Get to Know the Japanese Garden

With the 2020 Tokyo Olympics having wrapped up, there has never been a better time to explore Hermann Park’s tribute to Japanese culture.

Originally designed by landscape architect Ken Nakajima in 1992 and celebrating its 30th anniversary in May 2022, the Japanese Garden is one of Hermann Park’s most distinctive places. This garden’s design is approached with a different philosophy than other spaces within the Park in order to preserve its cultural authenticity and accuracy.

“We really respect harmony. Harmony between seasons or nature or human beings,” said Yuzuru Nagawa, chair of the Japanese Garden Advisory Committee.

To maintain this harmony, every year since 2007, specialty gardeners have traveled from the Japanese Garden’s sister city of Chiba, located along the eastern coast of Japan. Funded through the efforts of the Japanese Garden Advisory Committee, the gardening team from Chiba works closely with horticulture experts from Hermann Park to help make sure the plantings, paths, and architecture are all representative of a traditional Japanese garden, and in keeping with Nakajima’s original vision.

Everything visitors see at the Japanese Garden is meticulously crafted to give a curated sense of nature. Wide stone and bridge paths, rushing waterfalls, and native Japanese plants like black pine and maple trees help give wanderers visually pleasing sightlines from any vantage point.

The Japanese Garden is free to the public and open daily from 9 am to 6 pm.
Every time I speak to my mother she starts the conversation with, “What’s new in the Park?” And even though she asks me this a minimum of once a week, I never have a ready response. I am always torn between saying “nothing really” and “where do I start!”

When I am tempted to reply “nothing really” the impulse comes from the certainty that Hermann Park is, well, still reliably here. This year, especially, I have found comfort in this steadiness. The Reflection Pool has not retreated back to a mud pit, pedal boats circle the lake, and the Mount in the McGovern Centennial Gardens continues to give people both a literal and an emotional lift.

Yet, when you look carefully and take the time to notice, there is something new in the Park every day. Sometimes a duck is sitting smack in the middle of the path to our office door. Or the Cooper’s Hawk who favors the Gardens will swoop from her perch on the arbor into the middle of the lawn and stretch a wing — reminding me of our friends from the Houston Ballet who filmed a dance there. And lately I have been obsessed by the clusters of dragonflies everywhere — some as large as my palm.
Meet Our Newest Board Members

Morgan Hollins
Morgan is a Partner at White & Case LLP where she advises on mergers, acquisitions and joint ventures. She holds a B.S. in Economics from The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and a J.D. from Harvard Law School. Morgan and her husband, Chris, love to take their two children, Vivian and George, to Hermann Park for picnics, biking, and fun on the train.

Richard Holt
Richard is currently a Managing Director with Alvarez & Marsal Corporate Performance Improvement in Houston. He has been active in the community for many years and his current board leadership includes Arms Wide Adoption Services, LGBTQ Victory Fund, NDI Equal Voices, St. Mark's Episcopal School, and Boulevard Oaks Civic Association. Richard and his husband, Mark McMasters, MD, live in Boulevard Oaks with their three children: Lucy, Geneva, and Ford.

Tina Arias Peterman
Tina has more than 23 years of experience in the banking and public finance industries. She began her career in fixed income sales with Texas Commerce Bank but quickly found her way to public finance. Through a series of mergers, she spent the next 13 years at JPMorgan. In the fall of 2018, she joined Masterson Advisors LLC as an owner in the majority women-owned firm. Tina enjoys traveling, cooking, and photography. She lives in Houston with her husband of 22 years, along with her teenagers, Logan and Ava.

Alex Triantaphyllis
Alex currently serves as Chief of Staff for Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo and previously led Judge Hidalgo’s policy team for 2+ years. Alex’s prior experience includes serving as Director of Immigration & Economic Opportunity at BakerRipley and private sector work in finance and consulting. In 2007, he co-founded PAIR: Partnership for the Advancement & Immersion of Refugees. Alex lives in Houston with his wife Christina and two daughters, and their favorite activity is walking to Hermann Park!

