



# Cedar Valley Arboretum & Botanic Gardens

## Volunteer Handbook



# Welcome!

Welcome to our large and passionate team of volunteers! We're so glad that you've chosen the Cedar Valley Arboretum & Botanic Gardens as your "volunteering home." The Arboretum was founded in 1996 by a group of dedicated volunteers, and, until recently, was run entirely by volunteers. That is amazing!

Even though we do have a small staff now, our volunteers are an indispensable part of every area of our organization. Without you, we wouldn't be able to do a fraction of what we do today. Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Arboretum, and we thank you as you join our volunteering team.

If you have questions along the way, which we're sure you will, please don't hesitate to reach out to a staff member or other volunteers for help. At the end of the day, whether you choose to be a Welcome Center greeter, gardener, or administrative volunteer, we are all on the same team, and our ultimate goal is to constantly be maintaining and improving the Arboretum.

Welcome and thank you again from the staff, Board of Directors, and volunteers of "The Arb."



## **Our Mission**

The mission of the Cedar Valley Arboretum & Botanic Gardens is to enhance the quality of life for all individuals through horticulture. We seek to enrich life by nourishing and sharing the beauty of the natural world, the joy of gardening, knowledge of plants, and the diversity of our world.

## **Our Vision**

The vision of the Cedar Valley Arboretum & Botanic Gardens is to serve as a compelling public resource for the study of plants, a leader in environmental stewardship, a cultural center for the community, and a showcase of Iowa's rich heritage with the land.

## **Our History**

The Arboretum was founded in 1996 by a small group of dedicated volunteers from all over the Cedar Valley. During one chilly, spring day in 1996, the very first trees of the Arboretum were planted in the Sesquicentennial Forest in honor of Iowa's 150th birthday. Since then, we have added a Welcome Center, Education Center, large barn, and over 15 formal gardens. Today, our grounds include 40 acres, a Rose Garden, an award-winning Children's Garden, Shade Garden, Master Gardeners Orchard, and more!

## **The Volunteer Engagement Committee**

The volunteer Engagement Committee is made up of a group of Arboretum volunteers and strives to effectively identify potential volunteers, secure their commitment, and secure their continuous involvement by creating a volunteering atmosphere that instills a passion for volunteering at the Arboretum. They do so by working with staff members to support and improve each volunteer's experience.

## **Arboretum Funding**

As a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization, most of our income is through grants, donations, and membership, with only a small portion of income coming from admission and events. As a volunteer, you will not pay admission to enter the gardens while you are volunteering. However, as an active member of the Arboretum's community, we strongly encourage your support through membership. If you're interested in becoming a member, please contact our office to learn more.

## **Facilities**

Our facilities include the Welcome Center (the only garden entrance), the Education Center (available for rentals, located next to the Children's Garden), and our barn (only accessible to staff and volunteers). Further instructions about how to access each of these building will be given during your orientation.



## **General Guidelines**

### **Volunteer Rights**

- Receive equal opportunities regardless of race, sex, age, religious beliefs, gender identity, sexual orientation, financial status, or disability, so long as reasonable accommodations can be made to enable you to fulfill the volunteer responsibilities
- Receive training and supervision that will improve your understanding of the Arboretum and your ability to communicate that understanding and enable you to carry out your duties effectively
- Be given meaningful assignments that are essential to the Arboretum's growth
- Have access to the tools and materials necessary to fulfill your duties
- Be involved in evaluating the volunteer program
- Be shown respect for your skills, dignity and individuality
- Receive recognition in a way that is meaningful to you

### **Volunteer Responsibilities**

- Perform volunteer duties as outlined in your position description to the best of your ability and in the best interest of the Arboretum
- Follow Arboretum regulations and guidelines
- Meet time commitments
- Approach the public as a goodwill ambassador for the Arboretum and its mission

## **Tracking Hours**

Accurate records of volunteer hours help the Arboretum demonstrate community support for our work in grant applications and other fundraising efforts, enable us to assess labor needs, and help us to evaluate the effectiveness of our programs.

There are volunteer check-in/check-out stations located in the Welcome Center and in the barn. There is also an online form located at <https://goo.gl/forms/FKxZu9TbAwQ0Kw252> where you can log your hours. If you would like to submit your hours another way, please contact our office.

