



# Perennial Notes

January 2012

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society—an unincorporated nonprofit association

## WHPS COMING EVENTS!

All regular meetings are 6:30 social time, 7:00 p.m. program at Olbrich Gardens Commons, 3330 Atwood Avenue, Madison, unless otherwise noted.

**Sunday, January 15, 2012, Member Potluck Brunch** (Olbrich Commons). Members can bring their contribution and setup as early as 9:00 a.m.; serving will begin at 10:00 a.m. Don't forget to bring your own utensils and plates (and a serving utensil for your food. Juice and lemonade will be provided, (a soda machine is also available near the Commons). There will be a presentation of photos and music of the 2011 Ohio Trip by John Cannon & John Fritsch, and if the milder weather holds it will be a great day to take a winter tour of the Gardens after the Potluck.

**Seed Exchange Continues**—Thanks to all who brought seeds for the Seed Exchange at last month's meeting. Due to the overwhelming response, we will continue the Seed Exchange prior to and following the January Potluck.

**February 10-12, 2012, WHPS Booth at Garden Expo.** This year's Garden Expo will be held on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, February 10-12, 2012. On Saturday, at 9:00 a.m., Frank Greer will give a presentation on *My Favorite Perennials for the Shade Garden*. **You can be a part of the Expo by signing up for a 2 1/2 hour shift at our booth. Sign up sheets will be available at our January Potluck Brunch, or you can email Eleanor Rodini at [erodini@library.wisc.edu](mailto:erodini@library.wisc.edu).** Volunteers will receive a free pass to the Expo.

**Wednesday, February 15, 2012, John Bartram Comes to Madison, with Kirk Brown of Philadelphia.** Kirk Brown IS John Bartram, complete with period costume in this entertaining presentation about America's first prominent horticulturist. **For more info, check out <http://johnbartramlives.me/>.**

**Wednesday, March 21, 2012, What's New in Shrubs, Brent Gustason, Midwest Groundcovers of Illinois.** Midwest Groundcovers is an industry leader in the propagation, growing and wholesaler of quality container nursery stock. Each year, they produce millions of groundcovers in over 100 different varieties; over 500 varieties of perennials, ornamental grasses and native plants; and over 170 varieties of deciduous shrubs, broadleaf evergreens, shrub roses, conifers and vines. **<http://www.midwestgroundcovers.com/>**

**Wednesday, April 18, 2012, Olbrich Gardens.** Guest speaker Richard Hawke, Chicago Botanic Garden, *When Pretty Isn't Enough: Comparative Perennial Trials at the Chicago Botanic Garden*. CBG's Plant Evaluation Program is one of the largest and most diverse in the nation, and also one of the few programs in the United States that formally evaluates perennials. It received the Award for Program Excellence from the American Public Garden Association in 2008. **<http://www.chicagobotanic.org/research/staff/hawke.php>**

**Friday, May 18, 2012,** Volunteers set up for 5/19 Plant Sale.

**Saturday, May 19, 2012, WHPS Plant Sale!** Held at West Madison Agricultural Research Station in conjunction with their *Family Horticulture Day*.

**Saturday, June 2, 2012, WHPS Song Sparrow Buying Spree.** Look for map and info in April Newsletter. **<http://www.songsparrow.com/>**

**June 10-19, 2012 WHPS Trip to England.** Questions about the trip should be directed to Frank Greer at 608-233-4686.

**Wednesday, August 15, 2012 5:30 p.m. setup; serving at 6:00 p.m., Olbrich Commons. Member Potluck and Summer Walk Through Olbrich Gardens.**

**Wednesday, September 19,** Barry Glick of Sunshine Farms and Gardens will present *Hellebores for Every Gardener*.

**Wednesday, October 17, 2012** Lee Somerville of Sturgeon Bay, WI will discuss her book, *Vintage Wisconsin Gardens*. (Joint meeting with Madison Area Master Gardeners)

**Wednesday, November 14, Plant Introduction Process: Do You Have the Hot New Plant?** with speaker Angie Treadwell-Palmer, Plants Nouveau, Charleston, SC.

**Wednesday, December 12, 2012 Annual Meeting, Member Potpourri, Seed Exchange.**

### 2012 WHPS Bus Trips

**April 27-29—St. Louis area.** Get a jump on the gardening season! Trip to include the Shaw Nature Reserve, Whitmire Wildflower Garden, Missouri Botanic Garden (Herb Days Festival), Gringo Jones Imports, possible nursery tour and plant shopping opportunity and a private garden stop. Itinerary subject to change.

