



SUMMER 2024 NEWS MAGAZINE



Seventh BIRDIEST FESTIVAL in AMERICA April 24-28, draws birders from Alaska, Australia, Canada, Netherlands!

During Friday evening Keynote Speaker Cameron Cox's reception at April's *Birdiest Festival in America*, your editor chatted with several visiting birders snacking on gourmet sandwiches and sipping drinks. Amazingly vibrant after a day in the wild, they eagerly shared why they picked Corpus Christi with so many other festivals nation-wide, and some of their favorite experiences here. While some eat, sleep and dream birding, traveling to several cities yearly, others consider birding festivals a "vacation," just attending one or two!

Here are some of their comments:

- "The name of your festival got me right away!"*
- "We'd birded in Texas before, but not on the Gulf Coast."*
- "Activities on the website were varied and intriguing."*
- "I'd heard the amazing Cattle Tyrant story and wanted to see him!"*
- "Everyone says Texans are friendly; and it's true. Made so many friends!"*
- "We are beginners and saw experiences we'd feel comfortable with."*
- "Figured it wouldn't be snowing like at home!"*
- "Was happy to find several other single women to hang out with."*
- "I really was fascinated by tombstones on the historic cemetery tour."*
- "Got my target bird the very first day!"*





NUMBERS & BIRDS: Although 2024 registered birders were fewer than last year, they exceeded expectations in species sightings, beating 2023 counts!

FIVE-DAY FESTIVAL COUNT : Total Species Count was **274** during five-day festival, compared to **268** last year!

RARITIES: Our famous *Cattle Tyrant*, a cooperative *Black Noddy*, and *Nuttings Flycatcher* on final day!

RIO GRANDE VALLEY pre-and post-trips (16 birders) counted 211 species, 16 not seen during five-day festival.

MEGA RARITIES: *Southern Lapwing*, *Mangrove Cuckoo*; plus *Muscovy Duck*, *Altamira Oriole*, *Chihuahuan Raven*, *Elf Owl*.

**TOTAL
2024 FESTIVAL:
290
SPECIES!**

PHOTOS:
Debbie Noble



With consistently cool, cloudy weather, but no rain, birders enjoyed numerous field trips, bird walks, specialty tours, Raptor Project presentations, Trade Show Tent, birding presentations and social time. Jonathan Wood's "Raptor Project" entertained birders, school classes on field trips, and visitors Saturday.

Saturday brought more field trips, and \$2 "FAMILY FUN Community Day" open to the public to interest more residents in birding in the "birdiest city!"



CATTLE TYRANT
David Sikes



TRICOLORED HERON | Denise Housler

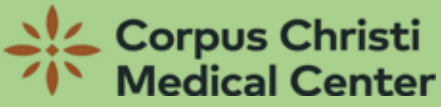


MANGROVE CUCKOO
David Sarkozi

Next Year's BIRDIEST FESTIVAL in AMERICA: April 23-27, 2025



With high winds and water restrictions, thousands attended April 6 BIG BLOOM for plants, orchids, memberships, making \$40,000 for Botanical Gardens!



PHOTOS:
Debbie Noble



“Mother’s Day FREE Weekend”

brought at least 235 moms who invited entouragees of family and friends to the Botanical Gardens May 11 and 12, totaling at least 500 guests—a 50 percent increase over last year! To get in free, Mom had to say, “Show me the Flowers!”

We especially love the top photo which appears to be “all in the family”!

“Father’s Day FREE Weekend,”

June 15 and 16, in the next issue! Dad’s passwords for Free Admission—“Reptiles & Snakes!”



Corpus Christi Water Conservation

**Save water,
today and every day,
for tomorrow**

For water-saving tips, visit
www.cctexas.com/conserv



MULTIPLE LUAU-INSPIRED FOOD & BEVERAGE STATIONS

- SIGNATURE DRINK
- Live Music, 'ALOHA DAVE & THE TOURISTS'
- SILENT AUCTION, RAFFLE
- ANIMAL AMBASSADORS
- BUTTERFLY RELEASE

DRESS IN CASUAL COMFORT—
LUAU ATTIRE OPTIONAL!

TO RESERVE YOUR SPONSORSHIP NOW—
Visit STXBOT.ORG, or contact:

- MaryJane Crull
mjc@stxbot.org
- Michael Womack
wmwomack@stxbot.org
361-852-2100

SINGLE SEATING AVAILABLE August 26.

