

# The Dirt

FALL 2025



NEWSLETTER OF THE MONTROSE BOTANICAL SOCIETY



*Two large tents on the Valley Lawn promised to shelter the crowd from threatening clouds at the Montrose Botanic Gardens' 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration on September 13. See page 3 for more photos.*

## MONTROSE BOTANICAL SOCIETY CELEBRATES 30 YEARS!

Ominous clouds loomed over the Montrose Botanic Gardens on the morning of September 13, but that didn't keep more than 200 people from celebrating the Gardens' 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary! The event was designed as a "Thank You" to our community for its support over the years.

MBS President Liz Mauch kicked off the event with reflections from some of our founding members like Linda Corwine McIntosh, who said, "I'm so appreciative of the hard work and long hours that so many volunteers have contributed over the years, and for the investment that so many have made.



"It's rewarding to see how the gardens have grown and, like all gardens, continues to grow," she added.

MBS offered complimentary hot dogs, chips, cookies and beverages to the crowd while the musical group Jedi George provided an upbeat atmosphere. A long line formed at the balloon animals tent while other kids created an endless stream of giant bubbles over the Valley lawn. A variety of games entertained folks of all ages.

Thanks to organizers Liz Mauch, Peggy Justis, Anne Britton, Anne Schuttig and Brenda Bafus-Williams, and to all the volunteers who helped on the day of the event. And a special thanks to our sponsors – Alpine Bank, Delta-Montrose Electric Association, and John and Nancy Eloie – for making this event possible. **See page 3 for more photos!**

## MBS BOARD

### President

Liz Mauch

### Vice President

(open position)

### Treasurer

Peggy Justis

### Secretary

Brenda Bafus-Williams

### At Large

Anne Britton

Tracy Harrison

Laulii Hillier

Anne Schuttig

Board meetings on the third Wed. of each month unless otherwise posted.

4:00pm - 6:00pm at  
230 South 2<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Montrose, CO

### Horticulture

Sara Ungrodt

### Operations & Maintenance

Rob Clapper

### Membership

Anne Schuttig

### Website & Newsletter

Brenda Bafus-Williams

### Private Event Coordinator

Linda Bentley

### Montrose Botanical Society

P.O. Box 323

Montrose, CO 81402

### Visit the Gardens at

1800 Pavilion Dr

Montrose, CO 81401

Free admission; dawn to dusk

[www.montrosegardens.org](http://www.montrosegardens.org)

[facebook.com/  
montrosegardens](https://facebook.com/montrosegardens)

[info@montrosegardens.org](mailto:info@montrosegardens.org)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Liz Mauch

Greetings fellow gardeners and members!

The summer went by so quickly, and now we are fully into the shorter days, longer shadows, and cooler nights of fall. I hope you were able to enjoy the fall colors at the Botanic Gardens and around beautiful western Colorado!

As the outgoing President, it has been an honor to lead this organization. We have so many dedicated, hard-working people who make this organization successful and who keep the gardens green and looking good. Our final Weed Warrior workday of the year was October 29; it's always bittersweet as we've enjoyed the camaraderie with our all-volunteer crew working together since the spring. We usually have 22-24 volunteers each week, and they do an incredible job. Thank you, Weed Warriors, and we look forward to seeing you again next spring!

I'd also like to thank those who go the extra mile at the Botanic Gardens:

- Sara Ungrodt, who oversees the horticultural work,
- Bryan Cashion who takes the lead on electrical and irrigation tasks,
- Rob Clapper who oversees the general maintenance,

- Linda Bentley and Sheri Smyth for designing and maintaining the entry gardens - they really popped this year,
- Liane Muller for overseeing Happy Hollow and the children's planting day and harvest day,
- Susan Woody for tending to the compost pile and weeds.

There are many other volunteers who give of their time, and one of our newest members is Dave Paprocki who has been such a help to Rob this year.