Sonny Villarreal
Sonny serves as 76th Brand Manager at Motiva Enterprises, where he manages all B2C and B2B initiatives, as well as sponsorships and partnerships. He also serves on Mayor Sylvester Turner’s Advisory Council for New Americans and Immigrant Communities, and sits on the Board of Directors at the American Advertising Federation–Houston, where he serves as chair of the Multicultural & Diversity Committee. Sonny and his wife, Sarah, are the proudest of parents to Soleil Alessandra and Stellan Alexander.

Plant Propagation in the Park

The Garden and Nature Series officially returned to the Family Garden on August 25 with Propagation Techniques and Barriers to Germination. Spirits were high and appetites for knowledge were eager at the first Garden and Nature class since 2019. Master Gardener and teacher Dr. Jean Fefer talked with local green-thumbed enthusiasts about how to create new plants from seeds and other plant parts, as well as how to keep them happy and healthy.

This hands-on session was the first of three classes in our fall Garden and Nature Series. The next class—Observing and Recording Wildlife in Your Neighborhood—will be on September 22, and the last class of the season—Sage Advice: Salvia in Texas—will be on October 27. Look for more classes to be announced for spring 2022!

Sign up at hermannpark.org/calendar
Touring the Commons: Live Oak Terrace

The space around the ample shade provided by the 100-year-old live oaks will be reimagined.

Shaded paths neighbored by native plantings provide a scenic promenade for Park visitors of all types.

The Live Oak Terrace will be a place for everyone in the Commons.

Fundraising is happening now. Visit hermannpark.org/thecommons to get involved.
An expansive deck with tables and chairs give an opportunity to walk underneath the live oaks, but also to sit and grab a meal.

The Central Lawn is perfectly suited for sports, exercise, picnics, or relaxing.
Save the Dates!

Saturday, October 9
8:00 am  
Run in the Park  
Hermann Park’s longest-standing community event is back! The 18th annual Run in the Park will have a 5K, 10K, and 1K kids’ route with a post-race party at Molly Ann Smith Plaza. Similar to 2020, there will also be a virtual challenge for those wanting to participate from home. hermannpark.org/run

Thursday, October 28
8:00 pm  
Urban Green’s Fall Event  
This Halloween, join Urban Green for a spooktacular movie night on the McGovern Centennial Gardens lawn to watch the 1991 classic The Addams Family. Buy your ticket, bring a blanket or chair, and grab a bite and a drink from our generous food donors at this outdoor fundraising event. hermannpark.org/addamsfamily

Saturday, October 23
9:00 am to 12:00 pm  
Love Your Park  
Member Volunteer Day  
Conservancy members show your love for Hermann Park by coming to volunteer and help with essential plantings in the McGovern Centennial Gardens. Come get your hands dirty for a good cause and keep Hermann Park looking incredible for the six million people who visit each year. hermannpark.org/loveyourpark

Saturday, November 6
8:00 am  
Houston Rockets Dog Walk  
Bring your four-legged friends out for a morning at Hermann Park! The Houston Rockets Dog Walk will feature a picturesque walk around McGovern Lake, the Jones Reflection Pool, and other areas of the Park, followed by a post-walk party in Lake Plaza! hermannpark.org/dogwalk

Saturday, November 13
7:30 am  
Park to Port Bike Ride  
The 20-mile round-trip bike ride takes cyclists from Hermann Park’s Bayou Parkland along the Bayou Greenway trail all the way to the Port of Houston. Enjoy a turn-around party sponsored by Port Houston, but be sure to save some energy for a well-deserved post-ride party under the Bill Coats Bridge. hermannpark.org/bike