## **Dress Code**

Volunteers are encouraged, but not required, to wear official Arboretum shirts while donating their time. One volunteer shirt is available to volunteers at no cost. Stop in the Welcome Center and talk to a staff member if you are interested in receiving an Arboretum shirt.

While volunteering, you are a representative of the Arboretum. As such, we do not allow any clothing with profane or suggestive wording or graphics. Close-toed shoes, hats, sunscreen, and gloves are recommended for your safety and comfort while volunteering outdoors. If you have questions about our dress code policy, please contact our office.



## **Procedures for Notification In Case of Absence**

If you are unable to work your scheduled shift, please notify staff as far in advance as possible. Please do not seek a substitute without first talking to your supervisor.

If a volunteer work session must be canceled because of inclement weather or other reasons, we will notify you by email as far in advance as possible. Staff will discuss frequent unexpected absenteeism with those volunteers who routinely do not show up for shifts. If the work schedule is no longer convenient for the volunteer, we can discuss other volunteer opportunities and try to find a more appropriate assignment.

## **Dismissal**

Volunteers who do not adhere to the Arboretum's policies and procedures or who fail to satisfactorily perform their volunteer assignment are subject to dismissal. No volunteer will be dismissed until the volunteer has had an opportunity to discuss the situation with supervisory staff. Prior to dismissal, staff will seek consultation and assistance of the Volunteer Engagement Committee.

Possible grounds for dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Failure to abide by the Arboretum's volunteer policies and procedures
- Failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties
- Failure to follow safety requirements, rules, and regulations
- Gross misconduct or insubordination

## **Safety**

The physical well-being of every visitor, volunteer and employee is a primary consideration in every Arboretum activity, whether the activity is fixing a trail, planning an event, operating the Welcome Center, weeding the gardens, or performing other tasks.

Each volunteer has the responsibility to:

- Read and follow safety instructions posted in work areas and on equipment
- Operate only that equipment which she/he has been authorized to use
- Use the safety equipment provided for his/her job
- Keep work areas clean and orderly
- Avoid behavior which could lead to injury
- Report unsafe conditions to his/her supervisor.

Volunteers should follow established Arboretum procedures for reporting accidents. Report any accidents to a staff member as soon as possible (within 24 hours of accident).

## **Tornado**

In case of a tornado warning or tornado, seek shelter immediately. There is a tornado shelter located next to the Service Road, between the back of the Hillside Welcome Garden and the Rose Garden. This area only holds a small number of people, so we recommend that volunteers watch the weather, and if there's a chance of severe weather, they should stay home and plan to volunteer another day/time.

## First aid

First aid kits are located in the Welcome Center. These contain supplies for minor injuries: band aids, gauze, and disinfectant wipes. Only staff and volunteers have access to these supplies. If a visitor is in need of first aid supplies, a staff person should be notified and that person will assist the visitor.

In the event that there is not a staff member at the gardens and a visitor is in need of assistance, please evaluate the situation to the best of your ability. If it's necessary to call 911, please do so, and then immediately call a staff member to inform her or him of the situation.

## Fire

If safely able to access a telephone, dial 911 and identify yourself, give location of the fire (physical address, building name, location), and provide details of fire emergency. Exit the building or area.

## Plant Donations Policy

The Arboretum does accept plant and tree donations. However, each donation must be approved by the Executive Director before being planted. Donors must know the complete botanical name of the plant that they will be donating, and it must be a zone 4 or lower hardiness level. We do not accept donations of houseplants or tropical plants.

## Arboretum Hours

May-September

Monday-Saturday, 9am – 7pm

Sunday, 11am – 7pm

October

Monday-Saturday, 9am – Sunset

Sunday, 11am – Sunset

November-April

Monday-Friday, 9:00am – 5:00pm

Saturday-Sunday, Closed

## Arboretum Admission

Adults: \$5 (18 and older)

Children: \$2 (5-17)

Children under four, Hawkeye students and staff, Arboretum members, class attendees and rental guests receive free admission

## Contact Information

319.226.4966

office@cedarvalleyarboretum.org

1927 E. Orange Rd., Waterloo, IA 50701

## Membership Levels & Costs

Individual: \$40

Family: \$60

Photographer: \$75

Organization: \$75

Contributor: \$100

Partner: \$250

Patron: \$500

Arboretum Society: \$1,000





E.C. -Education Center

W.C.- Welcome Center