

The

DIG

& grow  
COURSE CATALOG

norfolk  
botanical  
garden

MAY—AUGUST 2022

# From the President

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Summer is just the best of seasons. I'm a summer baby born in July. Growing up on the coast meant beaches, BBQs, my Aunt's swimming pool and visits to gardens and farms. I think we all have great memories of summer—no school, family vacations and just a whole different vibe than the rest of the year. Here at the Garden, walk a little slower, linger in the shade a little longer and just try slow. ("Try Slow" is a great road sign you'll see often up on the North Shore of Kauai. Hawaiians know how to live!)



"Try Slow" this summer at NBG with a game in the shade of the Enchanted Forest or frame the perfect photos as part of our Frames & Games summer exhibit. The Butterfly House expansion and renovation opens in June so try slow with a butterfly. Try slow everywhere with friends, with your family, talking to strangers, driving, enjoying our Garden or your own green spaces.

If you're ready for some travel this Fall, our international garden trips are finally back. This September travel with us to Provence and the South of France. Day trips to nearby Italy and Monaco make this a three-country experience. Our third international trip might prove to be our best with spectacular gardens and accommodations. Small group, it's curated and led by yours truly. Let's go out and see the world again. But first let's try slow this summer. I bet you'll enjoy it!

Michael P. Desplaines

THE MISSION OF NORFOLK BOTANICAL GARDEN:  
**IMMERSE** VISITORS IN A WORLD OF BEAUTY  
**LEAD** THROUGH ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION  
**INSPIRE** THROUGH EDUCATION AND CONNECTION TO NATURE



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# Horticulture Highlights Summer 2022



May

Bigleaf Magnolia  
*Magnolia macrophylla*

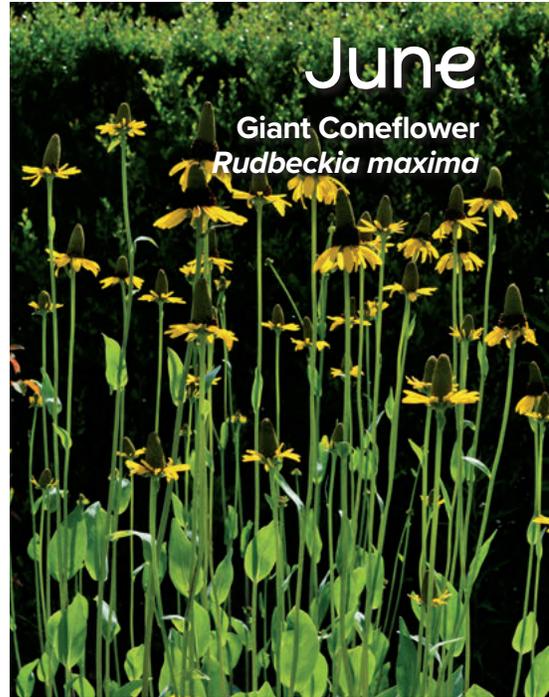
**May** – Bigleaf magnolia (*Magnolia macrophylla*) is aptly named. Growing three feet long by one foot wide, the leaves are the largest of any tree in North America. They are a bright cool green with silvery gray undersides. Not only does this imposing tree have large leaves, its fragrant, white and pink, May-blooming flowers can get up to a foot wide. They prefer full-to-partial sun in soil that is not too wet or too dry. With those large leaves, a place protected from strong winds would also be appreciated. Native to a few isolated spots east of the Appalachians, they are more common from Kentucky into the Gulf States. NBG is home to several, but one of the most accessible is near the base of the new Cobblestone Bridge.



July

Panicled Hydrangea  
*Hydrangea paniculata*

**June** – Things grow bigger in Texas (as well as in a few nearby states), including the giant coneflower (*Rudbeckia maxima*), which is one of the tallest members of the black-eyed Susan family. However, this plant is right at home in Coastal Virginia, thriving in our heat and humidity. The two-foot tall clumps of blue-green foliage are semi-evergreen and resemble cabbage, hence its other common name of cabbage-leaf coneflower. In early summer, its flower spikes rise to seven feet and are topped with bright yellow petals surrounding a central brown cone. Bees and butterflies will flock to this plant as will goldfinches who relish the seeds. Give it full-to-partial sun in moist well-drained soil; once established it can withstand occasional flooding and deer. The Baker Perennial Garden is a great place to see this giant.