Urban Green
$100–$499  
Kadriye and Avery Alcorn  
Anonymous  
Katie and Scott Amoldy  
Dorothy M. Modest Ashley  
Sarah Balinskas and Jeff DeBevec  
Jeanne Bauer and Walter Hittelmann  
Berly Family  
Gina and Devinder Bhatia  
Susan and Michael Bloom  
Suzann and Travis C. Brossche  
Patricia and Ian Butler  
Judy Chapman  
Joanie Ciarleri  
Lisa and Mark Cox  
Liz and Steve Crowell  
Nancy and L. John Davis  
Dialectica Ltd  
Judy and Edward Earle  
Rebecca and Stephen Fair – In honor of the Johns Family  
Karen and Larry George  
Nonya and Jonathan Grenader  
James Grotta  
Manuel Heredia  
Darlene and George Hirasaki  
Steven E. Holbrook  
Heather and David Houston  
Wendy and Mavis Kelsey, Jr. Fund  
Marilyn and Harry Kirk  
Anne Klein and Harvey Aronson  
Kathryn Louise  
Lucy Lunt and Wayne Donwoho  
Kay and Clark Martin  
Carl E. Masterson  
Jackie and Malcolm Mazow  
Diane and Emmett McDonald  
Jerry McNell  
Carol and Bob Miller  
Bernice Heilbrunn Potvin  
The Propst Family  
Karim and Leo Shipman – In memory of Lily "Kitty" Quinn  
Aaryn and Gene Silva  
Len D. Slusser  
Karen and Ken Smiley  
Arlene and Joe Staller  
William P. Steng  
Eva Talbot  
Manik Talwani  
John J. Toomey  
Fiona Tote – In memory of Dr. Robert S. Toth  
Melissa and Oliver Tuckerman  
Sarah and Duncan Underwood  
Beth and Joe Weikert  
Monica White  
Beth Wolff  
Susie and Alvin Zimmerman

Membership
$2,500 +  
Anonymous  
Annie and Ben Bergeron  
Lou Ann and Milton Gray  
Rebecca and Clayton Reed  

$500–$2,499  
Anonymous  
Lee and Bob Ardell  
Bill Arning and Aaron Skolnick  
Kathryn and Travis Boeker  
Virginia A. Clark  
Elizabeth A. Germani  
Britt Guarglia and Rusty Sewell  
James H. Hazen  
Josephine and Philip John  
Mark Licata  
Laura and Andrew Malek  
The Kim and Chris Reichert Family  
Kristen Castellanos Ridgeway and David Ridgeway  
Heidi and Bryan Rosenstrauch  
John E. Walsh, Jr.  
Wendy Wilson-Wills  
Marlene and Mark Wong

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HERMANN PARK CONSERVANCY

Every Membership Counts at Hermann Park Conservancy

Hermann Park Conservancy members all join for different reasons. Some want to support urban conservation and wildlife habitat preservation, some want to share the joy they had as children playing in Hermann Park with their own children, and some just love riding the train.

But regardless of why people join, one thing all members have in common is that they are all supporting vital operational needs in Hermann Park, which helps us keep it looking better than ever. And just how do memberships do that exactly?

- A Bronze membership buys 24 pairs of garden gloves for staff and volunteers to work in the Park.
- A Centennial membership buys weeding tools for 20 volunteers to remove invasive species from the Park’s plant beds.
- A Gold membership purchases a portable water tank to water newly-planted trees during drought conditions.
- A Platinum membership purchases 1.5 acres of Coastal Prairie Seed Mix to help restore the natural habitat of the migratory bird islands.
- A Conductor’s Circle membership purchases 20 native trees to plant in the Park.

While maintaining and caring for Hermann Park isn’t always glamorous, it is essential. Every membership counts and they are the best way to directly support the Conservancy’s efforts to make sure Hermann Park is here today and for generations to come. Learn how you can help by visiting hermannpark.org/membership.

Attention Members: Sip and Stroll is happening on September 30. Visit hermannpark.org/sip to sign up.
Give our newest social media channel a follow to get the latest updates on our upcoming dog park—plus more pictures like these!

@HermannBark

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