

Commemorative Benches at the U.S. National Arboretum

On behalf of the U.S. National Arboretum, Friends of the National Arboretum (FONA) offers memorial benches as a means to remember family, friends and loved ones, or commemorate a special occasion such as a birth, wedding, or retirement. Benches provide a beautiful spot for respite and relaxation for visitors, and your donation directly supports the National Arboretum's public gardens and scientific work.

When you dedicate a bench, you support mission-critical work at FONA and the Arboretum!



The U.S. National Arboretum consists of a research institution and public garden which is a green oasis of 451 acres adjacent to the Anacostia River in Washington, DC. Annually, over 700,000 visitors enjoy connecting with nature, plants, and science. As part of the USDA's Agricultural Research Institute, its science has resulted in wide-ranging developmental and applied research on trees, shrubs, turf, and floral plants, along with development of new technologies for the floral and nursery industries.

Friends of the National Arboretum was founded in 1982 as an independent non-profit partner to support the mission of the Arboretum. Since its beginning, FONA has raised funds for projects at the Arboretum like the Capitol Columns, Flowering Tree Walk, and Springhouse Run stream restoration. FONA also supports the Arboretum's research, plant explorations, and collections maintenance.

As we look towards the Arboretum's 100th anniversary in 2027, FONA is investing in three major projects: enhancing Washington Youth Garden to be a premier destination for garden-based education and nature play; building a treetop canopy trail that will enable children and families to explore the National Arboretum's trees from new heights; and restoring and maintaining the historic Capitol Columns for future generations.

Contact Us About Purchasing a Bench

Friends of the National Arboretum
3501 New York Ave. NE (mailing address)
2400 R Street NE (visitor entrance)
Washington, DC 20002
Office: 202.544.8733
info@fona.org

Commemorative Bench FAQs

About the benches: FONA provides beautiful, sturdy, and comfortable teak benches. They have a long life span and mellow from yellow to warm brown as they age.

How much does a bench cost? FONA offers two options:

- \$6,000 per 15 year term for a 6 ft bench placed in all locations except the National Herb Garden
- \$10,000 per 15 year term for an 8 ft bench located only in the National Herb Garden

How can I make my payment? Payment may be made by credit card, cash, check, or stock transfer. If you choose to pay with credit card, the transaction fee will be included in your total cost.

Do I own the bench? No, your “purchase” is actually a tax deductible donation.

Is this tax deductible? Yes, the donation of a commemorative bench is tax deductible to the extent of the law. Once payment is received, we will provide you with a tax acknowledgement for your records.

What is the term of the bench? The term of a commemorative bench is 15 years. After 15 years, we will contact you or another designated contact on file to discuss renewing or ending the term. You can purchase multiple terms up front if you would like the term of your bench to extend for 30 years.

Example: \$10,000 for a 6 ft bench for 30 years.

Is there a plaque on the bench and what can I put on it? Yes, we will have a plaque made and mounted on the bench for you. The plaque is 2.25 inches by 4.50 inches and follows specific text guidelines set by the Arboretum. We are unable to make exceptions. [Contact FONA](#) for the plaque worksheet.

Who maintains the bench? The Arboretum will be responsible for the care and maintenance of the bench. It will be replaced only if the bench is broken or deemed unsafe. Future changes to the Arboretum grounds may necessitate moving a bench. While every effort will be made to keep it in place, no guarantee can be made that it will not be moved.

How long does the process take? The bench and plaque will only be ordered once payment is received and we have your final inscription for the plaque. Please allow six weeks for the bench and plaque to be received and put in place. We will alert you when it is ready.

May I select where the bench is placed? There are pre-approved locations for benches at the Arboretum. FONA will review these with you so that you may select one of the available locations. Location requests are not guaranteed and must be approved by the Arboretum.

