

EYE ON THE PRIZE

Re-Strategizing and Positioning Membership in Family-Based Organizations

Susan Webb Rawls



Alison Thornton



Diane Ward



Similar Questions & Concerns

Why have members?



Impact if membership increases or decreases?



Membership seems small and expensive (or too big)

How do other organizations view membership?



Similar Questions & Concerns

Effective methods to acquire members?

Impact of new acquisition on retention?

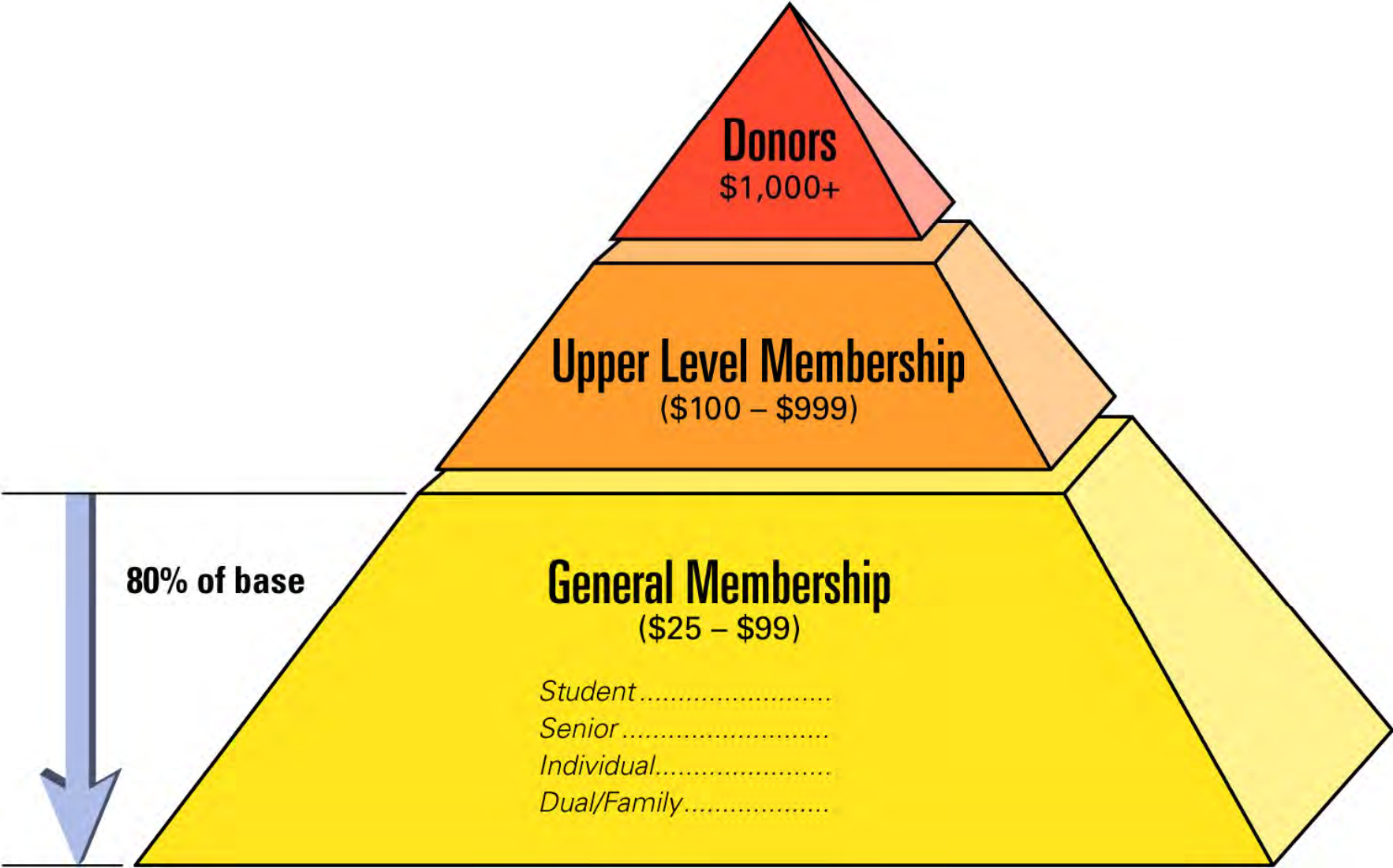
Where to invest our limited resources?

Can we figure this out on our own?

