



# *A Year in Review*

LOS ANGELES ARBORETUM FOUNDATION 2024 ANNUAL REPORT







## From the President & CEO



Su Oh and Annette Castro Ramirez.

### *Dear Friends,*

During this lovely, lush spring, the Arboretum is delighted to welcome our new CEO Su Oh. After an exhaustive, nationwide search, we found Su right in our own backyard. She brings incredible depth of experience with a long record of executive leadership, including many years with the Los Angeles Natural History Museum. We look forward to working together to help our gardens, members and communities flourish after a winter of raging L.A. fires.

In this Annual Report for the 2023-2024 fiscal year, we review a year of major upgrades in garden areas popular with the public. Most notable: The restoration of our beloved Queen Anne Cottage completed after five years of structural work (see page 8). The historic landmark reopened in May for a private benefactor/donor event. When tours are expanded, a new wheelchair lift will make the historic landmark accessible to even more visitors. Interior work continues with the preservation of the Cottage's beautiful stained-glass windows and the installation of newly restored doors.

When the new Visitor Plaza Entrance opened, the Gift Shop was the final missing piece of the

project. The shop, shuttered since 2022, moved to a bigger, brighter location after lengthy planning, construction, and stocking. The new Gift Shop opened to the delight of members, visitors, and staff. We thank everyone for your patience.

Planning began for the renovation of the Overlook Terrace above Bauer Lawn where the view spans an eastward vista from the Bauer Fountain, across our beautiful new entrance and flowering trees, to the Africa Collection, and the San Gabriel Mountains. The Lee and Chen Family Overlook Terrace, generously funded by the Lee Family and Jeff and Viktoria Segal, will have an expanded 3,000 square-foot space, ideal for events or simply relaxation.

The care of our historic structures and gardens is possible because of the continued support of our entire Arboretum Community—members, friends, donors, and visitors. It is your generosity that provides vital resources to ensure the Arboretum will flourish for future generations.

Thank you, and we look forward to seeing you in the gardens!

*Sincerely,*

Annette Castro Ramirez  
President  
Los Angeles Arboretum Foundation

Su Oh  
Chief Executive Officer  
Los Angeles County Arboretum

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## 2025 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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*President*

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ON THE COVER:  
QUEEN ANNE COTTAGE  
PHOTO BY MARLYN WOO



# Arboretum by the Numbers

THE 2023-2024 fiscal year featured a lion dance, a full-sized velociraptor encounter, record visitation at our historic Depot, and nearly a half million people enjoying Arboretum programs, education, and the opportunity to connect with nature. Enjoy our mission highlights below.

