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Dear Volunteers,

Thank you, so much, for your interest, time, and service in support of Boyce Thompson Arboretum (BTA). As a volunteer here, you are participating in a rich tradition--supporting the legacy of Colonel William Boyce Thompson, and conserving and protecting our living collections of plants from around the world.

Our mission is to instill in people an appreciation of plants. We do that in many ways--through education, and research and conservation. Each volunteer is an important ambassador for BTA as we reach out to our community of visitors. We strive to provide an experience for our visitors that will help instill a love for plants, the natural world, and a sense of stewardship.

We often hear, "We couldn't do it without you," but in this case, it's true! Volunteers are our lifeblood, and each volunteer is essential to our work. Thank you!

We hope that your experience here will be challenging, enjoyable, and rewarding.

I look forward to meeting you.

Sincerely,

Lynne Nemeth
Executive Director
lynne.nemeth@btarboretum.org
Value of Volunteers

The time, talent and dedication of our volunteers has made Boyce Thompson Arboretum thrive over its nearly 100 years in existence. Volunteers have given countless hours of service to propel BTA towards the fulfillment of its mission and its current success. We could not operate without you.

BTA recognizes and appreciates the value that our volunteers bring to the arboretum. BTA's staff are committed to making volunteering here enjoyable, productive and rewarding. We take responsibility for our volunteers' experience and commit to provide:

- Meaningful service that benefits both the volunteer and BTA in alignment with each volunteer’s experience, education and preferences
- Orientation to BTA grounds and its history
- Effective and professional training, communication and supervision for volunteer duties throughout the time each person serves as a volunteer
- An atmosphere of teamwork between volunteers and paid staff
- Respect to volunteers and between volunteers
- A physically safe workplace and one that is free from harassment
- A uniform and name tag in a timely manner
- Professional conflict resolution if necessary
- Opportunities for volunteers to provide feedback, give suggestions and ask questions
- Recognition, both formal and informal, for each person’s contribution
- Information that directly affects volunteers’ service and area of responsibility
- Regular communication of BTA news and development that reflect both the short and long-term goals of BTA

Thank you for choosing Boyce Thompson Arboretum. We hope you will enjoy your time serving with us. I am here to create a positive experience for everyone so please let me know if you have any questions, concerns or ideas. Volunteering should be a win-win experience, with both BTA and the volunteer (you!) benefiting. I look forward to working with you!

Emily Smolenski
Volunteer and Event Coordinator
emily.smolenski@btarboretum.org
Mission Statement

"The mission of Boyce Thompson Arboretum is to inspire appreciation and stewardship of desert plants, wildlife, and ecosystems through education, research and conservation."

History

The Arboretum was founded April 1, 1924, incorporated as Arizona’s first non-profit research institution on October 5, 1927, and officially dedicated and opened to the public on April 6, 1929.

The purpose of the Boyce Thompson Arboretum is to instill in people an appreciation of plants through the fostering of educational, recreational, research and conservation opportunities associated with the world’s arid land plants. An Arboretum is an area that focuses on trees and other woody plants. Although the Colonel’s original intent was to plant trees (hence the name, Arboretum), he soon realized that all types of plants from around the world should be included.

The Arboretum is managed by: the non-profit 501(c)(3) Boyce Thompson Southwestern Arboretum, Inc. and is governed by a Board of Directors, who act as directors of policy within the organization and ambassadors of its mission in the wider community.