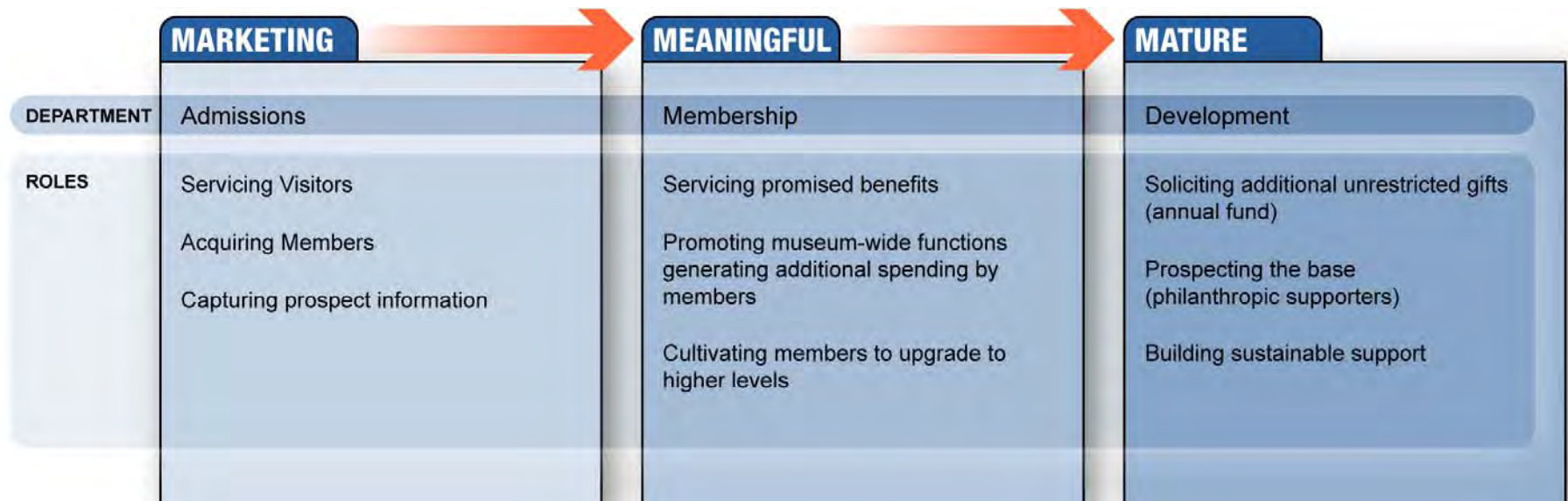
Strategic Membership Considerations

- Bodies or Bucks?
- Impact of Membership to your organization?
- Performance of the current program?
- Consider “same” or “different” program?
- Is there sufficient infrastructure for growth?

Membership 101



Positioning of Membership



Family-Based Membership

ENGAGED base of community constituents

- Interested in mission: ***Programs and Activities***
- Interested in supporting: ***Events & Retail Store***
- Predictable source of annual revenue ...
but often ***similar ratio of new vs. renewal income***
- Prospect base to ***cultivate*** for additional gifts
 - Annual Fund
 - Membership Upgrades
 - Planned Giving



**Morris Arboretum of the
University of Pennsylvania**

Official arboretum of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

124,000 visitors annually

6,000 member households

1 full-time Director (50%)

2 full-time Support Staff

- processing, fulfillment

- event management



Prior Levels

(2000 and earlier)

GENERAL (under \$100)

Student - \$25

Regular - \$50

Franklinia - \$75

PREMIER (\$100 and up)

Chestnut - \$150

Holly - \$250

Oak - \$500

Laurel - \$1,000

Morris Arboretum Membership Benefits

Regular Membership: \$50 (\$25 tax-deductible)

- ◆ Free admission for your household
- ◆ Four free guest passes
- ◆ Quarterly newsletter
- ◆ 10% discount on day/evening courses
- ◆ 10% discount at Spring Plant Sale, free bonus plant, and invitation to Members' Preview
- ◆ 10% discount in Gift Shop
- ◆ Invitations to Members' Lectures and events
- ◆ Free admission to over 100 gardens nationwide
- ◆ Orientation tour and reception

Franklinia Membership: \$75 (\$40 tax-deductible)

- ◆ All of the benefits of Regular membership, plus:
- ◆ Two additional guest passes (total of 6)
- ◆ Package of select bulbs every fall

Chestnut Membership: \$150 (\$110 tax-deductible)

- ◆ All of the benefits of Franklinia membership, plus:
- ◆ Two additional guest passes (total of 8)
- ◆ Invitation to June Garden Party
- ◆ Annual fall Perennial Exchange

Holly Membership: \$250 (\$210 tax-deductible)

- ◆ All of the benefits of Chestnut membership, plus:
- ◆ Botanical note-cards
- ◆ Additional bonus plant at Spring Plant Sale

Oak Membership: \$500 (\$450 tax-deductible)

- ◆ All of the benefits of Holly membership, plus:
- ◆ Early preview and box lunch with Director at Spring Plant Sale
- ◆ Year-end holiday gift

