

# WING HAVEN FOUNDATION

celebrating **50** years

# WARBLER

SPRING/SUMMER 2022

## SPRING HAPPENINGS

Join us in the gardens!

### Naturalist Egg Hunt

Saturday, April 2

### Spring Plant Sale

Wed April 6 - Members Day

Thurs-Sat April 7-9 - Public Days

### Backyard Gardening Workshop

Saturday, April 23

### Garden Tour Sip & See

Friday April 29

### Gardeners' Garden Tour

Saturday April 30 - Sunday May 1

### Tea Time in the Garden

Sunday May 15

Details and tickets online at  
[winghavengardens.org](http://winghavengardens.org).

## CELEBRATION OF THE GARDENS

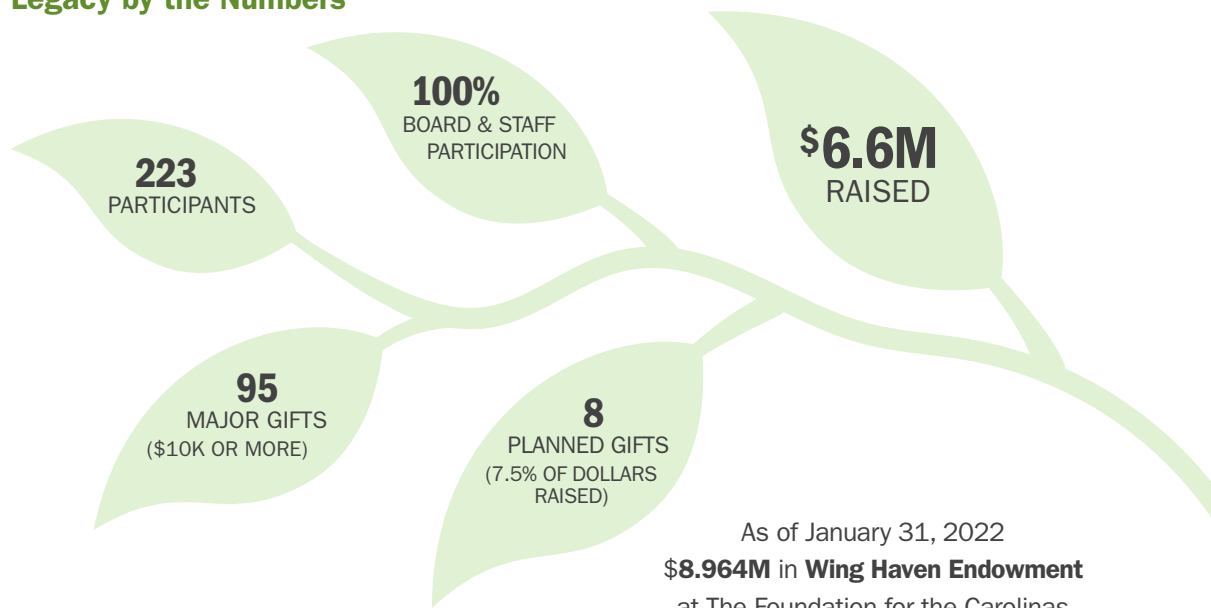
*Susan Little Evans, Development Director*

With the help of many generous donors and a challenge match from the Dowd Foundation, Wing Haven has to date successfully raised more than \$6.6M for the endowment to preserve our three public gardens and enhance our nature-based programming. To celebrate 50 years of the Wing Haven Foundation (1971-2021), Board members and Legacy Campaign volunteers worked for three years—through a pandemic—to share our mission and plans for the future with Wing Haven friends and community leaders. Thanks to their tireless efforts, 220 donors responded, and proceeds from the endowment will help to inspire a passion for the natural world well into the future. After all, Elizabeth and Eddie Clarkson and the founding members wisely created the endowment at the start in 1971 knowing the security it could provide throughout the years to help their vision endure.

By growing the Wing Haven endowment to \$10M and more with the Legacy Campaign, Wing Haven gardens will continue to be preserved as the peaceful refuge hundreds of thousands of visitors fondly remember and a unique environmental resource for students and teachers. We are ever mindful of the Foundation's original charter and mission to inspire others by example with our now three public gardens and we will continue to showcase environmental stewardship, wildlife habitat, bird sanctuary, garden observation and writing, native plants, backyard gardening and more throughout the year. The Wing Haven legacies created by Elizabeth Clarkson and Elizabeth Lawrence are carried out in each tour, each program, each camp and workshop.