Moonlight Luau in the Gardens!



6-9:30 pm ■ Friday, October 4, 2024 ■ 8545 S. Staples St. ■ Corpus Christi TX 78413

Construction starts in June to make *Oso Creek Loop Trail* 10-foot wide with permanent surface, and American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant.

Improving lowland trail will open up new learning, exercise opportunities!

Even after money was awarded, it's taken nearly two years obtaining permits and approvals to begin long-awaited improvements to the Oso Creek Loop Trail wandering through the Botanical Gardens & Nature Center's lowlands along Oso Creek and large wetland.

Thanks to \$89,000 City of Corpus Christi 'Type B' funding, and a \$200,000 *Texas Parks & Wildlife Department* (TPWD) grant, the 4408-ft (.8 mile) walking trail lined with Mesquites will be cleared of grass, widened to 10 feet, based with recycled crushed concrete, covered with a liner, overlaid with decomposed crushed granite mixed with aggregate, and finally topped with a surface stabilizing seal. Low spots will be elevated with high areas leveled out for ADA compliancy.

The trail and end of the Wetland Awareness Boardwalk will meet at the same elevation for continuous access from the upland garden area walkways, along Brennecke Nature Trail, across the boardwalk, around Oso Loop Trail and back.

Extra rest benches will be added, with trails eventually distance-marked for exercise walking. The new trail surface will prevent

extreme washout when Oso Creek overflows its banks in large rain events.

The project required TPWD approval through Texas Department of Transportation, ADA plan reviews and a surprise archeological review due to an Archeological Conservancy-owned burial ground further east along Oso Creek.

"This newly accessible environment will let guests experience acres of Botanical Gardens wildlife and plant life most haven't seen before, once there's improved walkability down to Oso Creek and large wetland," emphasized Executive Director Michael Womack.

"This new feature will be ideal for school field trips, camps, birding and adult exercise programs too," added Marketing Director MaryJane Crull.



Avangrid Renewables families pay visit for \$8000 check presentation!

Avangrid Renewables, providing sustainable energy primarily through windfarms, is a leading renewable energy company in the U.S. ■ Area employees and families recently delivered an \$8,000 check for the 2023 Holly Days Petting Zoo, and assistance with animal care expenses. *Thank you, Avangrid!*



- ✓ Free General Admission (12 months)
- ✓ American Horticultural Society **RECIPROCAL ADMISSIONS PROGRAM** (*FREE admission to 360 Gardens in US*) listing at www.ahsgardening.org/rp
- ✓ 10% Discount at: **Turner's Gardenland** (with valid STBGNC Member Card & ID) (*excludes labor, sale items*) Feathered Friends & Co. (*excludes birds*)
- ✓ **FREE Better Homes & Gardens online subscription**
- ✓ 10% Discount at **Nature's Boutique** year-round (STBGNC Gift Shop)
- ✓ 10% Discount at **BIG BLOOM** Plant Sale
- ✓ Substantial Class & Kids Camp Discounts (*most Saturday seminars free for members*)
- ✓ Facilities Rental Privileges
- ✓ Newsletter ■ Event Invitations ■ Window Decal



ALSO JOIN ONLINE - WWW.STXBOT.ORG

- Renewal or Former Member New Member

Membership Category	MARK SELECTION
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$ 40
<input type="checkbox"/> Couple *	\$ 60
<input type="checkbox"/> Family *	\$ 90
<input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent **	\$ 90
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining (Family or Grandparent + 2 guests)	\$ 125
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting (Family or Grandparent + 4 guests)	\$ 250
<input type="checkbox"/> Patron (Family or Grandparent + 6 guests)	\$ 500
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor (Family or Grandparent + 10 guests)	\$ 1000

* (Couple, Family: Must be Same Household)

** (Grandparents: Includes grandchildren / greatgrandchildren under age 18)
Age 60+ / Active Military may take 10% off the membership level of their choice

PHOTOGRAPHER MEMBERSHIP, for you & clients - \$150/year

Member Information PLEASE PRINT

 NAMES (S)

 STREET ADDRESS

 CITY STATE ZIP

 PHONE (S)

.....