Assets

- Arizona’s oldest and largest botanical garden
  - Founded by mining magnate William Boyce Thompson in 1924
- Plant collections from around the world
  - 18,900 arid-land plants [includes Wallace collection]
  - 3,900 taxa (species, etc.); 405 rare/endangered species
  - Countries and regions represented: United States, Mexico, Australia, Madagascar, India, China, Japan, Israel, South America, the Middle East, Africa, the Mediterranean, and the Arabian Peninsula
The Wallace Garden: 5,000 new plants
- Three nationally accredited plant collections: desert legumes, oaks, and eucalyptus
- Home to “Mr. Big,” an Arizona Champion Tree

- On the National Register of Historic Places; historic buildings on site
- 135 acres of gardens amidst 353 acres of upland Sonoran Desert and the Queen Creek riparian area; 4.7 miles of trails
- 120,000 visitors every year
- More than 7,500 members
- *Desert Plants*, a scientific journal, now in its 40th year
- The “most enchanting” Audubon Important Birding Area in Arizona; 275 species sighted
- Specialty tours highlighting wildflowers, medicinal plants, birds, wildlife, history, geology
- One hour or less from central Phoenix (60 miles)

**Fast Facts**

The 343-acre facility has 4.7 miles of paths and trails through plant exhibits from 11 of the world’s deserts, a native riparian habitat and colorful specialty gardens. One of those includes the recently acquired Wallace Desert Garden, opening in Fall 2020.

**Emergency Procedures**

First aid kits and radios are located in the visitor’s center if needed. Volunteers should only provide basic first aid supplies to visitors. All BTA staff are CPR/First Aid certified and are willing and able to assist if there is an emergency. Please follow the directions of staff and/or supervisors if there is an emergency. If your volunteer position requires a radio, radio training will be provided to you.

For the safety of all volunteers, please communicate any suspicious activity/threats/etc. to your supervisor or the volunteer coordinator immediately. BTA staff will assess the situation and take action if needed.
Hours of Operation

Seasonal Hours (October - April)

- Open Monday - Sunday: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Seasonal Hours (May - September)

- Open Monday - Sunday: 6:00 am - 3:00 pm

Closed Tuesdays, June through September.

Arboretum Map

Download Map from the BTA Website
Volunteering at Boyce Thompson Arboretum

Volunteer Departments
Boyce Thompson Arboretum offers volunteer opportunities across multiple departments including the facilities department, horticulture department, and public programs department. BTA also recruits special program volunteers on an as-needed basis. These projects are specific and vary per department. For a more detailed outline of volunteer departments and opportunities, please find the volunteer assignments on the BTA website.

Parking
Free parking is available for all volunteers. Please park in the main parking lot located directly in front of the visitor’s center, unless otherwise specified by the department supervisor or volunteer coordinator.

Benefits and Rewards of Volunteering
- Initial Orientation and Education throughout your Service
- Volunteer-Only Events and Opportunities
  - Relationship building within the volunteer community
- Gift Shop Discounts
  - 20% off Gift Shop Items
  - 30% off Plant Sale (contingent on volunteering at that plant sale)
- Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast in Spring and Annual Meeting in Fall
- Inner Departmental Recognition
- Contributing to the mission of Boyce Thompson Arboretum
Volunteer Requirements
Boyce Thompson Arboretum requires all volunteers do the following as part of their commitment to BTA:

1. Attend initial volunteer orientation held monthly by the volunteer coordinator.

2. Pay for an initial background check.

3. Honor the time commitment for your chosen volunteer assignment.

4. Record volunteer hours monthly. Hours are due no later than the 5th day of the month following their completion.

5. Perform volunteer service according to training from BTA staff or designated trainers.

6. Communicate accurate information to guests or redirect them to the appropriate source of information.

7. Wear a volunteer shirt and or name tag at all times when serving on BTA property and representing BTA off-site. Unless otherwise specified by supervisor or inappropriate for duty e.g. formal event or weather conditions, etc.

8. Report any contact information changes to the Volunteer Coordinator within two weeks of change to keep all personnel files up to date.

9. Follow the rules of BTA as outlined in Boyce Thompson Arboretum’s Code of Ethics and in Guidelines for the Arboretum.

10. Not participate in any activity that negatively affects the safety of guests, staff, volunteers, BTA’s plant collection, wildlife, the natural environment and/or the infrastructure on BTA property.