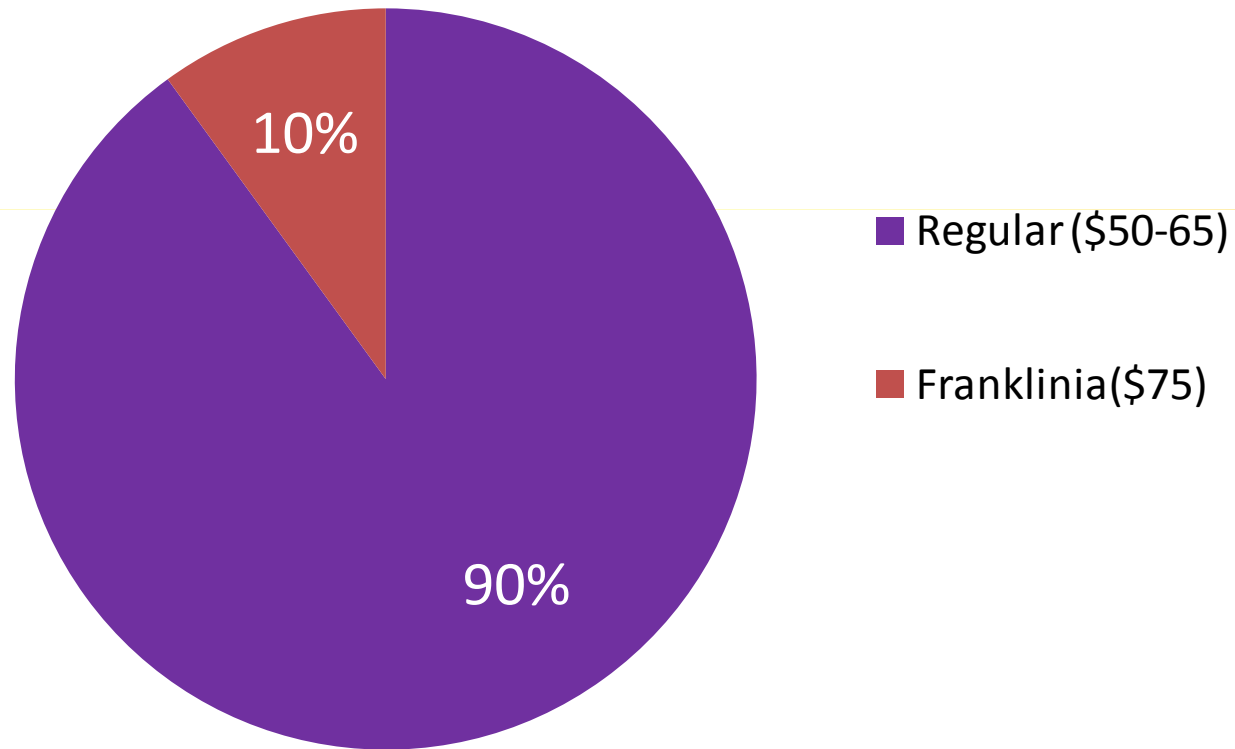
Laurel Membership: \$1,000 (\$900 tax-deductible)

- ◆ All of the benefits of Oak membership, plus:
- ◆ Private horticultural consultation
- ◆ Dinner with the Director
- ◆ 10% discount on Widener Center rentals

Student (full-time, with I.D.) Membership: \$25

- ◆ Membership card only

General Membership Distribution



Rationale: Opportunity in 2000

- Dramatically low distribution:
10% Franklinia (\$75) vs. 90% General (\$50)
- Opening of Garden Railway – change in audience
- Opportunity to introduce mid-level membership and diversify member benefits
- Greater revenue opportunity if mid level membership was successful... even if base the number of households remained the same.

Transition #1

1) Retire GENERAL Category

- Add lifestyles: ***Individual, Dual and Household***
(better match to new audience)

2) Create Mid Level Focus: **Beech Membership**

- Not positioned on lifestyle
- Incrementally low difference to upgrade

Household \$65

Beech Membership \$85 = \$20

There's Always Something Happening in the Garden

FOUR SEASONS MEMBERSHIPS

See Us Often!

- \$20 Gift Credit from White Flower Farm
- Members-only Day at the Plant Sale
- Bonus Plant & 10% Discount at the Plant Sale
- 10% Discount in the Gift Shop & on Classes
- Reciprocal Gardens Program
- Free Admission to Chanticleer, Wayne, PA
- Notices of Special Events
- Quarterly subscription to *Seasons*
- Discounts with local Retailers

HOUSEHOLD \$65

All benefits of the Four Seasons membership plus....

- Free general admission for up to 2 adults and children in the household under 18.
- 2 Guest Passes

INDIVIDUAL \$50

All benefits of the Four Seasons membership plus....

- Free general admission for 1 adult
- 1 Guest Pass

PREMIUM MEMBERSHIPS... See Us First!

All the benefits of the Four Seasons Membership plus...

BEECH \$85

All Household Benefits plus...