*CONTINUED INSIDE*

## Legacy by the Numbers



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

It is with much appreciation that we share this issue of our Spring newsletter. We had an extraordinary year in 2021 as we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Wing Haven Foundation. We grew in countless ways, learning so much along the way that will serve us well for years to come, as we continue our work to *Inspire a passion for the natural world* and preserve Wing Haven for future generations.

Generous donors joined us in our celebration of a multi-year campaign to continue the legacy by raising \$6.6M+ towards our goal to grow the endowment to \$10M. The community and donors continued to support us with annual giving and sponsorships in significant ways as well. Your gifts allow us to continue our work. As you read articles from the staff you will see the impact your support has on our gardens, programs and community partnerships.

As we reflect on the past year we are both grateful and humbled.

On behalf of the Foundation Board and Wing Haven Staff,  
THANK YOU!



Barrett Sloan Ranson  
Executive Director

## CELEBRATION OF THE GARDENS

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

### History & Legacy



Historic photo of ELH&G courtesy of Warren & Fran Way III.



Distributions from the endowment will support Wing Haven's strategic plans and ensure that the history and future of our three public gardens are secure.

### Where Will the Money Be Used

Funds distributed from the endowment will work to

- ▶ Preserve and rehabilitate 3.3 acres of garden greenspace and two historic houses; including projects to rewire and improve structure foundation of the nearly 100-year-old Clarkson House
- ▶ Enhance visitor experience and historic interpretation
- ▶ Restore historic structural plantings throughout Wing Haven Garden & Bird Sanctuary and the Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden
- ▶ Conserve, archive and share the historic resources of the gardens, libraries and homes—the Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden archives collections house more than 100,000 items
- ▶ Maintain and enhance the 100% native plant SEED Wildlife & Children's Garden learning areas
- ▶ Broaden educational reach within the Charlotte region and beyond
- ▶ Develop additional wellness programs for hospitals, caregivers and patients
- ▶ And much more

These legacy gifts will benefit students, educators, visitors, scholars, families, backyard gardeners, birders and the Charlotte community for many years to come.

So many joined us to celebrate the gardens during this golden anniversary and for that we are ever grateful. Hundreds of living legacy and planned legacy gifts were donated and pledged to help us reach the Foundation's 50th anniversary goals. It is not too late to create your own legacy in support of all or one of Wing Haven's gardens. Visit [winghavengardens.org/legacy](http://winghavengardens.org/legacy) for more information and a current list of donors.

Correction - 2020/2021 Annual Report Listing

We apologize for the omission of Janie and Gary Levinson in Wing Haven's FY21 Annual Giving Report as Sponsor-level donors.



## TACKLING BOXWOOD BLIGHT IN A HISTORIC GARDEN

Reavis Thornton, Head Gardener, Wing Haven Garden & Bird Sanctuary

On your next trip to Wing Haven Garden & Bird Sanctuary, you may notice boxwood replacements. All of the boxwood varieties planted in the past are susceptible to a number of problems. In order to keep Elizabeth Clarkson's design and structural planting, we chose new varieties that show good resistance to boxwood blight and leaf miner damage.

The first replacements to look for are the boxwood in the raised beds in front of the Clarksons' house. A few years ago, the original English boxwood were replaced with Baby Gem™ which were growing too fast and large for their allotted space and sprawled onto the nearby roses and herbs when it rained. The Baby Gem™ boxwood, which have good disease resistance, were transplanted to areas of the garden where we removed blighted English boxwood, and where their size and growth rate is more appropriate. The new boxwood for the front raised beds are 'Little Missy', a small to midsize boxwood that will fit the space better and offers good resistance to blight and leaf miner damage.

In the Main Garden, the original boxwood were suffering from dieback and root rot. We replaced them with NewGen Freedom™, a newly developed boxwood from Saunders Brothers Nursery with good disease and pest resistance. We are adding PermaTill® and compost to the soil to improve drainage and soil health. The look and color of this replacement is very similar to the original American boxwood we removed.

Boxwood blight first infected the sheared Korean boxwood in the Herb Garden in early June 2019. We tried cutting back, removing the infected stems and leaves, sanitizing the area and spraying with a

fungicide. This did not work and we ended up having to remove them. We let the soil rest before removing as much soil as possible. In February of 2021, we installed *Ilex vomitoria* 'Schillings Dwarf' (Dwarf Yaupon Holly)—a native that thrives in sun or shade, moist or dry soil and is a traditional edging plant in Southern gardens.

