



LAURITZEN
GARDENS

Lauritzen Gardens Contact

Mia Jenkins

m.jenkins@omahabotanicalgardens.org

Director of Marketing

402.346.4002, ext. 205

316.655.3911 cell

PacWest Agency for Washed Ashore

Natasha Laidlaw, Brand Manager

natasha@pacwest-agency.com

Elisa Johnson, Public Relations

elisa@pacwest-agency.com

100 Bancroft Street • Omaha, NE 68108

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- LAURITZEN GARDENS AND WASHED ASHORE ANNOUNCE WINNER OF “NAME THE SEAHORSE” CONTEST -

(OMAHA, NE): Today, Lauritzen Gardens and Washed Ashore announced that “Dandelion the Seahorse” will now join more than 80 other sculptures in the Washed Ashore exhibit collection. Lauritzen Gardens is the first exhibit location for the tiger tail seahorse sculpture (*Hippocampus comes*) and the garden was able to engage the public in a contest to select the sculpture’s permanent name.

“Washed Ashore is thrilled to have our newest sculpture, Dandelion the Seahorse, debut at Lauritzen Gardens and receive its name from the Omaha community”, said Brad Parks, Conservation and Education Director for Washed Ashore. “As Dandelion continues to travel the country inspiring ocean conservation, we will forever remember its start on the banks of the Missouri River and how all of our waterways are connected”, said Parks.

The garden invited the public to submit creative ideas for sculpture names in March. After receiving more than 1,200 name ideas from the community, the team at Washed Ashore narrowed the list down to five finalists for the public to vote on (Basura, Bubbles, Dandelion, Scrappy, and Sea Biscuit). Nearly 2,000 votes were cast and Dandelion emerged as the winning name.

The name “Dandelion” was first submitted by 2nd grader Ayile Chavez-Najera, a student at Castelar Elementary School, one of the garden’s two adopt-a-school sites. Names were submitted by Ayile and their classmates as part of an afterschool program about plastic pollution led by the education team at Lauritzen Gardens. The winning name will be on a new interpretive sign that will travel with the sculpture across the country from city to city, and Chavez-Najera will also receive a prize package from Lauritzen Gardens.

“Environmental education transcends classroom walls and the sculptures of Washed Ashore have been a great way to engage students in real world conversations,” said Christine Prescott, Director of Education for Lauritzen Gardens. “I’m excited that out of all of the names submitted for the seahorse, a student was selected as the winner, and I hope this experience encourages the class to continue to learn about how their generation can make an impact on the environment,” added Prescott.

Dandelion the Seahorse will be on display at Lauritzen Gardens through May 14 in the exhibit Washed Ashore: Art to Save the Sea. The exhibit is included with paid garden admission (\$15 + tax, \$9 + tax for ages 3-12) and is free for garden members and children ages 2 and under. In the exhibit, giant sculptures of sea life, made from marine debris graphically illustrate the tragedy of plastic pollution in our waterways, inspire conversations about conservation, and generate positive changes and behaviors towards the environment.

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[Lauritzen Gardens](#) is an urban oasis of beauty and tranquility. This 100-acre botanical garden, comprised of more than 20 outdoor garden areas, as well as the indoor gardens of the Marjorie K. Daugherty Conservatory, creates a living museum of unique four-season plant displays, maintained to the highest standards consistent with environmental stewardship. The garden aims to be a vibrant place for the community to learn about and connect to the natural world and the organization strives to impact every visitor through the natural beauty of its horticultural displays, enriching educational programs, entertaining special events, or via its research to conserve the endangered plants of the Great Plains.

Lauritzen Gardens is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. The ConAgra Café serves lunch from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and J's Coffee is open from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily. Lauritzen Gardens is conveniently located in the beautiful riverfront hills at First and Bancroft Streets and is close to Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium and the Old Market. For more information, please visit www.lauritzengardens.org or call (402) 346-4002.

Washed Ashore's mission is to build and exhibit aesthetically powerful art to educate a global audience about plastic pollution in the ocean and waterways and to spark positive changes in consumer habits. The organization's artwork is centered on plastic pollution education and its impact on sea life. Their educational programs mix art and science and aim to encourage recycling and promote awareness about environmental issues. Their elaborate sculptures are made up of debris found washed up on the beaches of Oregon and represent marine life affected by plastic pollution. For more information, visit www.washedashore.org.