11. Volunteers ages 13-17 must be supervised by a parent, guardian or chaperone at all times while on BTA property.

12. Volunteers ages 11-13 must be directly monitored and accompanied by a parent, guardian or chaperon at all times while on BTA property (not provided by BTA). Any volunteers ages 10 and under will not be permitted to volunteer at BTA.
Volunteer Procedures

Boyce Thompson Arboretum Policies

1. Alcohol and Drugs
   When on duty and/or wearing a BTA volunteer name tag and/or shirt, volunteers must not drink alcohol, use illegal drugs or be under the influence of either substance. If an accident occurs while volunteering and the volunteer is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the Volunteer Insurance Policy is nullified.

2. Smoking
   Smoking is strictly prohibited at the Boyce Thompson Arboretum except in personal vehicles.

3. BTA Property
   BTA property, merchandise or supplies may not be borrowed for personal use with the exception of library books with the approval of BTA’s Librarian.

4. Selling
   Selling of goods of any kind is not permitted onsite, unless during a scheduled event as a contracted vendor.

5. Gifts
   Volunteers may not accept gifts, favors, loans or other dispensations or things of value that are given to them in connection with their duties at BTA. Any tips received should be turned into the gift shop as a donation for the Arboretum.

6. Pets
   Leashed and well-behaved pets are welcome to accompany volunteers when deemed appropriate. Pets must be on a leash no longer than six-feet and under the physical control of the owner. Pet owners are responsible for cleanup.

7. Wildlife
   Do not pick flowers, fruits, or plant parts from any plant. Do not remove anything from the Arboretum grounds including plants, leaves, flowers, fruits, sticks, rocks, feathers or wildlife. Do not damage or harm any plant or animal or encourage others to do so.

8. Media and Reporters
   If any media personnel, not accompanied by BTA staff, approach a volunteer, the volunteer should immediately refer them to the Visitor’s Center or contact a staff person to be in touch with the Marketing Department.
Recording Hours

All volunteers must record the total number of hours served per day, each month. This includes hours for training.

Why is recording hours important?

1. Volunteer hours are an in-kind donation with a monetary value for BTA.
2. Hour tallies are recorded for each month. This data shows trends for Volunteer activity throughout each season.
3. Staff program managers are able to report the number of volunteer hours used for conducting their programs, and include those hours in grant proposals.
4. Recording volunteer hours maintains your volunteer status as active.

What volunteer activities count toward service hours?

1. Initial orientation
2. Direct Service done on-site
3. Direct service done at home or other off site location
4. Volunteer trainings and meetings

Volunteers may record their volunteer hours on-site or online:

1. Hour Clipboard
   Record hours on one of two Volunteer Hours Clipboard. One is located in the Smith Building and the other is located in the Visitor’s Center.

2. Online
   Volunteers can login to their own volunteer profile, select “time sheet” and input the number of hours served each day.

   LOGIN HERE!
Leave of Absence
Volunteers are asked to notify their staff supervisor and the volunteer coordinator if they are unable to volunteer for an extended period of time (e.g. seasonal resident, surgical procedure, etc.).

Resignation
In the event that a volunteer wishes to no longer volunteer at BTA, we ask that a notice of resignation be submitted to the volunteer coordinator two weeks prior to the effective date and their volunteer badge be returned.

Grievances
When a volunteer has a problem or complaint that cannot be resolved by themselves or their staff program supervisor, the volunteer coordinator will intervene to mediate the issue.