- Two additional Guest Passes (total of 4)
- One-year Subscription to *The Gardener*
- First Registration for Classes & Trips
- Invitation to Preview Events

CHESTNUT \$150

All of the above, plus...

- Invitation to Moonlight and Roses Thursday Preview Evening at the Plant Sale
- (Note: Evening preview begins May 2003)

HOLLY \$250

All of the above, plus...

- Autumn Garden Party at a Private Home
- 2nd Bonus Plant at Plant Sale
- Courtesy Guest Card - Bring a friend every time

OAK \$500

All of the Above, plus...

- Invitation to Plant Sale Preview Luncheon

LAUREL \$1000

All of the Above, plus...

- 2 Tickets to Auction of Garden Treasures
- 50% discount on one-time rental of Arboretum facilities
- (Mon. - Thurs., subject to availability)

KATSURA Collectors Circle \$2500

All of the Above plus...

- Evening with renowned collector
- Day trip to private collector's garden
- Breakfast with Arboretum experts
- Plants from our wild-collected sources
- Free one-time rental of Arboretum facilities
- (Mon. - Thurs. only, subject to availability)

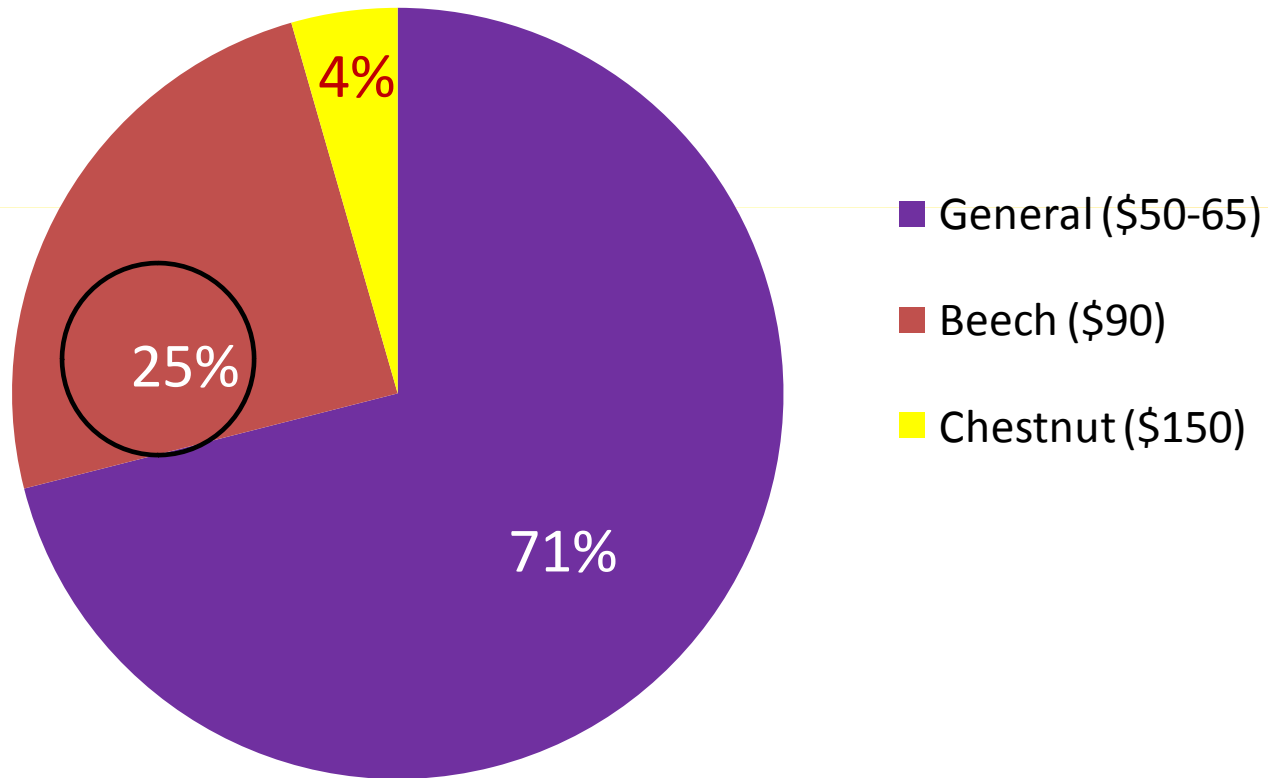


Eye on the Prize – Jackpot!

