting Together

Thanks to the generosity of our sponsors, guests, partners, and volunteers we've hosted a series of successful fundraising events to support the Garden's daily operations. While some of these programs fall a bit outside of the FY25-26 timeframe*, we include them on an annual basis here.

These include:

- **2025 WinterFest and Wreath Sale:** Volunteers provided assistance for a remarkably successful 2025 Winterfest and Wreath Sale, including many hours of skillful, artistic wreath-decorating. Total raised for the Garden = \$24,769.
- **Richie Steffens Benefit Lecture:** The Executive Director of the Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden shared his insights on sustainable gardening that honors our Western flora while welcoming global diversity with a sold out group of 50 attendees. This program was supported by sponsor Bartlett Tree Experts. Total raised for the Garden = \$5,000.
- ***2026 Benefit Concerts:** Ajay Ravi and Max Wolf brought a memorable and hugely successful Moment benefit concert to the Garden. And Ben Anderson, whose grandmother used to live near the Garden, organized a very special folk music benefit concert. Both concerts sold out and we are deeply grateful to the organizers who made these events happen, and to the musicians who generously donated their time and talent. These concerts raised = \$10,733.
- ***Nibble:** We welcomed 200 guests for a jovial gathering with local musicians, tasty food and drink, letterpress printing, and a sneak peek at our 2027 residency and land-based artist exhibition, Terrain. This program was supported by sponsors Portland Nursery, The Davey Tree Expert Company, Kathy Clayton Whole Person Coaching, Breakside Brewing, and Westmoreland Liquor. Total raised for the Garden = \$9,000 (after expenses).



MEMBERS

86% increase

DONORS

151% increase

Your Opportunity to Make a Lasting Impact

When you make protecting nature and environmental stewardship your legacy, you ensure that future generations will enjoy educational experiences, and joyful community programs in a lush landscape of over 2,000 varieties of plants.

You have several meaningful ways to support:

- [Put Leach Botanical Garden in your will](#)
- [Give a gift of appreciated stock](#)
- Make Leach Botanical Garden a beneficiary of your retirement account or life insurance policy
- Give a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) directly from your individual retirement account (IRA)
- [Make a Donor Advised Fund \(DAF\) gift via Oregon Community Foundation \(OCF\)](#)