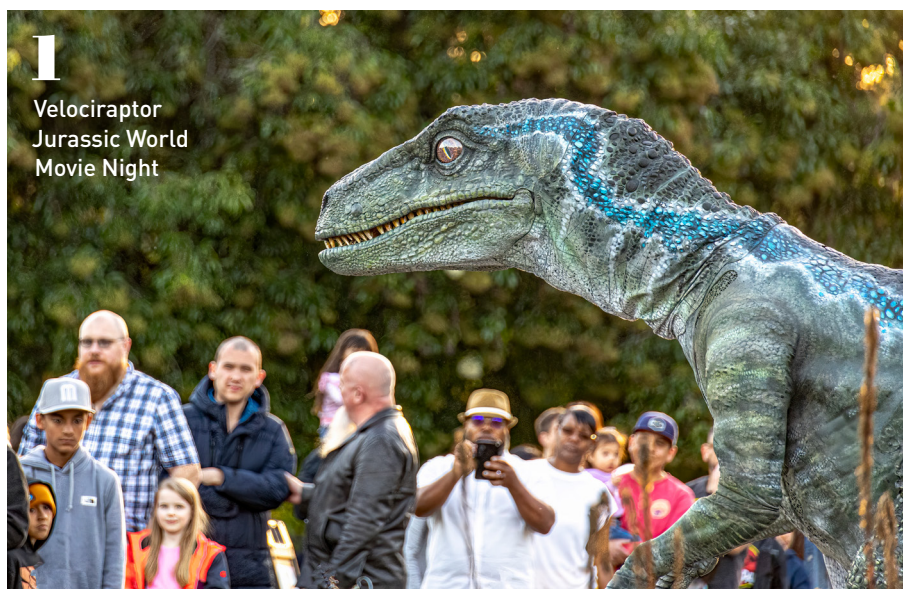


**832**

Number of dogs  
at Barks & Brews



**3,998**  
Tram Tour Riders







**685**  
Happy Campers



**3,180**  
Mushroom Fair Attendees



**3,142**  
Attended our first Lunar  
New Year Celebration.



**3,732**  
Peacock Day attendance



**980**  
Children attended  
Library Storytime.



**24,274**  
Visitors from 33 states  
and 29 countries toured  
the Santa Anita Depot.



**1,641**  
Plant bed, walkway,  
path points surveyed  
by Mapping Team.

**2,509**  
Participants in well-  
ness and art classes





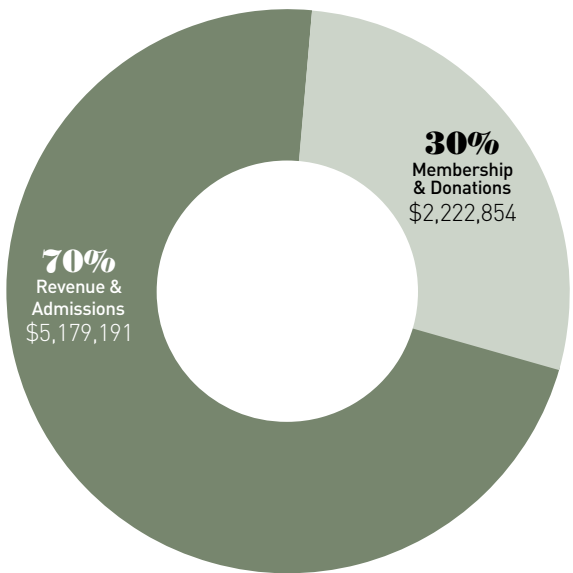


# Financials / Los Angeles Arboretum Foundation

July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024

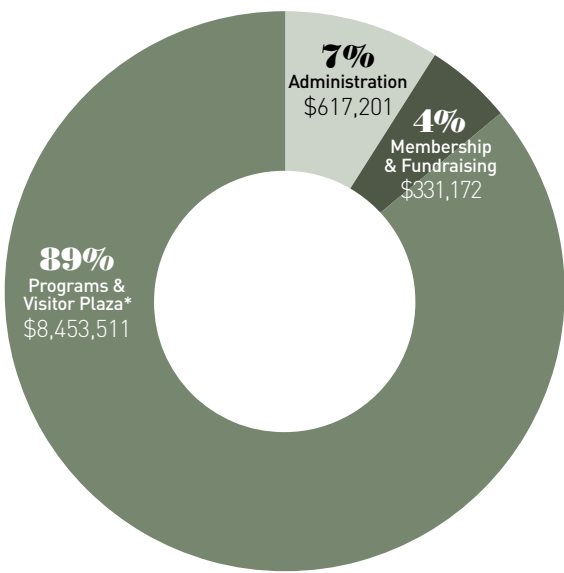
## REVENUE & SUPPORT

**\$7,402,045**



## EXPENSE

**\$9,401,884\***



## Statement of Financial Position / June 30, 2024

### ASSETS

CASH	\$3,720,209
INVESTMENTS (at fair market value)	\$2,722,269
OTHER ASSETS	\$797,514
TOTAL ASSETS	\$7,239,992

### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

LIABILITIES	\$2,298,556
UNRESTRICTED	\$3,281,608
RESTRICTED FUNDS	\$1,659,828
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$7,239,992

\*Higher expenses reflect Visitor Plaza construction costs that were paid with donations received in prior years.  
Source: Audited 2024 Financial Statements



# Bodacious Bunya Cone

Australian pine tree drops huge and bountiful cones.

by James E. Henrich



**Bunya pines** (*Araucaria bidwillii*) are native to southeastern and far northern Queensland, Australia. The mature bunya that dropped the cone shown in the photo was received as a plant from UCLA in 1953. Five juvenile trees grown from seeds produced by this bunya can be seen in the northern part of our Australian section. This species produces a large quantity of cones about every three years.

This species drew my attention about 15 years ago shortly after joining the Arboretum staff. The massive, heavy cones, Aboriginal cultural connections, and uses of the seeds fascinated me. I enjoy cooking and experimenting with the many ways of treating the seeds, from boiling, slicing thinly and pan toasting, to roasting on a gas grill (in lieu of in embers of an open fire). Pesto made with roasted seeds is quite wonderful.

A fellow colleague enticed me to see coning trees at old Los Angeles city parks. We looked at specimens approaching 100 feet in height at many of the parks dating to the late 1800s. Check them

out at Hollenbeck Park (dedicated 1892), Elysian Park (dedicated 1886), and others. Don't be surprised to find temporary construction fences around the trees when cones fall in August. After all, the heavy cones give this species the nickname widow maker! Trees related to bunya pine and distinctive in the landscape include Norfolk Island pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*) and New Caledonia pine (*Araucaria columnaris*).

Aboriginal culture is intertwined with the bunya pine. The trees are considered sacred and are an important source of food, timber, and fiber. Seeds are eaten raw or cooked (boiled or roasted in an open fire). If raw, they are ground into a paste and eaten directly or made into bread if cooked. Aboriginal families traditionally manage specific trees within groves. Surplus fresh seeds are often planted for a meal later. Seedlings produce a small tuber below ground and can be harvested and treated in the same manner as seeds for food.