In January of this year, we replaced the remaining six American boxwood with NewGen Independence™ another Saunders Brothers introduction that shows good resistance. Independence™ was used in the newly renovated Rose Garden at The White House in Washington, D.C. We are also using Independence™ to replace the English boxwood that lined the Upper Garden woods walk. Independence™ has an appealing bright green color and will form a cloudlike border along this walk.

For the newly restored White Rose Garden adjacent to the Education Building, we will add *Buxus sinica* var. *insularis* 'Nana' (dwarf Korean boxwood). This boxwood also shows good resistance to blight and leaf miner damage, is a low grower and will do well in the shade of the newly reinstated rose arbors.

We still have more original boxwood that will have to be replaced and will continue to consult with experts in the field and search for the best and most appropriate replacements. It hurts to remove these older boxwood, but we are staying ahead of the many problems from which boxwood suffer.



This historic image (left) was taken by Elizabeth Clarkson of her Herb Garden in the mid to late 1960s. She planted 500 Korean boxwood to make the perfectly pruned hedge. In 2019, the hedge was infected by boxwood blight and had to be removed. Today, the hedge is planted with *Ilex vomitoria* 'Schillings Dwarf' (Dwarf Yaupon Holly) which has no pest or disease problems, takes very well to formal pruning and will eventually mimic the historic shape.

*"...my dream is Wing Haven will operate well beyond my lifetime to inspire a love of nature in our community."*

- Legacy Donor



## ONE VISIT REVEALS MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

Andrea Sprott, Garden Curator, Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden

Sometimes it takes a visit from a fresh set of eyes to realize that the work we've been doing at the Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden (ELH&G) is paying off. What I should say is that I see and feel the effect of the work, and I hope others feel it, too. When Courtney Christensen—longtime super duper über volunteer and cheerleader of all things Elizabeth Lawrence—visited late this winter, she saw and felt all that we've been working toward in the garden, and then some.

Courtney moved away from Charlotte about four years ago. Prior to that, for several years, she was, in effect, my right hand man; she worked in the garden and archives, was chair of the ELH&G Garden Committee, and chaired the ELH&G Advisory Committee. Courtney was—and still is—a trusted critic whose enthusiasm for Elizabeth Lawrence rivals my own.

As we walked through the garden, she noticed many things, but was most excited about the rehabilitation of the lowest border. "This looks *great!*" I looked at the mostly dormant bed and made a mental note to plant more winter-blooming bulbs. I must remember to send her pictures from last summer, when irises of all types, daylilies, several perennials, annuals and dozens of bulbs filled almost the entire space. Not too shabby for its first year on the journey to recreating the effect during Elizabeth's tenure.

Courtney noticed the newer plantings of *Pinus echinata*, the shortleaf pine. Reinstating the pine tree canopy has been a topic of discussion for many years. So far, we have planted eleven seedlings, of which nine have lived. At least three more will be added this spring. Reinstating any tree canopy takes time because it is far better to start small. This is especially true with pines, since they are tap-rooted.

We paused at the pool, where I pointed out the rehabilitation of the brick surround, and how its completion completely changed the feel of the space. It's hard to describe; all I could come up with was, "It's calmer." She agreed.

"There's a feeling of consistency throughout the garden now," she said. "There were these pockets of things before that kind of didn't work. But now, there's a consistency to it." I hadn't even thought of that as a goal, but of course, it is one of the biggest: to get the entire space to read as a whole. This is not easily accomplished, especially not in an experimental garden where plants come and go more frequently than most.

She also mentioned that the garden feels "balanced" which made my heart sing operatic soprano. Something I have learned from studying Elizabeth's original structural plantings (many extant, some long gone) is her creation of repeated rhythm through the entire garden. The visual weight of trees and shrubs carry across the space, almost imperceptibly. I have been working to reinstate this not-so-subtle subtlety.

Courtney's eyes sparkled as we walked, and the smile on her face told me more than words ever could. I know that smile. It's the one I wear when I'm in Elizabeth Lawrence's garden, working toward growing, interpreting and sharing this amazing legacy.