AMT \$ _____ CASH _____ CK# _____

MC VISA DISCOVER AMX

 ACCT #

 NAME ON ACCT

 EXPIRATION 3 DIGIT SECURITY CODE

 SIGNATURE

PLEASE MAIL TO: South Texas Botanical Gardens
 8545 S. Staples St. ■ Corpus Christi, Texas 78413

We're proud of our spring graduates!



ANIMAL CARE INTERN Paige Allen received her Bachelor's Degree in Wildlife Biology from TAMU-Corpus Christi, while playing Islanders Women's basketball! She plans to continue both her education and college basketball in Corpus Christi!



ANIMAL CARE Team's Chloe Valdez received her high school diploma from Branch Academy; and simultaneously her Del Mar College Associates Degree in Liberal Arts. After volunteering many years while in school, she has joined the staff.

Recycle Right **SOLID WASTE SERVICES**

- PAPER**
Mail, notebook paper, magazines
Empty, flattened cardboard
- Cans**
Empty aluminum cans, steel cans
- PLASTIC**
Empty plastic bottles & containers with numbers 1, 2, 5

*Plastic bags of any kind should not be placed in your recycling cart.



Know what to throw by downloading the **CC Recycle** app today!

www.cctexas.com/howtorecycle
[ccwasteplace](https://www.facebook.com/ccwasteplace)

June 15/16: FATHERS' DAY FREE WEEKEND.

Just say, "Reptiles & Snakes," and Dad gets in free! Enjoy REPTALES, 10:30; gardens, resident reptiles, Gator Lake, trails, other guy stuff! Only dads are free—other non-members pay general admission. Buy Dad a membership this weekend, at 20% off for year of free admission, 360 Reciprocal Gardens!

July 4 : FOURTH- OFF FOR 4TH!

Celebrate AMERICA'S NATURAL BEAUTY at the Botanical Gardens with 25% off admission on Independence Day, a "big bang" for your bucks! Just \$7.50 ages 13-59; \$6 Srs / Active Military / College; \$4.50 ages 3-12. Under 3 and Members free! Bring a picnic; dogs on leash; but NO FIREWORKS allowed!

ALL SATURDAY MORNING CLASSES
Make RESERVATIONS, 361-852-2100

Classes FREE with Membership,
 General Admission, or \$5.

(ALL SATURDAY CLASSES begin at 9:30 AM)

July 20: CHOOSING, GROWING, WINTERING PLUMERIA

A week before the big sale, Plumeria Society's Renee Brown will discuss tips on purchasing and raising these exotic, tropical beauties, and lead a tour of the Gardens & Nature Center's impressive Plumeria Garden and Willoughby Viewing Platform.

Annual Plumeria Sale!

Saturday, July 27, 10-1,

Gardem Senior Center, 5325 Greely St.

Cuttings and rooted plants, named and unnamed varieties, will be sold, with proceeds benefitting the Botanical Gardens Plumeria exhibit. *Free Admission to Sale.*



September 7: PREPARING FOR FALL GARDENS

Learn tricks of the trade for having a bountiful fall harvest in our difficult Coastal Bend from Nueces Master Gardener Mary Sherwood, giving insights on varieties, fertilizing, care, tips.

September 14: FALL ROSE GROOMING FOR REBLOOMING

Nueces Master Gardener Renee Brown shares pruning, fertilizing, and pest control techniques to energize your American Beauties for spectacular fall display.

Sept. 21: KNOW YOUR BUGS!

Learn which bugs are good guys vs. those on public enemy list from Nueces Master Gardener Advanced Entomology Specialist and TDA Certified Applicator for Lawn and Ornamentals, Renee Brown!

October 4: Moonlight Luau in the Gardens

6-9:30 pm. Imagine tiki torches, souvenir lei, live music, delicious luau-inspired food and beverage stations, including island-style signature drink, and other surprises! Release a butterfly, enjoy garden strolls among tropical plumeria, orchids, bromeliads and hibiscus, silent auction and raffle, some parrots, iguanas and convenient valet service for a vibrant moonlit evening. Sponsorships: Call MaryJane or Michael, 361-852-2100, or visit STXBOT.ORG (see p. 6). Presented by CITGO Corpus Christi Refinery.



October 12: FALL LAWN CARE FOR A GREENER SPRING!