Grounds for Dismissal
- Treating guests, other volunteers or staff without respect or in an abusive manner.
- Continuing to give misinformation or performing tasks incorrectly after remediation.
- Not following the rules of BTA as outlined in Boyce Thompson Arboretum's Code of Ethics and/or Volunteer Policies.
- Participating in any behavior that negatively affects the safety of BTA’s plant collection, staff, guests, volunteers, wildlife or natural environment.
- Continuing to violate volunteer requirements and policies after remediation.
- Participating in illegal activities on BTA property.
- Violation of any state or federal law

Boyce Thompson Arboretum reserves the right to terminate a volunteer at any time.
Safety Procedures

Code of Ethics

BTA will conduct business honestly and ethically wherever operations are maintained. We strive to improve the quality of our services, products, and operations and will maintain a reputation for honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility, integrity, trust, and sound business judgment. Our managers, employees and volunteers are expected to adhere to high standards of business and personal integrity as a representation of our business practices, at all times consistent with their duty of loyalty to BTA.

We expect that officers, directors, employees and volunteers will not knowingly misrepresent BTA and will not speak on behalf of BTA unless specifically authorized. The confidentiality of trade secrets, proprietary information, and similar confidential commercially-sensitive information (i.e. financial or sales records/reports, marketing or business strategies/plans, product development, customer lists, patents, trademarks, etc.) about BTA or operations, or that of our customers or partners, is to be treated with discretion and only disseminated on a need-to-know basis.

Personal Safety

It is our goal to provide and maintain safe working conditions, to follow safe operating procedures, and to comply with all safety laws and ordinances. Employees and volunteers should be alert to any unsafe conditions and report any problems immediately to their supervisor/manager or the executive director. Prevention of accidents and unsafe conditions is the key, and ordinary common sense is the best approach. The principles of workplace safety are similar to the ones people should follow at home, on the road, or wherever they are. Here are some general guidelines employees and volunteers should follow that can help ensure a safer workplace:

- Watch out for and report conditions that may cause accidents
- Learn how to operate equipment properly
- Develop safe personal habits that will prevent injury
- Practice common sense and show consideration for others to avoid injury
- Know the location of the nearest fire extinguisher, fire exit, and first-aid kit
Safe Workplace Policy

BTA employees, clients, volunteers and visitors are provided a safe and secure work environment through the Safe Workplace Policy. This policy includes the following types of actions, behaviors, and/or circumstances:

- Firearms are prohibited on BTA property. However, employees and volunteers may lock personal firearms in their vehicles if they routinely carry firearms.
- Threatening, intimidating, coercive, abusive, harassing, or violent verbal, written, or physical behavior toward others, including coworkers, clients, vendors, and visitors to BTA will not be tolerated.
- Intentionally destroying company property or the property of others is prohibited and will result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

BTA requires all employees and volunteers to report threats of violence, intimidating encounters, harassment, or the possession of firearms in accordance with this policy to their supervisor/manager. No adverse action will be taken against anyone who, in good faith, makes such a report.

If the situation is of an immediate or life-threatening nature, employees and volunteers should leave the area immediately. After finding a safe location, employees and volunteers should call 911 and, when able, notify their supervisor/manager or the executive director. If the situation is not life-threatening, employees and volunteers should notify their supervisor/manager and provide all the necessary information so that the incident can be investigated.

If you are injured while volunteering, no matter how minor the injury, you must let your supervisor/manager or the volunteer coordinator know as soon as possible.

Volunteers’ Health and Security

- Protect your valuables. Do not leave them in your car or unattended.
- For volunteers’ health and safety, please remember to wear a hat, sunscreen, drink plenty of water and balance electrolytes. Water and snacks are always available from the Volunteer Coordinator, but volunteers are also encouraged to supply their own.
- All volunteers must leave buildings when staff members leave in the evenings, unless they are helping with a legitimate, sanctioned event (excluding host volunteers).
Insurance Coverage

Boyce Thompson Arboretum purchases special risk insurance for volunteers while they are serving at Boyce Thompson Arboretum.

If a volunteer is injured in the course of the volunteers’ service at BTA, it is important that they advise their supervisor, or any staff person, and get medical care if needed. An incident report will need to be completed by the volunteer with a staff member on duty in coordination with the volunteer coordinator. Volunteers are required to submit an emergency contact as part of their personnel file to the volunteer coordinator in case an emergency should arise.