

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Do next to nothing; help the Gardens

*Betty Ford Alpine Gardens
invites donors NOT to attend
a 'True Spirit' fundraiser*

VAIL, Colo. (June 29, 2010) — There's much ado about nothing this Fourth of July weekend at America's highest botanical garden.

Betty Ford Alpine Gardens, in Vail's Ford Park, is inviting everyone — from the former first lady herself to members, volunteers, visitors and the public at large — to celebrate the “true spirit of independence” by not attending its annual fundraiser ... but by buying “tickets,” nonetheless.

“Jacket and tie NOT required; feel great about NOT attending,” states the official invitation, sent to members and friends of the Gardens last week. “No need to attend the ceremony or listen to speeches. Instead, celebrate the Fourth of July holiday with your family and friends at home, or at a fireworks barbeque.”

Mrs. Ford, namesake for the nonprofit organization and its annual Spirit of Betty Ford Award event, a fancy, formal affair typically held in August, already bought her tickets, as have many loyal members and friends of the Gardens. All proceeds from the sales of tickets to this year's “nonevent” go directly to the nonprofit, which is aiming to raise \$100,000. All donations, matched dollar for dollar by an anonymous Gardens patron, are fully tax deductible.

“Just think of the savings,” continues the invitation before listing expenses typically incurred by many attendees of the annual fundraiser in the past — babysitter, tickets, cash bar, coiffure, wardrobe, dry cleaning, etc. — totaling up to \$900. “Independence Day evening spent with our loved ones? Priceless.”

“This is a wonderful opportunity to help the Gardens, capitalize on a very generous, dollar-for-dollar match — even get a tax deduction — without having to do anything, really, except send a donation,” says Deane Hall, president the Gardens' Board of Trustees. “We're hoping this creative approach will allow us to raise funds without incurring the substantial expenses and time involved with holding the annual fundraiser itself, typically a jacket-and-tie affair with all the bells and whistles.”

Betty Ford Alpine Gardens is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization for which operations and programs are funded through the generosity of individual donors. Conserving plants of the American West, its mission is to inspire passion for plants in high-altitude communities through beautification, conservation, education and research programs.

Inspired by an extraordinary passion for high-altitude flowers and plants, the Gardens, at 8,250 feet above sea level in Vail's Ford Park, is the highest botanical garden in the United States, providing free access to an estimated 100,000 visitors annually.

For more information, call 970-476-0103, ext. 3, or visit www.bettyfordalpinegardens.org.

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