And last but not least, I thank the Board: Treasurer Peggy Justis, Secretary Brenda Bafus-Williams, At-Large members Tracy Harrison, Anne Britton, Anne Schuttig and Laulii Hillier. The Board handles a myriad of topics at our monthly meetings. I appreciate our collaborative, thoughtful and respectful dialogue and variety of expertise. You are all golden! Tracy will be leaving the Board at the end of the year, and we will miss her contribution. It's truly been a joy to work with all of you.

### Children's Garden Renovation Update:

The Planning Committee is busy working with DHM Landscape Architects out of Durango on a conceptual design for the new Discovery Garden. We anticipate having the design available on our website for public comment in mid-December. We are especially interested in receiving comments from our members and from those who commented during the summer public comment period. We will also meet with the City to get comments and information on anticipated permitting or other approvals needed. The final conceptual design will be completed in mid-January 2026. We plan to do presentations around town and fundraise.

### Year-end Matching Challenge Grant:

**Once again, an anonymous donor has offered a \$2,500 challenge grant from November 12 to December 31. Any monetary donation made to MBS or through Colorado Gives will count. Please consider making a donation to help us fully meet the match!**

Wishing you a happy and restful holiday season, – Liz Mauch, President

## Welcome to our new members!

Aleja  
Jeanne Bass  
William Bottomly  
Arthur Clifford  
Jackie Edds  
Julia Hartley  
Rebecca Heins  
Betty Hooley  
Mary Kathryn Hooley-  
Underwood  
Diane Miller Keenan  
Peggy Reeve  
Rick & Kathy Weaver  
David and Sally Wood  
Linda Zaragoza &  
Frank Mazza

J.P. Cencer  
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# MBS Celebrates 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary *(continued from page 1)*

MBS's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in pictures (see article on page 1):

1. Giant bubbles, hula hoops and games for all ages entertained the crowd.
2. Storm clouds finally won out by mid-afternoon, sending the crowd running for cover from the pelting rain.
3. Anne Wilburn and Donna Sue Hudgins served chocolate cookies in yellow paper liners, suggestive of the anniversary's sunflower theme. The official "first seed planted" back in the day was a sunflower.



## Some of the benefits of your MBS membership!

**Present your MBS membership card at these local businesses to receive these generous discounts:**

**Abel's Ace Hardware**  
10% on gardening items

**Camelot Gardens**  
10% on nursery trees & shrubs

**Chelsea Nursery (in Clifton)**  
10% on plants, shrubs & trees

**Cooper Soils**  
10% on soils & mulch

**San Juan Gardens**  
10% on plants

**With an MBS membership card, you can gain free admission to over 380 beautiful botanic gardens in the American Horticultural Society's Garden Network.**



**AHS GARDEN NETWORK**

American Horticultural Society

Learn more at [www.montrosegardens.org/membership](http://www.montrosegardens.org/membership)

## MEMBER IN THE SPOTLIGHT: BETTY HALL

By Tracy Harrison

Betty Hall, a long-time member of MBS, received the *You Make a Difference Award* from the City of Montrose in 2024. She does make a difference for many in our community but her passion is Gardening. This is apparent from the pots of flowers that surround her home that lead out to a beautifully landscaped yard of trees, shrubs, vegetables and flowers -- both annuals and perennials.



Betty has been a CSU Master Gardener since 1988. She took the class a second time in 2000, after coming back from mission work in Africa. Her status is now 'Emeritus' Veteran Volunteer Colorado Master Gardener, and she has made substantial contributions to the program.

She has taught Spring Gardening classes for seven years at the former Delta-Montrose Vo-Tech College, and has also taught gardening for 10 years at the House of Promise. She also taught gardening and quilting as part of her mission work in Africa and other foreign countries.

Betty joined the Montrose Botanical Society after she and her husband

returned from Africa. They built the home where she still lives in 1999, and joined MBS soon after. She served several years on the Board of Directors, and has taught various classes offered by MBS. You always see her smiling face as a volunteer at the many events MBS hosts, and her beautiful yard has been on the MBS Home Garden Tour twice.

Betty is the Floriculture Judge for the Montrose County Fair as well as the Tri-River area of Delta, Mesa and Ouray County fairs. She has been a volunteer at Montrose Memorial Hospital for 50 years, a quilter and a member of the American Rose Society.