Beech Membership – *What happened?*

- Enhanced benefits package at mid point level
- Positioned Beech as a “**Premier**” membership for families
- Revenue increased 15% by 2003 ...with incrementally small growth to the base

FY05 Distribution



2010 ...Another Transition

RATIONALE:

- Grand Opening - Tree Adventure in July 2009
- Higher attendance
- Higher admission fees (increased in January 2009 and 2010)
- New membership cart with sales-oriented staff
- Dramatic increase in new memberships



2010 Membership Levels

GENERAL LEVELS

Individual

- \$60 One-Year
- **\$115 Two-Year** ←

Dual

- \$75 One-Year
- **\$140 Two-Year**

Far-Away Friends ←

- \$45 One-Year
- **\$85 Two-Year**

Family

- \$90 One-Year
- **\$170 Two-Year**

PREMIER LEVELS

Beech

- \$115 One-Year
- **\$220 Two-Year**

Chestnut - \$165

Holly - \$250

Oak - \$500

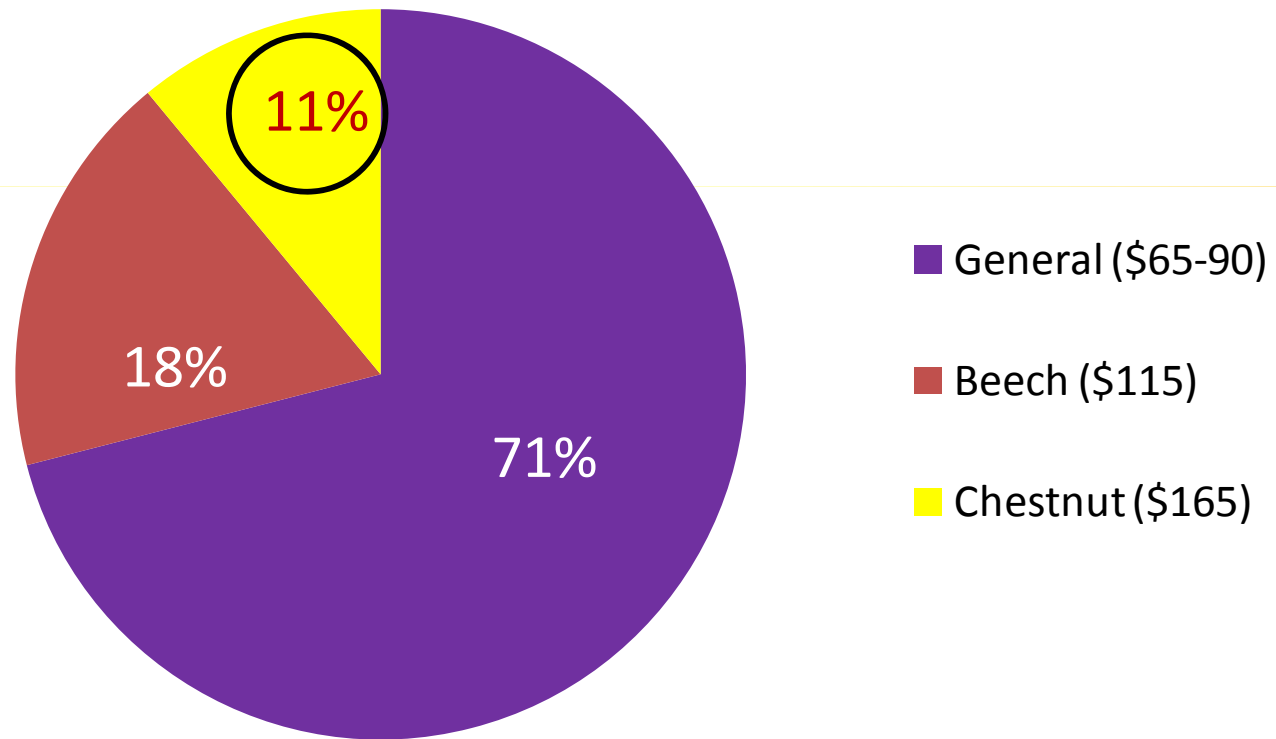
Laurel - \$1,000

Katsura - \$2,500

Chestnut Membership the NEW prize

1. Position as “**Family Deluxe**” membership
2. Added guest benefits – Bring 2 guests *anytime*
 - Our response to multiple generations/
households visiting the Arboretum together
 - Confirmed by Focus Group Research

FY11 Distribution



2011 Challenges – New Prizes



Stabilize REVENUE

- *Maximize income per transaction*

Focus on Renewals

- *Stabilize the base with fewer new memberships*

Challenge 1: Stabilize Revenue

- Avoid implosion of revenue in year two
- Key Considerations (build our confidence)
 - 1) Onsite Sales & Conversion Rates
 - 2) Membership Value to Paid Admission Cost

Conversion Rate History

- Conversion rates highest in FY99 – **Garden Railway**

- 2.3% following years

- Spike in rates returned in FY10 – **Out on a Limb Tree**

FY99	FY00	FY05	FY09	FY10
3.3%	2.3%	2.5%	2.3%	3.1%

- Exceeding a 10 year proven trend

Value Proposition: Membership to Paid Admission Cost

Paid Admission Cost (non member)	(1) Visit	(2) Visits	(3) Visits
2 Adults (\$28) and 2 Youth (\$14)	\$42	\$84	\$126

