

Arboretum News Q&A:

Q&A is an occasional column in The Arboretum News featuring Arboretum staff members who give topical information, and provide thought provoking insight into The Arboretum.



**JERRY TURNEY,
Biologist**

Jerry is a scientific botanical and horticultural researcher who conducts studies related to evaluating new commercial products, and to

maintaining and improving the Arboretum's collections. He is available for consultation in person, by mail or by phone regarding botanical and horticultural topics.

**FRANK
MCDONOUGH,
Botanical Information
Consultant**

Tuesday through Saturday, Frank is available to answer all plant questions. He also works on special projects ranging from creating signage and workshops to assisting the visitor as well as developing and maintaining The Arboretum collection databases.



**KEVIN KANE,
Assistant
Superintendent**

Assists in the planning and directing of the development, planting, and maintenance of The Arboretum.

As a new staff member what can you do in your position at The Arboretum to increase visitorship?

JT: I am able to teach classes in various aspects of horticulture such as arboriculture, mycology, and plant pathology which I believe will attract more people to The Arboretum. I am also available to lead tours of the Garden with a different perspective that may interest a different type of visitor that might not have come in the past.

KK: I can be part of the process to develop strategies to increase traffic into The Arboretum. My position affords the

opportunity to have a direct effect on the overall appearance of the facility. I would like to upgrade the "look" of

The Arboretum through creative plant selection and the development of "visual impact" areas on the Arboretum Grounds. I can assist in an aggressive effort to attract visitors through ideas such as reciprocal agreements with other facilities, interactive participation with schools and colleges, and increased educational offerings on site.

FM: When somebody calls The Arboretum with a plant problem or an identification of certain plants, I am the one they talk to. I am their first impression of the professionalism of The Arboretum staff. I make it a point to bend over backward to get them the information they need. I believe good, thorough, and thoughtful service will help create a solid and substantial word-of-mouth. I am also

formulating lectures and workshops that I hope will be informational and thought provoking. Plants are such an integral part of our society that adequately touching on their importance requires research in fields other than pure science. These disciplines need to be considered when trying to convey to people the

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— Frank McDonough

importance of plants in human affairs and also the key in creating exciting presentations to the visitor.

What specifically attracted you to The Arboretum, and what prompted you to accept your position at The Arboretum?

JT: The opportunity to spend more time on research rather than landscape maintenance was attractive to me. The Arboretum is open to the public more than other botanical institutions and is really here to help home gardeners. I have always enjoyed helping people with their garden problems and sharing my knowledge of horticulture. There is better opportunity here to educate the public on tree care, tree selection, disease control, and other horticultural topics.

KK: The job description is a veritable playground of activities for anyone truly involved in horticulture. The opportunity to participate in so many activities directly associated with the horticultural process, and to have an immediate impact

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— Jerry Turney

on the long term appearance and the everyday machinations of The Arboretum is a challenge that I fully embrace.

FM: About two years ago I was visiting The Arboretum with my wife and daughter. We had a great time that day. We saw the "Anaconda" set and banged out tribal tunes by hitting sticks on dead canes in the bamboo forest across from the rose garden. We had a magical and unforgettable time. As we were strolling on our way out my wife turned to me and said, "Wouldn't it be nice if you worked here?" When the opportunity came to work here I could not refuse.

You have just been given \$1 million dollars to spend at The Arboretum. What would you do with it?

JT: Most of the research equipment that had been here at The Arboretum was removed when the research staff left in 1992. I would like to replace the equipment that was given away or sold and bring the sole remaining lab up to date. We need a boiler and autoclave to prepare media to culture fungi and bacteria, and camera ready microscope with high

quality optics for publication of quality photographs of plants and fungal tissues. I would also like to do DNA finger printing for fungi and plants. This procedure would require gel electrophoresis equipment such as an electrophoresis power source, a refrigerator, restriction enzymes and various lab supplies. The ability to characterize plants and fungi at the molecular level would greatly enhance our ability to identify unknown plants to cultivar and to population research on pathogenic fungi. I would also buy a research greenhouse that would have the ability to quarantine plants and separate research projects from one another. Finally, on my list of purchases would be a digital projector, slide scanner, and hardware to convert computer generated graphics to slide film. This equipment

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— Kevin Kane

would greatly enhance our ability to present lectures and seminars on various topics.

KK: If I have that kind of money to spend immediately, I would upgrade the irrigation system, increase plant production facilities, and renovate planting areas most visible to the public entering The Arboretum grounds and facilities.

FM: I would build more interpretive displays. I believe the scientific aspects of plants can be highly entertaining and educational. I would also use the money to help bring in guest lecturers from both the scientific community and the media. 🌱

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