June

Giant Coneflower  
*Rudbeckia maxima*



August

Rose Mallow  
*Hibiscus moscheutos*

**July** – Hydrangeas generally have a reputation for being shade lovers and for being complicated to prune. The one member of the family who bucks this reputation is the panicled hydrangea (*Hydrangea paniculata*). This plant thrives in full sun, but can even take a little shade with all of its other hydrangea cousins. There is also no guess work with pruning panicled hydrangeas. In the late winter, you can either prune light, prune hard, or leave it alone. Either way it will bloom again in mid-summer. The typical flower color is white, but there are a number of cultivars whose flowers will age to an attractive dusky pink. You can see this plant and many other members of the family in the Kaufman Hydrangea Garden.

**August** – Hibiscus are a popular group of plants grown mainly for their large colorful flowers which always seem to lend a touch of the exotic to summer gardens. By late spring, garden centers are usually pushing tropical hibiscus for summer color, but we have our own native hibiscus that doesn't need to be brought indoors for winter protection. Common rose mallow (*Hibiscus moscheutos*) is North America's most widely distributed hibiscus, native from Canada to Florida and west to Texas and New Mexico. It has beautiful white (sometimes pink) flowers with crimson eyes that easily bloom in high summer. They like full sun in moist soil and thrive in wet areas. You can see them blooming around Lake Whitehurst and along the Frog Bog in the World of Wonders Children's Garden (WOW).

# Construction Begins!



## Other Garden-wide Improvements

In addition to the start of The Garden of Tomorrow construction, we have been busy with other Garden-wide improvements. The Cobblestone Bridge needed to be replaced. The new design now allows boats easy access to Lake Whitehurst for an all new experience during your next boat tour. With a new boat route, the canal needed dredging to ensure a safe passage. Renaissance Court is also undergoing renovations replacing asphalt with more brickwork. Rose Garden Hall and gazebo were refreshed. Look for future improvements scheduled for the Butterfly House and the World of Wonders Children's Garden.

**Cobblestone  
Bridge**



**Renaissance Court  
Pavers**



**Rose Garden Hall  
Gazebo**



**Canal  
Dredging**



# *The Garden of* Tomorrow



## Regenerative Design

- Restoring what is lost during the construction process
- Saving trees and planting more
- Retaining and reusing rainwater runoff
- Protecting the shoreline while providing access to Lake Whitehurst
- Use of sustainable, carbon-neutral building materials



Scan this QR code for construction updates including time-lapse videos of our progress!



To preserve the six large willow oaks (*Quercus phellos*) along Rose Garden Road, the soil was aerated allowing oxygen to get to the roots. The trees were pruned and fertilized as well. They have been mulched and are surrounded by protective fencing. These actions were taken to ensure that these oaks will thrive for years as part of The Garden of Tomorrow.

# Green Scene



## New Natives

Nearly 900 Coastal Plain native plant plugs were planted by NBG horticulturists in the IKEA Longleaf Pine Forest located in the Virginia Native Plant Garden. Be sure to look for switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) and lovegrass (*Eragrostis spectabilis*), along with pollinator-friendly perennials like threadleaf coreopsis (*Coreopsis verticillata*).

## White Oak Donation



Six white oak (*Quercus alba*) trees were donated to the City of Chesapeake by NBG and were planted at the new historic village associated with the Cornland School Restoration Project. The historical significance of this school centers on its recognition as one of the earliest efforts to formally educate African American children in the post-Civil War era. What a fitting home for one of nature's most celebrated trees!

## Inspiring Students in Environmental Studies

This past school year, we had the privilege of working with a handful of high school seniors from the Environmental Studies Program with the Virginia Beach City Public Schools. This first-of-its-kind program in our area focuses on experiential environmental learning for juniors and seniors where they work alongside local leaders in sustainability as well as environmental advocacy groups. Throughout the school year, seniors are provided the opportunity to work on an intensive one-year research project or an internship through independent study in their area of interest. Our student interns took a deep dive into the world of public horticulture by working with the Horticulture and Education Departments. Through various hands-on projects, the students gained a very tangible understanding of the interconnectedness of the natural world. One of the students also interned in the Butterfly House over the summer.