PRIOR Family Membership
(2 adults and 2 children)

\$75

Difference to Admission Cost

(1) Visit	(2) Visits	(3) Visits
(\$33)	\$9	\$51
Member loss	Member saves	Member saves

REVISED Family Membership

\$90

Difference to Admission Cost

(\$48)	(\$6)	\$32
--------	-------	------

Rational:

Member must attend 3 times for savings

Challenge 2: Renewal Rates

Major Concerns

- 1st Year Member renewal rates (traditionally low)
- Price increase may deter interest

Renewal Strategy 1: Pricing

Implement price increase but offer discounted rate to renewing members

Category	Existing Price	New Price	Discounted Price
Individual	\$55	\$60	\$55
Dual	\$65	\$75	\$65
Family	\$75	\$90	\$80
Far-Away Friends	\$40	\$45	\$40
Beech	\$95	\$115	\$105
Chestnut	\$150	\$165	\$155
Holly	\$250	No change	No discount
Oak	\$500	No change	No discount
Laurel	\$1,000	No change	No discount
Katsura	\$2,500	No change	No discount

Renewal Strategy 2: Positioning

RE-SELL excitement of year one!

- Position renewals similar to new acquisition mailings by...
- Upgrading prior renewal packaging/materials
- Offering member “extras” in renewal package ...
plus other savings and values to enjoy.

MORRIS ARBORETUM MEMBER COUPON

FREE *Always Growing:
The Story of the
Morris Arboretum*

Receive a copy of this brand new publication when you join at any level.

Bring this coupon to the Shop at Morris Arboretum in the Visitor Center with your valid membership card to redeem this offer.

Offer valid through August 31, 2010 or while supplies last.

MORRIS ARBORETUM MEMBER COUPON

FREE *American
Horticultural Society
Reciprocal Admissions
Program Directory*

Receive a copy of the AHS directory listing over 200 gardens offering Morris Arboretum members free or discounted admission when you join at any level.

Bring this coupon to the Shop at Morris Arboretum in the Visitor Center with your valid membership card to redeem this offer.

Offer valid through August 31, 2010 or while supplies last.

MORRIS ARBORETUM MEMBER COUPON

**Double Your
Member Discount!**

Receive an additional 10% off your purchase in the Shop

Bring this coupon to the Shop at Morris Arboretum in the Visitor Center with your valid membership card to redeem this offer.

Offer valid through August 31, 2010.

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP

INDIVIDUAL

\$60 \$55 1 year, (\$37 tax-deductible)
2 free admission passes
\$115 \$105 2 years, (\$49 tax-deductible)
4 free admission passes
• Admits one named member.

DUAL

\$75 \$65 1 year, (\$37 tax-deductible)
2 free admission passes
\$135 \$125 2 years, (\$69 tax-deductible)
4 free passes
• Admits two named membership cardholders.

FAMILY

\$90 \$80 1 year, (\$52 tax-deductible)
2 free admission passes
\$170 \$160 2 years, (\$104 tax-deductible)
4 free admission passes
• Admits up to two named membership cardholders and their children (OR up to 4 grandchildren) ages 18 and under.

FAR-AWAY FRIENDS

\$45 \$40 1 year, (\$12 tax-deductible)
2 free admission passes
\$85 \$75 2 years, (\$19 tax-deductible)
4 free admission passes
• This membership is exclusively designated for people living beyond a 200-mile radius from the Arboretum.
• Admits two named membership cardholders.



Membership *benefits*



JOIN TODAY at a Discount and Receive a Free Year-Long Subscription to Better Homes & Gardens®!

HURRY, OFFER EXPIRES JUNE 15!

All Membership Levels Include:

- Free unlimited admission for an entire year
- Complimentary one-time use guest passes
- Private Guided Walking Tour voucher for new members
- Discounts in the Shop, at the Café, and on educational classes and excursions
- Discounts at local garden centers and outside retailers
- Free admission to special annual events
- Members-Only Plant Sale Day, plus 1 free plant
- Participate in Bring a Friend for Free Night
- Reciprocal admission privileges to over 200 gardens and arboreta through the American Horticultural Society
- Seasons newsletter
- E-Newsletter, keeps you up-to-date on all our events
- Morris Arboretum automobile decal

PREMIER MEMBERSHIP



Premier Memberships admit up to two named membership cardholders and their children (OR up to 4 grandchildren) ages 18 and under.

BEECH *a family favorite*

\$115 \$105 1 year, (\$49 tax-deductible)
4 free admission passes
\$220 \$210 2 years, (\$98 tax-deductible)
8 free admission passes

All general membership benefits, plus:
• Enjoy 2010 Summer Concerts for FREE.

- Celebrate the season with an exclusive evening visit to the Holiday Garden Railway.
- Plant Sale Family Night – shop and enjoy family fun!
- Beesches, Butterflies and Bugs Summer Evening – special premier member family evening in the garden.

