

# Spring Flower Show



## Woodland Wall

Created by Richard DeVries, a Natural Resources Horticulturist at the Arboretum, this captivating wood backdrop, featuring natural stump tables, came from just part of a single downed cedar tree from the Arboretum grounds.

To add more floral appeal, the folks at Orchid Web of Plymouth have imbued this vignette with numerous specialty orchids, including some planted in the style of kokedama — a Japanese word that, simply translated, means “moss ball.” Also called the “poor man’s bonsai” or “string gardens,” kokedama involves binding plants into mossy orbs, a practice that dates back centuries to the Edo era in Japan around 1600 AD — the same era that inspired the Arboretum’s Japanese garden.

In the wild, orchids and bromeliads are epiphytic, meaning they grow in trees and gather moisture from rainfall and humidity, rather than soil. See even more orchids in the Conservatory in the Snyder Building, grown and curated by Arboretum Greenhouse Manager Ricky Garza.

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## Baskets of Dreams

Dreaming of spring? More than 50 repurposed baskets of all shapes and sizes were used to create this eye-catching two-story wicker wall of wonder, designed and created by Arboretum Horticulturist Jewel Engstrom. Engstrom and volunteers carefully wired the baskets to grape vines and other materials, then embellished them with fresh greenery, blooms and springtime accents to transform the north wall of the McQuinn Great Hall of the Oswald Visitor Center.

Engstrom is a big fan of repurposing items whenever she can as she creates her designs. By recycling and reusing — planters, materials and even propagated plants — we can all embrace eco-friendly living and a greener planet!

Nearby, check out the spectacular stone fountain created by Tonka Bay Fountains, which also contributed two other fountains at the Spring Flower Show.

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## Stunning Cymbidiums

Stop and smile — and take a selfie — under the willow branch moon gate, adorned with sprays of cut and potted cymbidiums, tulips, arctic and curly willow branches, grapevines and lush green plants.

Also known as boat orchids, cymbidiums are native to the Himalayas and are accustomed to cool conditions. Their tall spikes bloom with up to 25 flowers that span up to 6 inches across — and can last up to three months! Many also have the added appeal of fragrance. Look for these botanical wonders throughout the show.

To see the rest of the show, head upstairs to see more vignettes, starting on the balcony and continuing on to the Eatery and the Snyder Building. You'll know you've seen it all after you arrive in the balmy Conservatory, filled with orchids large and micro.

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## Reflection Garden

In this vignette, stop to gaze into a series of stunning, colorful mosaic mirrors created by award-winning local artist Shelley Beaumont, whose work is inspired by her love of flowers and their natural symmetry, geometry and enigmatic colors.

Shelley explains her captivating mosaics with a slideshow on a nearby video monitor. Can you tell which one-of-a-kind mosaic is inspired by which flower? Each piece is for sale Feb. 8 through March 10. Check the *Mosaics and Mirrors* exhibit poster for pricing and more details.

Also in this vignette, you'll see three fabric-wrapped trees made from European alder (*Alnus glutinosa*), an invasive species removed from the Arboretum near Green Heron Pond. Filling in the space are lush green houseplants, kalanchoes, orchids, amaryllis, neoregelia bromeliads, fresh-cut flowers and more to create a collaboration of colors and a show-stopping scene.

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## Enchanting Terrariums

Bring nature indoors with these delightful botanical beauties! Terrariums create eye-catching environments, bursting with moisture-loving plants that adore the higher humidity contained within their growing space. Some terrariums are used to create fun little scenes — landscapes for tiny animals, butterflies and even a fairy garden.

Some of the most common plants for household terrariums include ferns, moss, pilea, baby tears, peperomia, fittonia and polka dot plants.

Generally, slow-growing plants do well in the closed space of a terrarium. Today's display was made complete with growing lights with handmade flower lampshades.

Visit the Arboretum Gift & Garden Store for houseplants, fairy garden supplies and terrarium containers.



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## Super Succulents

Succulents continue to be popular houseplants and as outdoor garden selections because they need little watering and thrive in dry conditions — including the low humidity of our indoor winter air.

They come in an amazing array of vegetative features, including some that look like bona fide flowers while others emulate strings of pearls, cattails, candelabras and just about anything one could imagine.

Succulants can be put together in beautiful topiaries, container groupings or they can stand alone, preferably in south-facing windows. However, they do fairly well in low light for short periods of time.

Special thanks to Kelly's Cottage Garden for creating the 50 display in the Great Hall, celebrating the 50-year anniversary of Snyder Building which opened in 1974.