What an incredible opportunity for these bright, curious students! The same can be said of our staff as the role of mentor is integral to the success of the program. We saw firsthand how exposure to the practical application of the natural sciences leads to broader possibilities, especially when it comes to future career paths. All the best to these graduating seniors!



Front row left to right: Caitlin Whitfield, Callie Kipper, Olivia Shinault, and Timothy Doughty. Back row: Jonah Starr and NBG Adult Education Manager Alex Cantwell.

# Community Connections

## Appreciating Our Volunteers

After a hiatus due to COVID-19, NBG was thrilled to once again celebrate our wonderful volunteers at the Volunteer Appreciation Banquet held in February. We honored these vital contributors to the Garden with a catered buffet, music, awards, and an evening of camaraderie. NBG is humbled by the individuals and groups who graciously donate their time and efforts to make us the premier destination in Coastal Virginia. Over 722 volunteers gave 11,134 hours of their time last year—a value equal to \$324,444 based on the Independent Sector.



## STEM Career Day

Youth Education staff attended a STEM Career Day at the Children's Museum of Virginia. Participating children learned about different careers relating to nature and environmental science, and then received a STEM activity kit to take home.

## February Free Admission Thursdays

In celebration of Black History Month, NBG offered Free Admission Thursdays for the month of February. More than 4,000 visitors enjoyed exploring the Garden and had the opportunity to learn more about the 220 African American Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers who were hired to clear debris and plant the Garden's first azaleas, daffodils and many other blooms.

## Virginia Wesleyan University Co-op Program

This spring semester, we participated in Virginia Wesleyan University's Community Cooperative Education Program. Claudia McGough, a psychology major with interest in consumer psychology and the mental health benefits of gardening, rotated through our Education, Visitor Services, Events, Gift Shop and Horticulture Departments. This valuable career development program provides an excellent opportunity to jump start a student's post-graduate endeavors.



## In Memory of Bruce Williams

Bruce passed away February 10, 2022. He was a community activist and longtime member of our President's Council on Inclusion and Diversity. He was a large supporter of the Garden and was passionate about sharing the story of the 220 African American Works Progress Administration (WPA) workers who first planted the Garden. He was instrumental in helping to list NBG as a historical site and obtaining the WPA Memorial Garden's statue *Breaking Ground* that depicts a WPA female worker. He leaves behind a large and extended family including his wife, Helen Ferguson Williams, whom he met on this Council. Helen is the daughter of the last known surviving worker, Mary Elizabeth Ferguson. Bruce was a true inspiration and exuded kindness to everyone he met. We will continue to honor him and his legacy.

# Under-appreciated Pollinators

## Need Our Help!

Story & Photos By NBG Senior Horticulturist Tom “Buzz” Houser

Pollinators aren't just important for food production that directly benefits us, they are a crucial component of our ecosystem that ensures reproduction in 90% of flowering plants worldwide – plants that provide food and shelter for our wildlife. Along with their fellow insects, they serve as the foundation of our entire ecosystem.

**Incorporating more native plants** in your garden is critical as our native pollinators have co-evolved with them and formed relationships that simply cannot be provided by most non-natives. You can provide bloom support for them throughout as much of the year as possible. In our area, some good early season plants include columbine, blueberry bushes and redbud trees. Traditionally viewed as undesirable, lawn weeds such as dandelions and henbit are highly beneficial to early season pollinators including emerging bumblebee queens. Late season support can be provided with the addition of more aster and goldenrod varieties to your landscape.

**Insecticides have wreaked havoc on our pollinator population** and homeowners have played a large part in it. The recent growth of mosquito spray companies has also negatively impacted pollinator populations. Accurately identify any pests and use the least lethal and targeted product available – and apply only when a pest is truly damaging a plant. The internet and local extension stations are valuable resources for pest identification. Most yards don't have too many insects, but too few. In a healthy garden ecology where all insects are supported, they tend to keep potentially harmful populations in check.

One of our most fascinating pollinators, flies, are second only to bees in importance as pollinators and have developed some evolutionary adaptations that are absolutely amazing! Their extremely small size and sheer numbers of some fly species (particularly Syrphid flies) allow them to access nectar in blooms that bees have difficulty reaching, and some have enough hair on their bodies to incidentally collect and then transfer pollen in the process. Some plants such as the paw paw tree are pollinated almost exclusively by flies along with certain beetles; their blooms smell quite unpleasant and are completely ignored by bees.