Betty's early years were spent in Arlington, Kiowa County, Colorado. Her family celebrated 100 years in Colorado in 1988. She graduated from high school in Los Alamos, New Mexico, where she met her husband, Austin. They were married 55 years at the time of his passing. They lived in many places before settling in Montrose for his job with Colorado Ute Electric Association.

## LEAVE YOUR MARK ON THE GARDENS

If you're looking to make a significant donation to the Botanic Gardens during this season of year-end giving, please consider one of this opportunities:

### Sponsor an Entry Garden:

Possibly the area of the most eye-popping color in our Gardens, the east and west Entry Gardens (pictured at right) make a big impact as visitors approach. In exchange for a donation of \$600, your name (individuals or business) could be featured on a highly visible sponsorship sign near the front gate.



With a donation of \$3,000, you could sponsor a third table and chairs set for the other Shavano Plaza -- complete with a tribute plaque with a message of your choice.



### Endowment

**Fund:** As we announced in the Summer issue of *The Dirt*, the MBS Endowment Fund is now being managed by the Western Colorado Community Foundation. If you would like to add to the Endowment Fund with a monetary gift now, follow the link on [www.montrosegardens.org/donate](http://www.montrosegardens.org/donate). If you would like to receive more information about including the Endowment as a part of your estate planning, or **if you are interested in any of these other opportunities, email [info@montrosegardens.org](mailto:info@montrosegardens.org) and we'll be in touch! Thank you!**

**Garden table and chairs:** With a donation from Darrell Hartigan, in memory of his wife Catherine, MBS added a heavy duty garden table and two chairs to the nook just west of the entrance gate in 2024. Anonymous donors recently gifted the Gardens a matching set, which will be placed on one of the Shavano Plazas.



# PHOTO PATCH

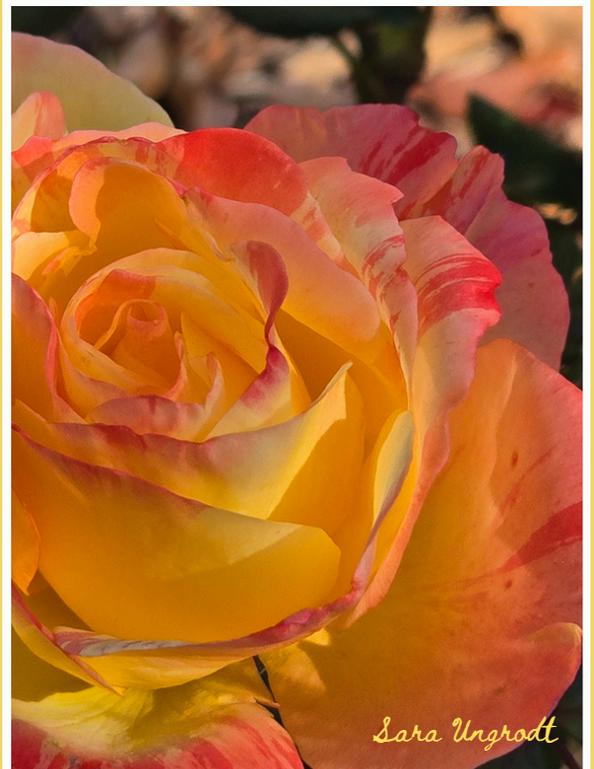


J.P. Cencos  
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- (above) MBS members enjoyed the annual picnic in August.
- (below) Weed Warriors Peggy Justis, Dodie Guinn and Brenda Bafus-Williams hacked back the aggressive Bluestem Joint-fir as part of an effort to reclaim the long-obscured Rock Garden.



- (above) Twenty high school students volunteered in the Gardens during October's "Redhawks Soar" event. Pictured here are two helping to weed the Homestead Garden's strawberry patch.
- (below) Kenton Seth offered his critiques of the potted crevice gardens created during his September 6 workshop.
- (at right) The Chihuly Rose in the filtered light of the Promenade.