*Be inspired! Connect to new blooms, fresh discoveries and fascinating history through the Elizabeth Lawrence House & Garden blog at [winghavengardens.org/el-blog](http://winghavengardens.org/el-blog).*



*The lower border is once again filled with perennials, bulbs, ground covers, low-growing shrubs and a seedling descendent of Elizabeth Lawrence's original *Prunus mume*. The rehabilitation project required in-depth research. The photograph on the lower right (taken circa 1975) shows a brilliant daylily planted near the path. The opportunity to create a more authentic feel to the space resulted in reinstating one of Lawrence's original as-of-yet unidentified daylilies (bottom left).*

*With new space for experimentation, there were trials of several bulbs. *Haberanthus x floryi* Jumbo Purple (left) was one of the most beautiful last year.*

*Historic photo courtesy Elizabeth Way Rogers and Warren & Fran Way III.*





# A (SEED) GARDEN FOR YOU

By Tracey Roode, Education Coordinator

Next to a “forest” of green bamboo  
An iron gate  
I’m welcomed through

Follow the winding, red brick road  
To garden beds  
Where seeds are sowed

Tomatoes, potatoes  
Lettuce, kale  
Fragrant herbs that discourage snails

We save seeds  
And harvest rain  
Compost bins to maintain

Watch and learn  
From nature’s preachers  
Let the garden be your teacher

“Follow us!”  
The birds implore  
For there is more to explore

Another garden path to follow  
This one leads  
To SEED, you know

Lots to observe  
And survey  
What does the Ozone Garden say?

Crouching down  
On hands and knees  
To better watch the busy bees

Let’s move the rocks  
And dam the stream!  
Working together as a team

Grab a shovel!  
Let’s dig for worms  
Through the dirt they wriggle and squirm

Turning logs  
And building forts  
I wonder how much this branch supports?

Ding! Ding!  
The garden bell’s chime  
Calls us all to Story Time

We hear an array  
Of garden stories  
All inspired by nature’s glory

Making art  
Under the Pavilion  
Painting bugs of bright vermilion

Climb the platform  
Observe the birds  
Listen to their chirping words

“Goodbye for now”  
They seem to say  
“Thank you for a lovely day!”

Tired smile, walking slow  
Through the iron gate I go

“Goodbye for now, my garden”, I sing  
And wonder what tomorrow brings.



*Last fall, our weekly Budding Naturalists classes helped us care for the vegetables growing in the raised beds.*

*After the two nature-themed stories have been read and crafts have been made, our Story Time & More participants enjoy exploring the many offerings of the SEED Wildlife & Children’s Garden.*





## THE WELLSPRING OF EDUCATION

Jill Goodrich, Director of Education & Outreach

When we tell the story of “education” at Wing Haven, we usually start with the fact that Elizabeth Clarkson brought children to her garden and gave them tours. In time, she invited Kathy Shonts of the (then) Nature Museum Guild to assist her. Soon after, a docent program was born. Friends joyfully volunteered their time to assist the Clarksons with caring for their garden and coming up with creative ways to share it with visitors. Tours led to small programs featuring stories and crafts for neighborhood children; family events celebrating the seasons were introduced to bring awareness while also showcasing the magic and wonder of the garden. For many adults, the learning came through conversations in the nursery or swapping plants and sharing tips, which grew into more formalized speaker programs, workshops, and symposia.

Decades later, such educational offerings still exist—albeit in a much larger sense, and more have been added. If for no other reason, Wing Haven has grown into three distinct gardens—each offering new programs and experiences to highlight their purpose. Interest and awareness exploded over time and education needed to expand from these quaint gatherings of neighborhood children and local garden clubs. Individuals, groups and organizations across the community, state and region come through the garden gate anticipating an educational experience and we deliver.

Over the past two years, we adapted, we pivoted, we stretched our comfort zones and featured the natural world in a virtual one. Indeed, the times changed, perhaps exponentially faster in recent years, yet, the purpose of that first tour or that conversation about plants on the terrace was, at its very core, to educate.

According to Merriam-Webster, “to educate” is “to provide with information.” Certainly, our lecture series, story times, bird walks, garden tours, camps and workshops serve to inform. Methods of providing this information may bend and weave with the times, but the foundation of what our gardens provide is a wellspring of educational interest that goes beyond the sharing of facts and data. The gardens of Wing Haven are a source of continual supply for educational programming. They always have been and, with your help, they always will be.

Seek inspiration by exploring our many educational opportunities—navigate to your area of interest under Happenings: [winghavengardens.org/calendar](http://winghavengardens.org/calendar).

*"On behalf of CltBP, I wanted to thank Wing Haven PEEPs for all the support you all have provided us this school year. ¡Mil gracias Wing Haven - we are grateful that you all are a part of our comunidad!"*

- Allie Norman, Advancement Associate, Charlotte Bilingual Preschool



Clockwise from top left:

Brie Arthur (center) poses with two attendees after her Fall Seed Sowing workshop in November.