Flies are essentially defenseless (no stingers!) and to help protect themselves from potential predators, many species have developed an evolutionary adaptation referred to as “Batesian mimicry.” Named for the 19th century English naturalist H. W. Bates, it is a form of biological resemblance where a noxious or dangerous organism is mimicked by a harmless one. In the case of some flies, they have evolved to resemble stinging insects such as bees or wasps – see how well in the photo of the Southern Bee Killer (left).

We hope this information inspires you to help our pollinators not only for one week, but all year long. Look at plants a little more from the perspective of how attractive they are to pollinators and other wildlife and a little less at how attractive they are just to us – the world will be a better place for it!



This tiny Hoverfly (*Toxomerus sp.*) is a type of Syrphid Fly and would be completely defenseless without its resemblance to a stinging insect. The larvae of many Syrphid flies are ferocious predators of aphids and other soft-bodied garden pests!

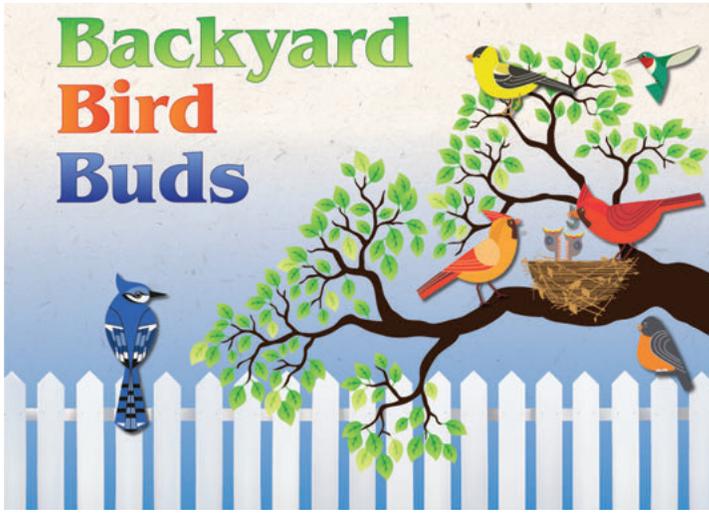


The Clubbed Mydas Fly (*Mydas clavatus*) mimics large wasp species such as the Great Black Wasp and has a truly fearsome appearance!



The predatory Southern Bee Killer (*Mallophora sp.*) mimics a bumblebee in order to blend in with and hunt bees and other insects.

# Backyard Bird Buds



You can help birds this summer by planting food for them in your own yard. Coneflowers, sunflowers and black-eyed Susans will provide nutritious seeds. Cardinal flowers, wild columbine and trumpet honeysuckle offer nectar to hummingbirds.

## Become a Backyard Bird Bud!

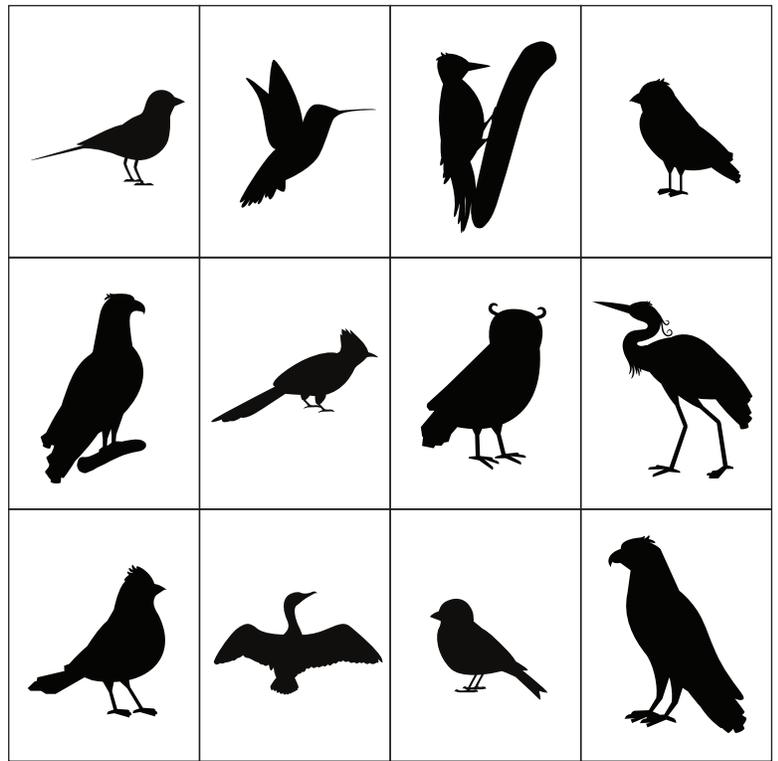
Children ages 4–12 are invited to register to become Bird Buds this summer! Registration includes a starter kit with a bird-friendly plant and a birdwatching activity. Registrants are also invited to participate in Bird Blitzes throughout the summer at the Garden. Register on our website to receive instructions on how to pick up your kit beginning in April.