Nueces Master Gardener Renee Brown gives best fall fertilizing and cultural practices to help your lawn not only survive winter dormancy, potential disease, but for better growth next spring to make your yard the envy of the neighborhood.

October 19: BEST TREES FOR SOUTH TEXAS from ARBORIST!

John Wood, Certified Arborist and owner of Tree Amigos, walks you through selecting the best tree for your landscape; and shows you proper planting techniques entering prime Coastal Bend tree planting season.

October 26: FALL FLOWER POWER!

Learn great perennial and annual plants to jazz up your existing landscape turning heads all season long, from staff Horticulturist and Nueces Master Gardener Carol Krank.

November 2: MAXIMUM SOUTH TEXAS FRUIT PRODUCTION!

Nueces Master Gardener Renee Brown will not only discuss fruit tree varieties for our area, but also how to properly prune and prevent diseases for abundant harvest in your backyard!

November 9: SCENTS OF THE HOLIDAYS!

Discover creative uses of fresh and dried herbs during the holidays from staff Horticultural Specialist Whitney Lance. Learn how to brine a turkey with herbs, spice up holiday dishes, making your home a scent-sational holiday retreat.

November 16: DESERT ROSE 101

Learn all about this popular succulent from local desert rose aficionado and collector Joe Ortiz, who has grown multiple varieties over the years.



HAY MAZE OPEN October 19th - January 1

Hay Maze now a staple fall attraction for kids, opening Sat, October 19 for Halloween, changing to holidays after. More . . .



HOLLY DAYS AT THE GARDENS

November 29/30 • December 6/7 • 13/14 • 20/21

4 special holiday weekends celebrating joys of the season with a beautiful 20' fresh-cut lighted fir tree and huge 18' recycled ECO CHRISTMAS TREE made of green plastic bottles + 4 smaller ones, created by Shelia Rogers! **FRIDAY & SATURDAY EVENINGS, + SATURDAY AFTERNOONS.** Lighting displays, trees, SANTA, more TBA. Presented by Valero.

ANIMAL AMBASSADORS

Visitors Center Reptile Room, Open Daily!



"REP-TALES"

Saturdays, Sundays, 10:30 am

Meet, pet, learn about, and often feed several of our Resident Reptiles, with trainers, usually on Festival Lawn area.

Summer / Fall YOUTH FIELD TRIPS



Schools & Youth Groups; Self-Directed & Directed Options.

Visit the Gardens & Nature Center—
Learn about Butterflies, Reptiles, Parrots, more!

A. SELF-DIRECTED FIELD TRIP:

PRE-K through GRADE 5 \$7 / student
GRADES 6 through 12 \$8 / student
Start at Visitor Center with map, PICK destinations!

B. DIRECTED FIELD TRIP:

PRE-K through GRADE 5 \$10 / student
GRADES 6 through 12 \$12 / student
Choose Gardens & Nature Center areas for students' experience. Staff/volunteers available for Q/A.

C. DIRECTED FIELD TRIP with CUSTOMIZED SCIENCE LESSON, NATURE CRAFT, or BOTH!

PRE-K through GRADE 5 Starts \$14 / student
GRADES 6 through 12 Starts \$16 / student

Minimum Field Trip is 12 students.

\$5 Adult Chaperones.

Activities subject to weather, availability.

Field Trip Descriptions, Questionnaire **RESERVATIONS**,
Nature Fun Bag information,
email brendae@stxbot.org.

-A Few Spots Left in SUMMER CAMPS-

Half-Day Camps, 9 am-Noon (except Nature Shutterbugs)
Mon-Fri • \$135 Mbrs, \$160 Others (except Shutterbugs)

Environmental learning experiences for campers include reptile and parrot interactions, butterfly and other tiny critter observations, trail walks, nature crafts, journaling, more!

Campers also may learn to use binoculars, compasses, mini-microscopes and cameras.

All activities are age-appropriate conducted by Educators, Volunteers and Guest Presenters.

June 17-21 **NATURE BUDDIES** Ages 6-8
June 24-28 **NATURE SHUTTERBUGS** Ages 9-13
1-4 pm, \$150 all campers

Minimum 8 campers per session.

PRE-REGISTRATION / PAYMENT at least 7 days before session.