Cones are green and solid when they fall and soften and collapse within one to two weeks. The large, almond-shaped seeds can be harvested easily at this time. Mold will envelop the seeds if left unattended in the deconstructing cone. Seeds keep well refrigerated or frozen.

For a closeup look at the bunya cone as well as the author, [check out this video](#).

---

*James E. Henrich is  
Curator of Living Collections  
at the Arboretum.*



A mature bunya tree (above) looms large in the Australian section of the Arboretum. Seed (left) from a cone cut in half from tip to base. Male cones (below) on juvenile tree.





# Long Live the Queen Anne Cottage!

A toast to a 140-year-old icon looking splendid after five years of painstaking restoration.



An aerial view of the Cottage after the restoration. The tower and cupola (top) needed stabilization and the steps serious repairs.

THE REOPENING OF the Queen Anne Cottage celebrates the beauty and history of one of Southern California's great 19th century landmarks. Of equal significance, completion of the five-year restoration project demonstrates the essential importance of community support, as well as the public/private partnership that has governed the Arboretum since its inception in 1948.

In 2019, when Arboretum

donors generously came forward to fund a restoration project at the Cottage, then CEO Richard Schulhof said he embraced the opportunity with "both deep gratitude and a twinge of caution." The chance to address the preservation needs of the historic structure could only be enthusiastically welcomed. Yet he knew that peeling back surface layers of the 140-year-old structure could reveal additional

needs of unknown complexity and cost.

Yet there was still some surprise when the removal of the veranda marble flooring for repair uncovered significant structural work to secure the veranda foundation, which in turn, pointed to another project to stabilize the tower and cupola. The Foundation responded with a creative on-line Kickstarter campaign for the cottage as well as other fundrais-

ing efforts. L.A. County contributed its considerable preservation management experience and project funding. With great thanks to a large community of support for the \$1 million restoration project, the Cottage reopened in the spring of 2024 with a stabilized structure, foundation repairs, and a renewed veranda, all completed in keeping with national standards for architectural preservation.

PHOTOS: AERIAL VIEW BY FRANK McDONOUGH; TOWER AND STAIRS BY MITCHELL HEARNS BISHOP



# Thank You to Our Supporters

THE ARBORETUM COMMUNITY is made up of many individuals who share a commitment to the vital role a garden plays as a place of learning, inspiration, and enjoyment. We are grateful to our Arboretum Benefactors who are highlighted within this list and celebrate their role as the organization's highest level of members and supporters. We are also proud to recognize and honor our many other special friends, members, foundations, and businesses for their generosity. All donors of \$500 and up are listed based on their cumulative contributions between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024.

## \$500,000

Estate of Simon Russin

## \$150,000+

Georgina Fredrick  
Children's Foundation

## \$50,000+

**Carl L. Herrmann**

## \$25,000+

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**Jeanie & Terry Kay**  
**Celina McHugh**  
**& Patricia Herron**  
**Susan Rzeppa Redpath**  
Steinmetz Foundation

## \$10,000+

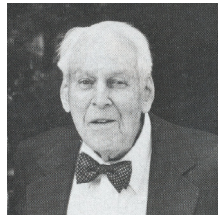
**Carolyn Egenes**  
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**D. Hill, PhD**  
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MonteCedro  
**Louise Neiby**

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**John Tegtmeyer & Pamela**  
**Hillings Tegtmeyer**  
**Betsey Tyler**

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Ellen & Harvey Knell  
**Diana Leach**  
**T. C. J. E. & Lee Family**

## Samuel Ayres Legacy Society



SAMUEL AYRES was a visionary and the driving force in the establishment of the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden. We are grateful to these forward-thinking individuals and families who share Ayres' vision of a great public garden and have named the Los Angeles Arboretum Foundation in their wills or estate plans.

Corrine Abel Estate\*  
Anonymous (5)  
The Domenica M. Ashton Trust\*  
Estate of Samuel Ayres Jr.  
& Helen Ayres\*  
Coleen & George Ball  
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The Vincent Talbot Trust\*  
The Tauer Family Trust\*  
The Susan Walker Trust\*  
Evelyn Walpus  
The Wilbur Estate\*  
Fern Yu

\*Legacy Gift Realized

If you have named the LA Arboretum Foundation in your will or estate plan or if you are interested in exploring a planned gift, please contact Chief Development Officer Sylvia Rosenberger at 626.821.3232 or [sylvia.rosenberger@arboretum.org](mailto:sylvia.rosenberger@arboretum.org).