A PEEPs (Preschool Environmental Education Program) student at Charlotte Bilingual Preschool crafts a pair of binoculars, a perennial craft favorite of children's education at Wing Haven.

Our monthly Senior Bird Walks draw out the most dedicated birders — even in the cold winter months!



## ROOTS VOLUNTEERS

Andrea Funk, Volunteer Coordinator

Honoring volunteers is always an easy task at Wing Haven. In the past seven months alone, our volunteers have contributed over 3,600 hours of service. Our Roots volunteers have potted plants, assisted in the planning and execution of Wing Haven events, answered the phone, given tours, taught toddlers ecology, weeded garden beds, swept brick paths, picked up sticks, served on Wing Haven boards and committees, and warmly greeted guests in addition to many other activities. Without the ingenuity and know-how of our volunteers, we would not be able to adequately preserve, protect and share the three gardens and two historic homes that comprise Wing Haven.

All of our volunteers deserve recognition, but this season let's quickly learn more about two volunteers who have served in lesser-known volunteer roles.

Jennifer Engle (below left) has faithfully served as a Wellness Wednesday host from 8-10 a.m. during this fiscal year. Jennifer attended a docent training class to learn more about the history of



Wing Haven so she can share her knowledge with our early morning guests.

Ava Knudsen (below right), a senior at Ardrey Kell High School, has been the able assistant during our bilingual Digging Deeper program (a program collaboration with Art-Kiddo). She has come every Monday that the program has been offered this year, and is now an expert in nature crafts and conversational Spanish with school-age children.

We would love to have additional help in both of these areas if their work sounds interesting to you. (Spanish knowledge is not required for the latter position.)

If you are interested in volunteering, or if you are a current volunteer and want to try your hand at something new, please contact Andrea Funk at [roots@winghavengardens.org](mailto:roots@winghavengardens.org).



## WHAT IS WELLNESS WEDNESDAY?

Every Wednesday, Wing Haven Garden & Bird Sanctuary is open additional hours for visitors to enjoy sanctuary in nature, between 8-10 a.m., while this garden is less busy. Guests may take a quiet stroll, reflect on a bench or observe wildlife. A self-guided meditation walk is also available.

Stay tuned for meditative and mindfulness programs offered during this time, or simply come to experience the restorative benefits of nature on your own.

Sign up for Wellness Wednesday at [winghavengardens.org/wellnesswed](http://winghavengardens.org/wellnesswed).



Photos by Betty Thomas during Wellness Wednesday visits

# WING HAVEN FOUNDATION



260 Ridgewood Avenue  
Charlotte, NC 28209  
[winghavengardens.org](http://winghavengardens.org)

*Cultivating sanctuary in nature,  
environmental stewardship and the  
legacy of Southern horticulture*

OPEN HOURS: WEDNESDAY - SATURDAY 10 - 5



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Wing Haven is supported, in part, by the Infusion Fund and its generous donors.

## WING HAVEN STAFF

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Susan Little Evans  
*Development Director*

Beth Gilbert  
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*Head Gardener,  
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Andrea Sprott  
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Jill Goodrich  
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Andrea Funk  
*Volunteer Coordinator*

Amy Poole  
*Admissions Host*

Janet Porto  
*Admissions Host*

Beverly Pearson  
*After-Hours Host*

Lorraine Piephoff  
*Accountant*

## CELEBRATE PLANTS!

### Spring Plant Sale

MEMBERS DAY April 6

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC April 7-9

**Spring is the perfect time for renewal.** Look no further than the Wing Haven Nursery for everything you need for a happy, healthy and refreshed garden! Shop from a choice selection of unique and tried & true plants suited to growing conditions in the Middle South, hand-picked by our knowledgeable volunteers.

**Current Wing Haven members get first pick!** Not a member? Join online at [winghavengardens.org](http://winghavengardens.org).

Shop for plants in person between 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. by appointment only. Register online.

*Our Plant Sales are an important source of revenue for our very special properties. Thank you to everyone who shops and/or volunteers with us. We appreciate your support!*

## CAPTURE PRECIOUS MOMENTS AT THE GARDENS



PHOTO CREDIT: MU-CHEN FAMILY © INDIGO PHOTOGRAPHY

Capture treasured memories at Wing Haven! Timelessly beautiful in all seasons, our gardens offer breathtaking backdrops for your next family picture, engagement photography or bridal portrait. See our website for full details.

To book your session, contact Office Administrator Samantha Wagner at 704.331.0664 x 101 or [samantha@winghavengardens.org](mailto:samantha@winghavengardens.org).