Sara Ungrodt

## NEW OFFICERS ELECTED AT ANNUAL MEETING

Montrose Botanical Society members held their annual meeting on November 12 at the First Presbyterian Church. Since President Liz Mauch is stepping off the board as of January 1, elections were the top business item at the meeting. Members elected Brenda Bafus-Williams as the new President, with Anne Britton moving up to Vice President and Anne Schuttig stepping up to Secretary. Officers are elected to two-year terms, although Britton is filling a one-year remainder term as Vice President. The board may appoint additional At-large members at its discretion.

*(at right) MBS's current board of directors through the end of the year: President Liz Mauch, At-large Anne Schuttig, At-large Laulii Hillier, Secretary Brenda Bafus-Williams, At-large Anne Britton, At-large Tracy Harrison and Treasurer Peggy Justis. Tracy will also be leaving the board at year's end. Thanks to Liz and Tracy for all their hard work!*



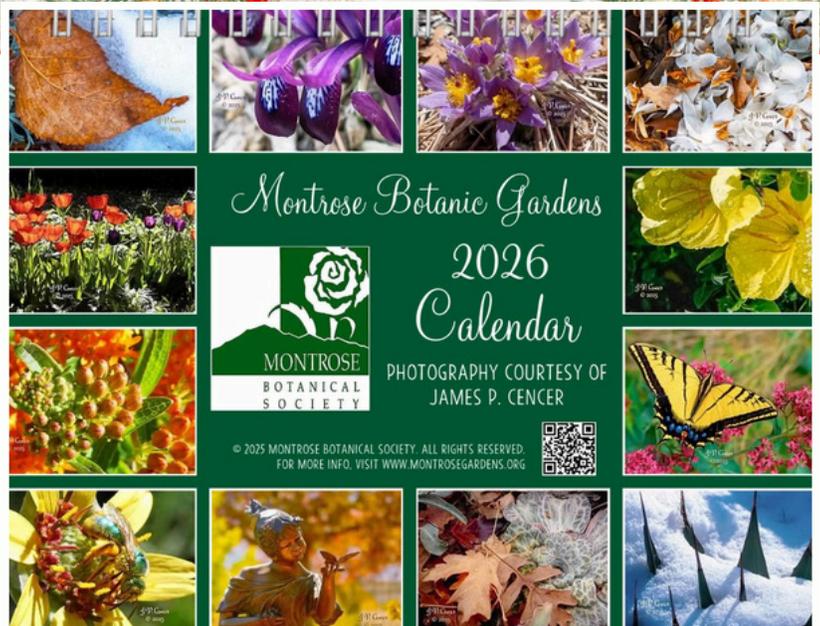
## Thank You to our Generous Patrons

Alpine Bank  
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 England Fence Company  
 Misty Mountain Landscape & Irrigation  
 Montrose Forest Products  
 Rotary Club of Montrose  
 San Juan Gardens  
 Gil Bollinger  
 John & Anne Britton  
 Bryan Cashion  
 Mary Coluccy  
 Tim Edgar  
 John & Nancy Eloe  
 Beth Gordon  
 Tracy Harrison  
 Suzi & Mike King  
 Cherie MacDonald  
 Steve Manis  
 Sally McClintock  
 Carol & Jerry Pyle  
 Constance Roth  
 Molly & Chuck Shaver  
 Sara Ungrodt  
 Brenda Bafus-Williams &  
 Kevin Williams  
 Mike & Anita Winter

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JOIN US FOR A  
***Holiday Party***  
 Monday, December 8, 5:00 – 7:30 pm  
 Cobble Creek Clubhouse (699 Cobble Drive)  
*(Please note – we've changed up the location and day of the week from recent years.)*

There is ample parking and elevator access to the second floor banquet room. Please note that the Clubhouse bar will be open for at least the first part of the party. Outside alcoholic beverages are not permitted. Please bring a potluck dish and an item for the Silent Auction (optional). MBS will provide paper products and tea/coffee.



**Limited Edition 2026 MBS Calendars just in time for holiday gifting!** Available at the Holiday Party (see above); suggested \$20 donation.