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

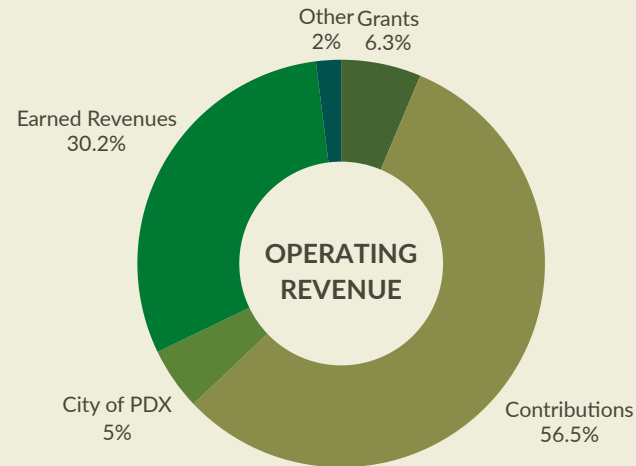
LEACH BOTANICAL GARDEN

2026

2025-2026 Fiscal Year

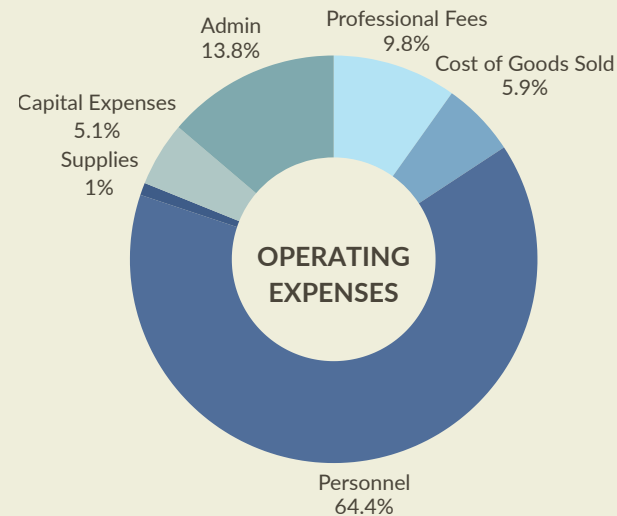
Functional Revenue

Grants	\$ 124,718
Government Support (City of Portland)	100,000
Contributions	1,102,822
<i>Individual & Corporate Contributions, Fundraising Events</i>	
Earned Revenues	576,318
<i>Admission, Programs, Rentals, Sales, Investment Income</i>	
Revenue Other	33,012
Total Functional Revenues	1,936,870



Functional Expenses

Personnel	\$ 1,057,534
<i>Salaries, Benefits, & Payroll Taxes</i>	
Professional Fees	164,140
<i>Finance, IT, Honoraria, & Other Consultants</i>	
General and Administrative Expenses	227,746
<i>Marketing, Maintenance, Utilities, and Admin. Costs</i>	
Horticultural & Educational Supplies	6,818
Cost of Goods Sold	88,815
Capital Expenses	84,435
<i>Renovations & New Construction</i>	
Total Functional Expenses	1,629,488



Our revenue surplus planted the seeds for developing a needed \$7.5 million Sustainability Fund that will support Garden operations into the future.

GRANTORS

- The H.W. and D.C.H. Irwin Foundation
- The Jackson Foundation
- Metro Nature in Neighborhoods
- MJ Murdock Charitable Trust
- Prosper Portland
- Ronald W. Naito MD Foundation
- Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust
- Travel Portland

BUSINESS MEMBERS

- Bartlett Tree Experts
- D & J Landscape Contractors
- Foster Trees
- Sauvie Island Natives
- Wolf Water Resources

Operating in partnership
with Portland Parks &
Recreation



SPONSORS

- Bartlett Tree Experts
- Breakside Brewing
- Coava Coffee
- Davey Tree Expert Company
- Friends of The Oregon Association for Talented & Gifted
- Heritage Bank
- Kathy Clayton Whole Person Coaching
- NW Natural
- Olson Kundig
- Pogo Pass
- Portland Nursery
- The Family Archivists
- Westmoreland Liquor
- Winterbrook Planning



Staff

Jose Benitez, Event Attendant
Sarah Benitez-Silvas, Rental Sales + Special Events Specialist
Carrie Boatwright, Visitor Services Specialist
Anastasiya Brant, Rental Sales + Special Events Coordinator
Mali Fischer-Levine, Seasonal Horticulturist
Katharine Grace Flores, East 5 Education + Ecology Manager
Kit Cummins, Rental Sales + Special Events Manager
Wenndi Fryder, Visitor Services Specialist
Lindsey Gohd, Propogator/Gardener
Adam Hart, Horticulture Director
Jami LeBaron, Director of Events + Community Engagement
Kyle Macdonald, Facilities + Event Support Specialist
Alina Mello, Visitor Services Specialist
Hilliary Montero, Horticulturist
Max Meyers, Program Coordinator
Renee Myers, Executive Director
Sam Mularz, Gardener
Lisa Santo, Operations Director
Cheyenne Swartz, Rental Sales + Special Events Asst. Manager
Katherine Takata, Special Events Assistant
Tamra Tiemeyer, Visitor Services Manager
Jennifer Tilson, Visitor Services Specialist
Eric Vines, Interim Executive Director
Annie Winn, Volunteer and Gift Shop Manager
Jennifer Woodward, Development Director

Board of Directors

Tom Bland, Treasurer
Lewis Barr
Sam Bennett
Kate Bodin
Michael Crosbie, Secretary
Gay Greger
Richard Hartlage
Bob Hyland, President
Michael McKeel
Sue O'Halloran
CiCi Polson
Jim Rondone
Francheska Snyder, Vice President
Carol Wilson



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