CHESTNUT *the deluxe family membership*

\$165 \$155 (\$71 tax-deductible)
6 free admission passes

- All the benefits of Beech, plus:
- BRING 2 GUESTS ANYTIME – Show your membership card and get free admission for two guests every time you visit the Arboretum.
 - Attend the Plant Sale Preview.
 - Recognition in the Annual Report.

HOLLY

\$250 (\$151 tax-deductible)
6 free admission passes

- All the benefits of Chestnut, plus:
- Beautiful full color calendar, which includes gardening tips and events.
 - Invitations to exclusive Arboretum events for Premier Members.
 - Additional bonus plant at the Plant Sale (2 total).

OAK

\$500 (\$345 tax-deductible)
10 free admission passes

- All the benefits of Holly, plus:
- Shop first at the Plant Sale.
 - Hall Pass – Coupon valued up to \$25 for one educational course held at the Arboretum.
 - Behind-the-Scenes Tour with an Arboretum expert.

LAUREL

\$1,000 (\$845 tax-deductible)
10 free admission passes

- All the benefits of Oak, plus:
- BRING 4 ADDITIONAL GUESTS (4 total) – Show your membership card and get free admission for four guests every time you visit the Arboretum.
 - Free Dual Level Gift Membership – introduce friends or donate this membership to your favorite charity.

KAISURA COLLECTOR'S CIRCLE

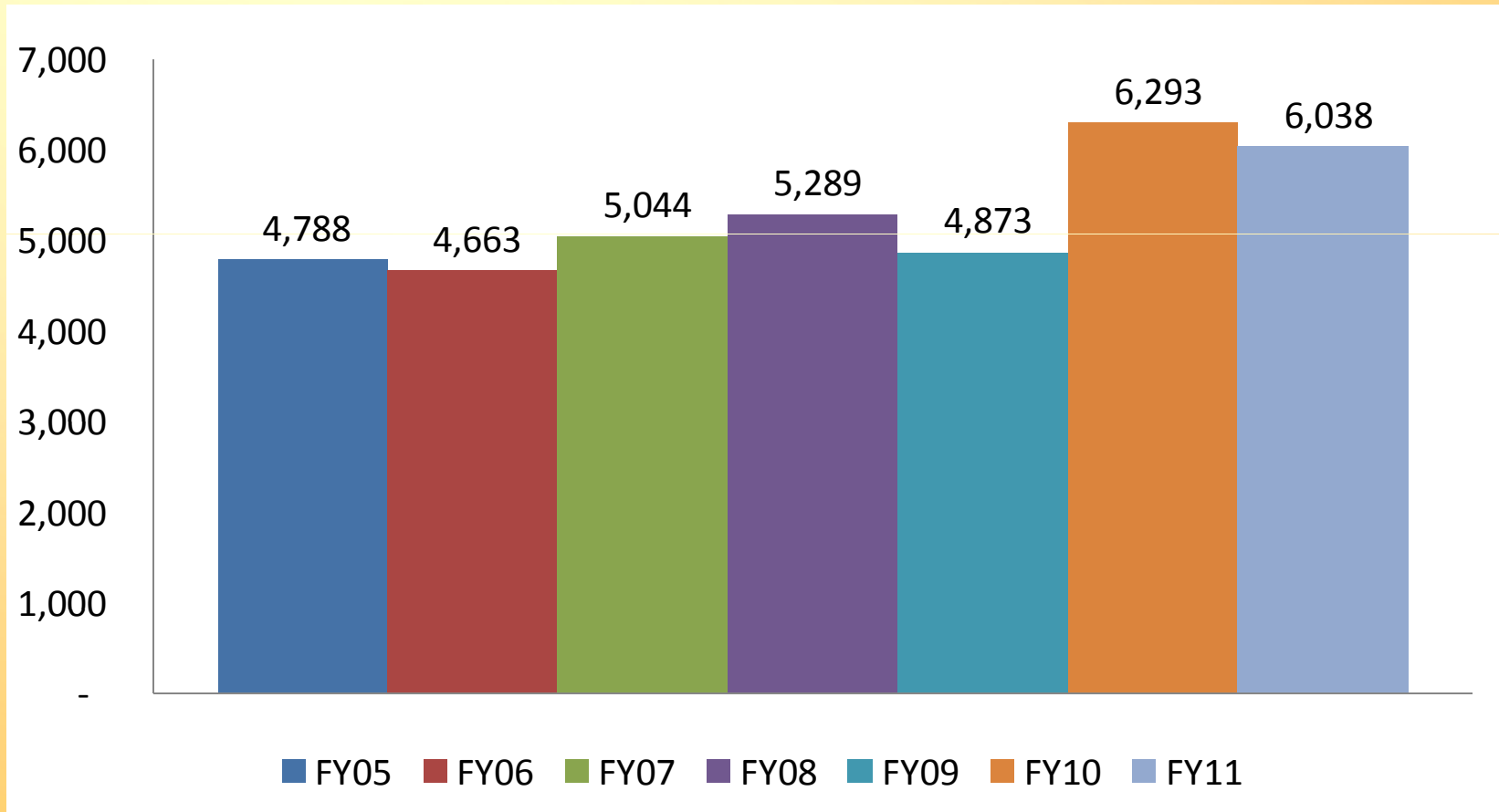
\$2,500 (\$2,345 tax-deductible)
10 free admission passes

