



LAURITZEN
GARDENS

Lauritzen Gardens Contacts
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LAURITZEN GARDENS ANNOUNCES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

OMAHA, Neb.- The Lauritzen Gardens Board of Directors is pleased to announce that John Newman has been selected to serve as the organization's new Executive Director, effective immediately. Newman, who has served as the garden's Interim Chief Operating Officer since February, was selected as the result of a rigorous, eight-month national search.

The opportunity at Lauritzen Gardens attracted an abundance of highly qualified candidates, including public garden, not-for-profit and executive professionals from across the country.

Newman distinguished himself from all other candidates through his leadership expertise and experience, dedication to building a culture of opportunity and achievement, passion for plants and nature, and vision for future excellence. John will lead an experienced senior management team with deep expertise in horticulture and the operation of public botanical gardens.

The search was led by Wheless Partners of Birmingham, Alabama and a six-member committee comprised of current and former board members.

"After an exhaustive national search, it became clear that John was the right person to move the garden forward, said Lee Handke, board president. "His personality, passion for the garden, and business leadership experience will lead Lauritzen Gardens to new heights."

Bruce Lauritzen, who remains an active garden advocate, participated in the decision, along with other key garden donors and stakeholders. Lauritzen said, "I am excited because I believe John will build on the garden's past success and is ready to lead and further cultivate the garden's growth and development to even bigger records of success."

Lauritzen, the search committee and the board of directors are pleased with this outcome, given the competitive rigor of the search process and Newman's success leading the garden as Interim Chief Operating Officer over the past eight months. Lauritzen Gardens has seen strong attendance and a 6% growth in membership under Newman's lead.

Newman, who is a Michigan native, built a three-decade career as an executive with Union Pacific Railroad and led the Opera Omaha board of directors, as part of the organization's recent transformation, over a nine-year board tenure. He joined the Lauritzen Gardens Board of Directors in 2016. He lives in Honey Creek, Iowa with his wife, Shawn, where he can be found in his own garden most weekends.

"I am honored to be leading Lauritzen Gardens at this exciting time in the vibrant organization's history," said Newman. "The garden has so many important resources to share- its beautiful horticultural displays, important plant collections and work in plant conservation, entertaining special events, and a deep and

varied offering of educational programs. It is truly a treasure for the community and I look forward to refocusing our vision to achieve future growth.”

Lauritzen Gardens is an urban oasis of beauty and tranquility. This 100-acre botanical garden, comprised of several outdoor garden areas, creates a living museum of unique four-season plant displays, maintained to the highest standards consistent with environmental stewardship.

Lauritzen Gardens is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and the café serves lunch from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., every day except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year’s Day. Admission to Lauritzen Gardens is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children ages six to 12 and free for members and children younger than six years old.

Lauritzen Gardens is conveniently located in the beautiful riverfront hills at First and Bancroft Streets and is close to the Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium and the Old Market. For more information, please visit www.lauritzengardens.org or call (402) 346-4002.

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