**Bold/Italics recognizes Arboretum Benefactors.**



# Thank You to Our Supporters



## **Ginger & William Lincoln**

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Longo Toyota

Mitchell Foundation for  
Nature, Art and Science

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**Rashad Raisani**

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## **\$2,500+**

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### **Cathy Gendron**

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Wendy Holloway

### **Kathy & H. Clay**

**"Hap" Kellogg**

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Laborer's International

Union of North America

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2626 AFSCME

Pete Lopez

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Pinnacle Building

Maintenance

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The Sapphire Foundation

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JoAnn & Ron Schrantz

Susie & En-Jang Shen

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**& Florist**

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## **\$1,000+**

Avery Dennison, Inc.

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**Williamson**

### **Patricia Wilmot**

## **\$500+**

American Ceramic

Society

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**& Donna Campbell**

Greg Apodaca

William J. Barney

### **Amanda & Michael Barrett**

### **Ann & Olin Barrett**

### **Suzanne Beatty**

### **Marcia & Thomas Bent**

## GIFTS OF APPRECIATED SECURITIES

A gift of long-term appreciated securities is one of the most tax-efficient ways to support the LA Arboretum Foundation. Such a gift offers you two distinct tax advantages: avoiding capital gains tax on the increased value of the stock, while also providing a charitable deduction for its full fair-market value when the stock is donated. Please contact Chief Development Officer Sylvia Rosenberger at 626.821.3232 or [sylvia.rosenberger@arboretum.org](mailto:sylvia.rosenberger@arboretum.org) for information.

**Bold/Italics recognizes Arboretum Benefactors.**



Lucy Berbeo  
 Jim Brewer  
**Jung C. Chang**  
**Emmy Chang**  
**& Shilung Lin**  
 Cady & Carson Cheng  
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**& Kou C. Lin**  
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**Bonnie Youngdahl**

## Paying it Forward

by Sylvia Rosenberger



Jerry Paul and Fern Yu

"I NEEDED A job because I only had \$27 left," said Jerry Paul, who journeyed to California at age 19 because he could see the demise of the steel and manufacturing industry in his native Pittsburgh, PA. When he arrived in California, he landed a job with Transamerica, where he built a 40-year career becoming senior vice president in charge of Asian markets.

His wife of more than 20 years, Fern Yu, was no better resourced when she arrived at age 21 in search of the California dream from Houston. "I don't think anybody wakes up and says, 'I'm going to be an underwriter,'" Yu said. Her drive, tenacity, and continued education led to a thriving career as a life insurance underwriter ultimately with Transamerica Life. Transamerica was good to the couple in another way too – it's where they met, a second marriage for both.

"We came to California with nothing," said Paul. "We were educated, had business careers, have children who are happy and were raised well. We've lived well. Giving is not a sense of owing. It's not an obligation or paying back a debt. It's paying it forward."

Making their home in San Gabriel, their life included the Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden. Yu visited with her daughter when she was young and later with two grandsons. Jerry, who has a son

from his prior marriage, was first introduced to the gardens through events and concerts.

In recent years, the couple has deepened their Arboretum involvement and commitment as Benefactors, the highest levels of membership. In addition, they have supported special projects such as the new Visitor Plaza entrance and youth education programs for children in Title I schools.

"We have this crowded, busy, involved, challenging world all around us in Los Angeles County," said Paul. "And right in the middle of it, we have this fabulous asset called the Arboretum, and we need to nurture and care and grow it because they ain't gonna make any more of this. It's now our responsibility to see that it goes forward."

Yu, a Samuel Ayres Legacy Society member, also has included the Arboretum as a beneficiary of her 401k plan. She chose to give this way to the Foundation because, unlike other estate assets, 401k income is taxable to her heirs, so it's a financially savvy way to give. She further explained that as she accumulated a little bit of wealth, her giving philosophy shifted. She used to give a little to many organizations, but then realized she wanted to make a bigger impact, which meant focusing on what was most important to them.

"Jerry and I have decided that since we live here, we both enjoy Los Angeles and we want to give locally," said Yu. "We want to give to things that we use, where we can see the progress and know where our money goes."

With friends like Fern Yu and Jerry Paul, the Arboretum will flourish for future generations to enjoy, and we are forever grateful.

The Arboretum appreciates your support. Please call the Development Office at 626.821.3237 if we inadvertently misspelled or omitted your name.





THE LOS ANGELES ARBORETUM FOUNDATION, a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization, co-manages the Arboretum in partnership with the Los Angeles County Department of Parks and Recreation. Founded in 1948, the Foundation was instrumental in creating the Arboretum and fostering its early development. From its beginnings, the Foundation has provided new gardens and education programs serving Southern California. Today, the Foundation leads a broad community of members, volunteers and donors in establishing the support needed to realize the Arboretum's potential as a premier public garden and educational resource. In an era of economic challenge and reduced public budgets, this role is of increasing importance.