

Like all state entities, many businesses and non-profits, the Arboretum faces unprecedented budget pressures now and in the foreseeable future. We believe, however, that we are supported by both the University and our legislative delegation, who value the Arboretum's contributions to life in North Carolina and who have backed our work for regional economies based on botanical diversity/natural biotechnology and our leadership of the Centers for Environmental and Climatic Interaction.

With its public-private support base, this Arboretum benefits from state and donor investments that protect and maximize each other. While funds generated by The North Carolina Arboretum Society (i.e., charitable gifts, memberships, earned revenue) now underwrite approximately 33% of the annual budget, our leaders have long recognized that the Arboretum can hold its value over time only if private funding matches and eventually exceeds state funding.

Now, while the legislature conducts difficult budget deliberations, we are encouraged by great public interest and support. As the process unfolds, we anticipate that our leaders will extend help where possible but expect the added "significant, painful budget cuts" projected by UNC President Erskine Bowles. We will keep you informed as more information is available.

How the Arboretum is responding to current challenges

Staff have worked hard to avoid reducing Arboretum access this spring, despite 7% budget cuts for the fiscal year ending June 30. Staff and volunteers are giving extra time and effort to protect core areas of mission delivery. While advancing priorities where possible, we have cut costs by consolidating programs, streamlining services and using resources carefully. Although we expect more cuts in July, I am not aware of any plans to close the Arboretum, despite recent media reports otherwise.

Right now, to protect current programming and move viably into the next year, we are seeking \$30,000 in unrestricted gifts by June. So, along with other fiscal strategies, we are asking all Arboretum households to share (and spread) the responsibility by increasing their giving this spring.

How each member household can help now

If each of our 5,600 households contributes even a small gift now, we will complete the fiscal year successfully. Your resounding support does even more. Right now, it sends a strong public message about the Arboretum's value. Going forward, it establishes a standard for annual giving that can see the Arboretum through next year and each year to follow.

Please help us meet all of these goals by sending a charitable contribution of \$50, \$100 or more this spring. If you can't contribute at this level, a gift in the amount you choose will help meet our financial requirement and be valued as well. Together, these donations will make a BIG difference in how we can serve you in the coming months.

The Arboretum will do all it can to reduce the impact of the recession on its services and to offer you a place of beauty, respite, learning and economic innovation. Please understand, however, that we cannot continue to do this at current levels without your help.



Please detach and include this form when mailing your gift to the address below. Thank you for your envelope and stamp.

YES, I'll add my gift now to help meet these important goals!

\$100 \$50 \$ _____

Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation in support of Arboretum programming, outreach and services.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

E-MAIL _____ PHONE _____

Thank you for this gift, which is important to the Arboretum but unrelated to membership. If you donate by check, please make it to "The NC Arboretum Society" OR call us at (828) 665-2492 to donate by credit card or with a gift of stock.

An Update to our Members and Donors

“Both the University and our legislators have been very supportive of the Arboretum, but they are confronted with a historic economic challenge in North Carolina.

It’s incumbent upon us as a region and as a community to make sure that the places we value – and the institutions positioned to lead us toward a sustainable future – are protected.”

George Briggs, Executive Director
The North Carolina Arboretum

Our Response to State Budget Reductions

We are working to cut costs but protect mission-related programming and services, as follows:

- ✓ Consolidate programs, restructure internal functions & streamline processes
- ✓ Eliminate positions equivalent to 11 full-time temporary staff
- ✓ Expand volunteer roles and simplify or reduce some services
- ✓ Monitor revenue performance weekly

How You Can Help Right Now

Help us sustain the Arboretum for your benefit and as a valuable public resource:

- ✓ Make a gift to The Annual Fund this spring
- ✓ Update your friends on the Arboretum’s status and encourage them to join and give
- ✓ Volunteer your time and visit the Arboretum often to enjoy all it has to offer
- ✓ Give us your e-mail for prompt, inexpensive communications
- ✓ Answer our online survey (see “click here for survey” on main page at www.ncarboretum.org)

Additional News and Updates

- While prompt customer service is our hallmark and goal, please be patient as we adjust to current circumstances. Our responses to your gifts, registration calls, membership cards, requests and other business will be as careful as always but may take a little longer at times.
- Gift shops and café will continue to offer good service but will have smaller staffs and more volunteers, along with reduced hours of operation. (Café and Garden Trellis Shop are now closed on Mondays.)
- Thanks to a private gift received last year from a longtime donor, we have been able to plan upgrades for the Arboretum’s Web site. If you access it during the spring transition, please expect “construction work” and look forward to a greatly improved site that helps us better serve you.
- With state funds allocated more than two years ago for landscape site improvements at the Baker Exhibit Center, this spring we will repair grounds disturbed by construction and install new garden exhibits at the site. This project was designed last year by a local landscape firm working with our staff and will be installed by a local contractor beginning in April. Enjoy watching this beautiful landscape unfold!