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## Forcing the Issue

In addition to the houseplants and cut flowers of the Spring Flower Show, visitors will find many blooming bulbs, including fragrant hyacinths, daffodils, paperwhites and tulips alongside other late-winter bloomers such as primrose and cyclamen.

The Arboretum coaxes the bulbs into bloom early by putting the bulbs through a chilling period and then planting the bulbs about eight weeks before the show, thereby “forcing” the bulbs to bloom at just the right time. Greenhouse Manager Ricky Garza, along with other staff and volunteers, plant the bulbs at staggered times, so visitors will enjoy fresh buds and blooms throughout the entirety of the four-week show.

Visitors will find these forced flowers throughout the show, but especially in the Eatery window boxes and in clear vases on the Eatery half-wall, allowing visitors to see the roots, bulbs and stems as they grow!

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Learn more about activities with the Garden Club of Minneapolis by taking a bookmark from the mailbox

## Garden Club of Minneapolis



The Garden Club of Minneapolis holds perhaps the longest-standing relationship with the Arboretum of any garden club. Not only did the members propose the original idea of an Arboretum in 1956, every director of the Arboretum has been a member of the club, including Dr. Leon Snyder (pictured), former head of the U of M Horticultural Science Department, who served as the first Arboretum Director (1958-1976).

Subsequent director members include Francis de Vos (1977-1984), Peter J. Olin (1984-2008), Edward L. Schneider (2010-2015), Peter C. Moe (2016-2023) and current Executive Director Andrew Gapinski.

The Garden Club of Minneapolis has more than 150 members from all walks of life and with diverse gardening interests. For more than 30 years, the Arboretum and the club have co-hosted an annual Flower, Food & Foto Show of prize-winning flowers, vegetables and horticultural photos every August. Explore this vignette to learn more, and check out the Arboretum history panels near the cafe terrace windows for more history!



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## Happy Birthday, Snyder Building!

This giant blooming cake celebrates the 50th year of the Snyder Building, named for Dr. Leon Snyder, the first Director of the Arboretum. Officially opened in 1974, the building served as the Arboretum's first visitor center, and also housed research and education programming, a Tea Room restaurant and the first phase of the Andersen Horticultural Library.

Arboretum Horticulturist Audrey Busch created this delicacy using repurposed plywood, chicken wire, sheetrock joint compound (for the frosting!) and burlap, along with botanical elements that represent decades of memories at the Arboretum.

Adorned with cyclamen, kalanchoe, primroses, fresh flowers and hand-painted birds, the cake also features pods, leaves, branches and dried flowers, as well as grasses and pinecones from the Arboretum's collections, native grasses to honor Indigenous peoples, a single leaf from the Jacob Wetterling memorial tree at the Learning Center and barley from the Farm at the Arb, plus grape vines and apples as a nod to Arboretum fruit breeding, too!

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Meyer-Deats Conservatory (Photo by Jason Boudreau-Landis)

## Birth of the Conservatory



Dr. Edith Potter (1901-1993) was a remarkable woman of her time. After being one of the first women to earn a medical degree from the University of Minnesota, in addition to a Ph.D. in pathology, she later taught at the University of Chicago and served for 33 years as pathologist in Chicago.

Potter became known for reducing infant mortality rates through her pioneering work in perinatal pathology. One of her key discoveries was a link between Rhesus disease (Rh) and infant death, which led others to develop preventative screenings and treatments that are now standard life-saving practices.

During her retirement in Florida, Potter became an expert in tropical plants, particularly bromeliads. What you see in the Conservatory today is a double donation from Potter — a gift of more than 120 bromeliad cultivars from her own collection, but also charitable gift annuity that established the Meyer-Deats Conservatory in 1980, named after her two late husbands, Alvin Meyer and Frank Duryea Deats.

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Photo by Mark Paulson

## Amazing Epiphytes!

Tropical orchids and bromeliads aren't just stunning plants! They're a great choice for winter houseplants as they provide an important connection with nature for people during a relatively colorless season outdoors in Minnesota.

Most orchids and bromeliads are epiphytic (growing on trees) so they require small containers and thrive in indoor environments. Many of them bloom best during the shorter days of winter, typically reblooming in January and February.

Orchids are also the most diverse group of plants on earth, so they offer a visual cacophony of forms, colors and even fragrance. Arboretum Greenhouse Manager and orchid expert, Ricky Garza, curated this display and cares for the Arboretum's bromeliads and orchids year round!

To see even more orchids, check out the Woodland Wall vignette in the Great Hall of the Oswald Visitor Center, featuring orchids from Orchid Web, an online orchid retail based in Plymouth.