*Backyard Bird Buds is made possible by the Julian Haden Gary and Margaret Savage Gary Fund of the Hampton Roads Community Foundation.*



## Dig It Kids' Corner Take-along Guide

Can you identify these NBG birds by their silhouettes? Cut out this card and turn it over for the answers. Bring the guide on your next visit to NBG to check off each of the birds you see.



# FRAMES

# & GAMES

## Summer Fun in The Enchanted Forest

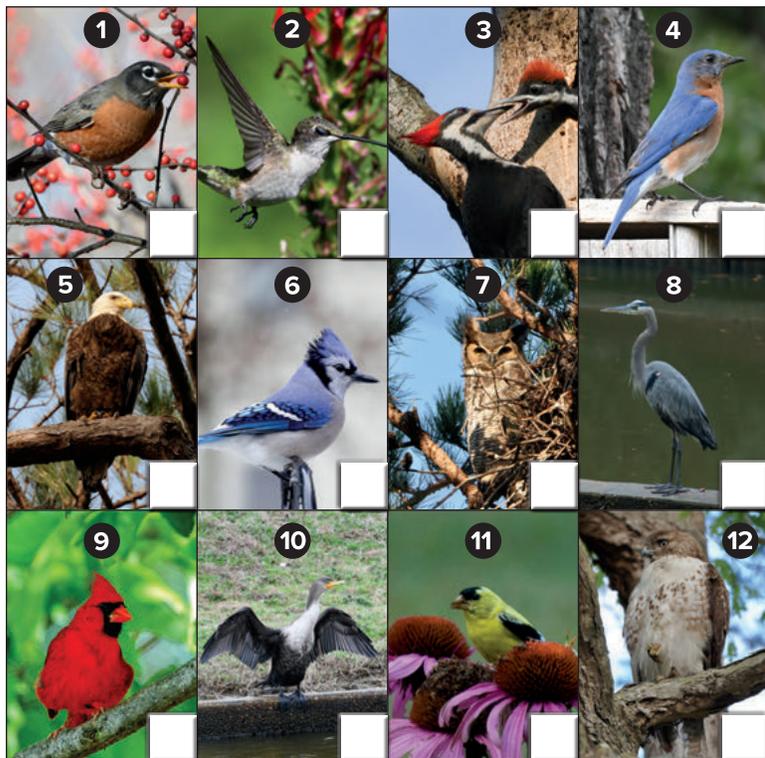


Discover the shade of the Enchanted Forest this summer where you'll find fun games for the whole family. Challenge your friends to a game of checkers, chess, yard pong, horseshoes, cornhole and more! Snap a photo in one or more of the many frames. Frames & Games will have an environmental message, inspiring you to save our planet.

## Dig It Kids' Corner Take-along Guide

**Answers:** 1. American Robin, 2. Hummingbird, 3. Pileated Woodpecker, 4. Eastern Bluebird, 5. Bald Eagle, 6. Blue Jay, 7. Great Horned Owl, 8. Great Blue Heron, 9. Cardinal, 10. Cormorant, 11. Goldfinch, 12. Red-tailed Hawk

Take some time to notice how the birds are using the plants in the Garden for food and shelter.