- All the benefits of Laurel, plus:
- A plant from our wild collected sources distributed at the Plant Sale.
 - Scheduled golf cart tour for up to five.
 - One free consultation of your garden by an Arboretum horticulture expert.



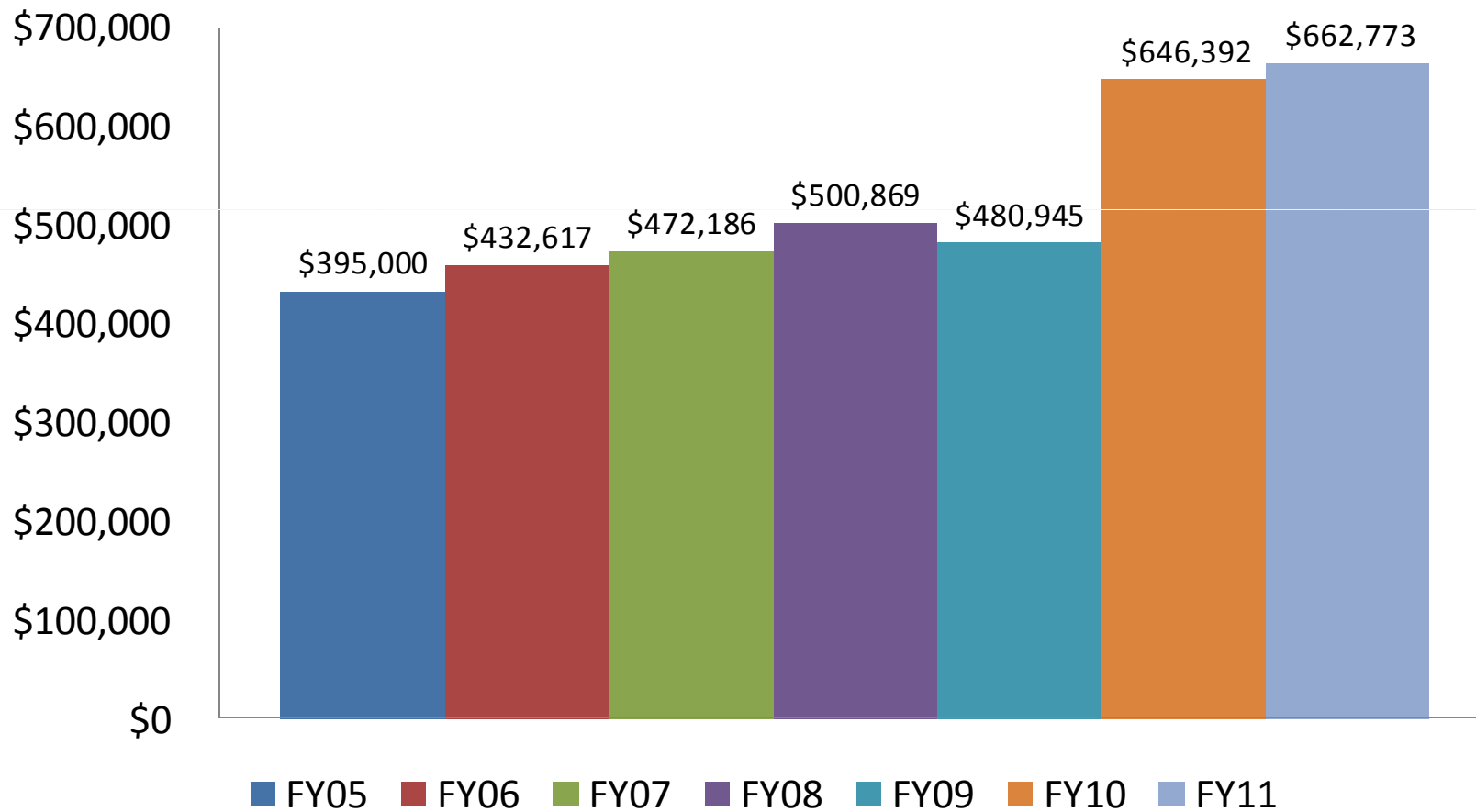
Number of Memberships

FY05 – FY11



Membership Revenue

FY05 – FY11





museum of
science+industry
chicago

Susan Webb Rawls

Director of Membership