REGISTRATION FORMS: Call, stop in Visitors Center, or brenda@stxbot.org, 361-852-2100



OTHER KIDS NATURE EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

Homeschool Series: (ABC Journaling, Science Outdoors)
Pre-School Nature Awareness (Reading with a Reptile . . .)
Scout Nature Adventure Patches

MINI ANIMAL ENCOUNTERS

Interact with 3 Resident Reptiles! Guests hold animals, give them snacks, take photos in a private setting!

Up to 6 people 15 minutes \$40 (plus gen admission)

Additional people or animals can be arranged if scheduled in advance, additional fees apply.

- Price is for groups, plus Gardens admissions per person.
- \$5 package discount for Gardens members.
- Limited spots available each day.
- Hands/arms clean, free of repellants, sunscreens.

Scheduling, questions: 361-852-2100



GRANTS & DONATIONS

Avangrid Renewables
Andy Bobin
Brenda & Conner Bishop
Ruth Camp
Coastal Bend Community Fnd, Triple L Fund
Eve Coberly
Corpus Christi Arts & Cultural Commission
Corina Johnson
H-E-B
Port of Corpus Christi
Ed Rachal Foundation
Manette Scanio
Texas Parks & Wildlife Dept.
Norma & Fermin Valle

BIG BLOOM—See Article p. 4

BIRDIEST FESTIVAL—See Article p. 1

MEMORIALS

Russell Henderson

Sue & Wiley Farler
Pattie Featherston
Andrew Obrien

Frances Hunt

Stewart Hunt

Timothy Nicholson

The Cooper Family

John Paul Schulze

Eric Greve

Jan Shannon

Joann & Edgar Bradley
Tammy & Dan Casey
Corpus Christi Rose Society
Karen Easton
Rick Holliday
Steven & Kathy Holliday
Cynthia Johnson
Meg Johnson
Jane Lamon
Cindy Tourniert
Kay Walker
Betty Whitt
Michael & Kim Womack

Jane Stone

New Neighbors League of Corpus Christi

Dorothy Ward

Serenity Home Care
Serenity & Grace Hospice

CLUB/SOCIETY MEMBERS

Athenian Club
Audubon Outdoor Club
Driftwood Garden Club
Island Gardeners
Native Plant Society, South Texas Chapter
Nueces Master Gardeners
Plumeria Society of South Texas
Port Aransas Garden Club
Texas Master Naturalists, South Texas Chapter

PHOTOGRAPHER MEMBERS

David Alcala, Jr. Photography
Joshua Auzenne Photography
Katy Garcia Photography
Crystal Lail Photography

CORPORATE MEMBERS

\$2000: CITGO
\$1000: VALERO
\$ 500: **Branded by Web Design**
Gill Garden Ctr. & Landscape Co.
MDR Advertising
\$ 250: **Aquaria Services Inc.**

NEW PREMIUM LEVEL MEMBERS

SUSTAINING \$125 /YR

Thomas, Dawn, Maxine Cahill
Daniel S. Crain
Sharon Heilman
Karen Sutton & Donna Johnson
Juliane & Alex Johnston
Daniel Louis
Brooke & Robin Tausch
Rebecca Payton & Andrew Villanueva