## ART in BAKER HALL

Included with Garden Admission

MAY—JUNE

*Wonderland*



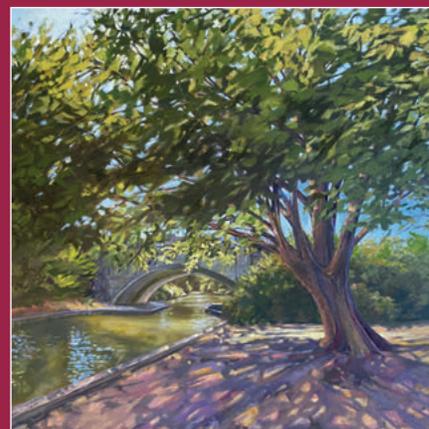
Whimsical Acrylics by Chris Jeanguenat

JULY—AUGUST

*The Nature of Two Painters*



Oil Paintings by Ray Hershberger



Oils and Pastels by Linda Gerek



**Butterfly House  
Undergoing Renovations  
Opening in June**

# Leaving a Legacy

*The Evergreen Society recognizes and celebrates an outstanding group of friends who generously support the Garden beyond their lifetimes.*

## Evergreen Society Members

*If you are interested in learning more about the Evergreen Society, methods for making a planned gift or alerting the Garden to a gift in your estate plan, please contact us.*

Dan Allison, Annette Averitt, I.M. & Sarah Lee Baker, Ty & Martha Brown, Elizabeth Bruce, Blanche C. Chappell, Robert & Janie Creecy, Cindy Cutler & Craig Haines, Sandra L. Dashney, Michael Desplaines & Jason Robinson, William W. Eley, Richard & Eleanor Evans, Cathy Fitzgerald, Joe Foreman, Jane Frazier, Robert M. Gostel, Randy Harrison, June Hoye, Kit E. Johnson, Karen S. Gershman, Karen L. Hines, Edward C. & Betty Lou Johnston, Sr., Patricia A. Kiefer, Patty L. Landrum, Virginia T. Lawrence, Eleanor Marshall, Bee McLeod & Goody Tyler, Rick Morsink, Susan Elise Morton, Nancy Nelson, Edward & Gayle Nichols, Susan L. Oldridge, Brian O'Neil, Dana Parker, Stephanie Pope, Mildred Amsinger Powers, Judy Pravecek, Ann Rathbone, Pamela Read, Alan Rohanna, Kurt & Debbie Schroeder, Sam Strickland, George & Nancy Sutcliffe, Sylvia E. Simons Trembelas, Jim & Christiane Valone, Richard & Ann Weber, Pearl Windle, 3 anonymous.

# Tribute Opportunities



The beauty, wonder and serenity of the Garden combine to create a perfect setting to honor a loved one, pay tribute to a friend, or mark a special anniversary or milestone. Select from a number of sites in the Garden to place our teakwood bench, complete with commemorative plaque. Please call Cathy Fitzgerald at 757-441-5830 ext. 319 or email her at [cathy.fitzgerald@nbg.org](mailto:cathy.fitzgerald@nbg.org) to make an appointment or discuss all tribute opportunities.

## In Memory of NBG Employee Bryan Breedan

NBG Horticulture Department staff member Bryan Breedan passed away on February 13, 2022. Bryan was a heart transplant recipient and was very open about his story. Many of us were here when he was waiting on his new heart. He returned to work with a new lease on life and was thankful for each and every day. He was giving of his time, exuded kindness and was passionate about organ donation. He was so grateful for his work family and we are so grateful to him for sharing his bright light with everyone. To his family—know how much he was loved here at the Garden.

NBG has set up a fund to honor Bryan's memory by matching all gifts to The Garden of Tomorrow campaign up to \$2,500 for a total of \$5,000. We will honor him by adding his name to one of the donor walls in the new Perry Conservatory.



**THREE GREAT CAUSES,  
ONE GREAT PARTY**

**Suds & Buds**

Thursday, May 19

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# Enjoy Summer at NBG!



**Butterfly Festival**  
Saturday, July 16  
10 AM — 4 PM

**Virginia Honey Bee Festival**  
Saturday, August 20  
10 AM — 4 PM



**SAVE THE DATE**

# Sunflower Music Festival

**Three Great Bands**  
Vendors • Beer  
and More



**Sunday, August 28**  
Noon—6:30 pm  
Dogs Welcome