

# Leila Arboretum

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## & Children's Garden <sup>[1]</sup>

Planting a Brighter Future!

*“The mission of LAS is to preserve and enhance Leila Arboretum for all to appreciate horticulture and the arts in a natural environment.”*

The Leila Arboretum dates back to 1922 when Leila Post Montgomery, widow of cereal magnate C.W. Post, donated 72 acres of land to the city of Battle Creek that had formerly been the site of the Battle Creek Country Club. She envisioned a center for culture amid the beauty of nature.



In 1924, landscape architect T. Clifton Shepherd created an impressive design, but harsh realities of the Depression overshadowed the masterpiece in progress. Arboretum plans languished for more than fifty years.

In the autumn of 1981, determined to reclaim the arboretum's former beauty from overgrown brush, a group of citizens with a vision for what could be formed Leila Arboretum Society (LAS).



■ [Arboretum Grounds Map](#) 

■ [Evergreens Trail Guide](#) 

Don't be misled by the word society in our name. LAS began as a hard-working cadre of people willing to get their hands and knees dirty--and remains so today. With membership and volunteers numbering in the hundreds, the arboretum has been reborn and the love for natural spaces and gardening places has translated into friendships, a downtown that has drawn national attention, neighborhood landscaping projects, city gateway plantings, classes that lead to master gardener certification and sheer enjoyment! Next door to the arboretum, the nonprofit built a one-acre Children's Garden that has enticed representatives from cities throughout the country, as well as a few from Australia, to see how it was done!

Leila Arboretum Society depends on the people who love it. We need support from you. There are many ways to show your support. Walk in Leila Arboretum and stay fit, maybe picking up some trash along the way if you see it.

## **A Few Facts and Figures**

♥ LAS is a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation. Its income comes from membership, grants, gifts, the sale of commemorative's, contracts and fee-based services.

♥ Fee-based services include grounds and facility rentals, professional consultation and

educational programs.

✔ The arboretum is owned and partially maintained by the City of Battle Creek as part of its parks system. Under contract, LAS manages its more than 3,000 trees, shrubs, perennials, and annuals, many of which are living memorials or tributes to special people.

✔ The Children's Garden, a fenced, one-acre site, offers educational field trips and family learning experiences from May through October.

✔ LAS spearheaded BC Green projects throughout the city to inspire neighborhood spirit and improve quality of life. More than 50 such projects took root and continue under the leadership of residents.

✔ Growing in the Garden classes are offered for the sheer enjoyment of gardening, the creative process and home landscape management.

✔ LAS professional horticulturists, under contract, design and maintain seasonal business district displays, one of the reasons Battle Creek has been praised as one of the most attractive downtowns in the country.

1. <http://www.lasgarden.org/children.html>