NEWLY SPONSORED ANIMALS

Jason, Camille & Adlyn Ahern

PEACHES, Citron Cockatoo

Angelina Bulga

BONNIE, Leopard Gecko

LEVI, Blue Quaker Parrot

Adam & Beatriz Friend

GOLDIE, Blue Gold Macaw

Gonzales Family

ROSIE, Rosy Boa

Norm Hedrich

CRUSH, Red Eared Slider

Corin Rerecich,

Dustin & Dylan Lawley

SPYRO, Bearded Dragon

Marla Owens

BUDDY, African Grey

**FRED & ETHEL, Double-Yellow
Headed Amazons**

SARGE, Military Macaw

JELLY BEAN, Severe Macaw

OLIVER, Quaker Parrot

Ann Snuggs

LOLA, Military Macaw

UBOO, Sun Conure

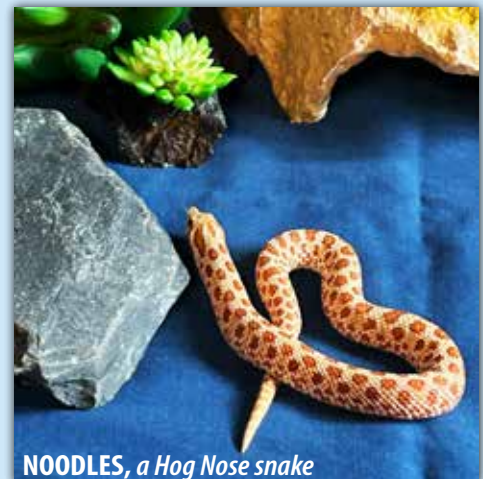
Zakai M. Wisner

PABLO, Pueblan Milk Snake

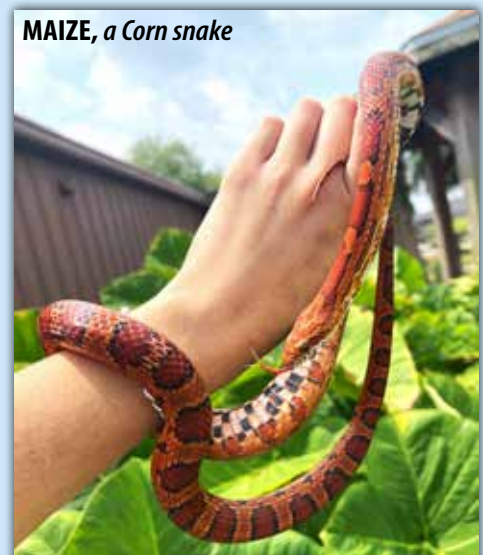
IN-KIND DONATIONS

Emiliee Clark
Clarissa Trainer
Family of Bobbie Lou McElaney
Aletia Stewart, *Branded by Web Design*
Corpus Christi Caller-Times
KIII TV 3
KRIS Communications TV 6, 10
Coastal Living
KEDT Public Television
KCTA AM
KLUX FM
The Bend Magazine
Nueces Master Gardeners
Texas Master Naturalists
Plumeria Society of South Texas
Orchid Volunteers
Safeguard Security
SafeGuard Mini Storage
David Drown
Jorge Garcia
Richard Schmidt
Adel Casiano
Candy Tidmore

ANIMAL CARE ACQUIRES TWO NEW REPTILES; meet in Reptile Room!



NOODLES, a Hog Nose snake



MAIZE, a Corn snake

**RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED**

**FATHER'S DAY
FREE WEEKEND**
Saturday, Sunday, June 15/16
(See page 5 for Password)



**KIDS SUMMER
NATURE CAMPS CONTINUE**
(See page 10 for Details)



**MOONLIGHT LUAU
IN THE GARDENS**
Friday, October 4, 6-9:30 pm
(See page 6)



OPEN DAILY, 9am - 6pm (except Thanksgiving Day, December 24, 25) ■ 8545 S. Staples St. ■ Corpus Christi, Texas 78413 ■ 361-852-2100 ■ Fax 361-852-7875
WWW.STXBOT.ORG ■ Facebook.com/stxbot ■ SouthTexasBotanicalGardens ■ LinkedIn

Family commissions life-sized bronze "Sandhill Cranes" sculpture in memory of parents, Jane and Dr. Dewitt Harvey.



Dr. DeWitt and Jane Harvey, founding members of now South Texas Botanical Gardens, also were leaders in Corpus Christi's medical, arts, gardening and wildlife conservation communities.

Children David DeWitt Harvey, Anne Lenore Harvey O'Shell and Thomas Bradner Harvey recently commissioned friend H.W. "Buddy" Tatum, Jr., former local artist now residing in New Braunfels, to create a life-sized bronze sculpture titled "Sandhill Cranes," installed near Gator Lake in May, and dedicated at a private memorial service June 2.

Thomas DeWitt Harvey (1930-2022) graduated from Texas Tech University and UT Medical Branch, Galveston, marrying Jane in 1955, joining the Navy in 1957 serving in Corona, CA, in 1961 becoming a long-time Family Practice physician at Thomas Spann Clinic.

Jane Bradner Harvey (1932-2018) attended UT-Austin, earning her Bachelors in Education at Mills College, Oakland, CA, teaching in Alameda. She got a Master's in Interdisciplinary Studies at now Texas A&M-Corpus Christi, worked in real estate, enjoying tennis, hiking, running and skiing at their Taos, NM vacation home.

The Botanical Gardens is fortunate to cherish Jane and DeWitt as part of its past, and be gifted this striking sculpture for its future!