**July 28—Private Milwaukee gardens** with Dennis Buettner

**Aug 10-12—Explore Chicagoland's garden-based treasures without the hassle of dealing with Chicago traffic!** Join us August 10-12 as we explore exclusive private gardens, public gardens, nurseries & garden centers and parks in three areas including Lake Forest, inner city Chicago and Lisle/St. Charles. Sites may include Millennium Park, Lincoln Park, the Art Institute North and South Gardens, Michigan Avenue plantings, The Morton Arboretum, Cantigny Gardens, The Planters' Palette and more! Highlights will include private gardens featured in magazines that would otherwise be inaccessible to the general public. Itinerary subject to change, more details to come!

## SUMMER TOURS OF LOCAL GARDENS

WHPS, along with Madison Area Master Gardeners, has put together two evening tours featuring member's gardens for summer 2012. A **June 20** Tour is in the Stoughton Area, with five open gardens and a **July 18** Tour on Madison's Eastside with three or four gardens open (We are looking for another garden in the area.)

## Special offer from Rotary Gardens

We are excited to offer a selected group of plant and garden-related organizations a special opportunity for 2012.

Your members may join as Friends of Rotary Botanical Gardens at a special discounted rate (\$30 individual; \$45 for Friend Plus One Level). Benefits: free general admission to the gardens, along with many other discounts and special opportunities. To join, download the form at

<http://rotarybotanicalgardens.org/support/friend-member-program>  
***This special offer expires on February 29, 2012—join today!***

## What's New in 2012

- Plant collections, including over 400,000 spring blooming bulbs (900 varieties), 3,000 varieties of perennials and 150,000 annuals representing 800 varieties. There is also a framework of over 1,000 varieties of trees and shrubs.
- The newly famous "Smelly Garden" located in the Nancy Yahr Memorial Children's Garden is an educational and engaging space, featuring over 180 varieties of plants with fragrant foliage and/or fragrant blooms.
- An expanded ornamental edible and compact vegetable display that will also include a "Grains of the World" collection.
- An extensively renovated water feature in the Japanese Garden, featuring a new waterfall, stream and pool system.
- Two new garden areas to feature: the North Point Garden and North Point border planting.
- The 2012 color theme in the Entrance Garden and Terrace Garden will have a strong focus on whites and silver.
- A featured collection of over 100 varieties of moss roses (*Portulaca*) in our demonstration beds.
- The Fern and Moss Garden has one of the largest fern collections in the Midwest: over 250 different types of ferns in this garden, endorsed by the Hardy Fern Foundation.
- Significant collections of annuals as part of the All-American Selections, American Garden Award and Fleuroselect collections; and feature trials for Ball Seed, Pan American Seed and Takii Seed (Japan).

We look forward to seeing you soon! Please contact me if you have any questions. Mark Dwyer, Director of Horticulture, 608-754-1779, [mark.dwyer@rotarygardens.org](mailto:mark.dwyer@rotarygardens.org)

## Dues Notices Sent Out Week of 1/5/12

Anyone who has paid dues through 2011 will be receiving a dues notice in the mail this week. Those who are paid for 2012 and beyond **will not** receive a notice. We hope you'll renew by our **March 1 deadline**. It's still a great bargain!

## The Ed Hasselkus Curator Endowment Fund Reaches \$1 Million!

Thanks to the \$3,000 contribution from the WHPS and the more than 100 generous individual contributions from WHPS members, the UW Foundation reports that we have reached the \$1 million mark on our goal of \$1.2 million. We hope to celebrate the conclusion of the campaign (and my 80th birthday) on July 21 in the Longenecker Horticultural Gardens. An elegant new entrance to the gardens will also be dedicated at this event.

*The Curator Endowment will support a full time person to assure the future of the Longenecker Horticultural Gardens within the UW-Madison Arboretum.*

THANK YOU fellow Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society members!

—Ed Hasselkus, Curator,  
Longenecker Horticultural Gardens

## OSAGEORANGE (*Maclura pomifera*)

At the December meeting, I brought several of the grapefruit-sized fruits of osageorange for the seed exchange. The yellowish green fruits are not edible, but decorative and known to repel cockroaches.

The two 40-year-old Longenecker Horticultural Gardens trees have glossy green foliage, yellowish bark and bear wicked thorns. As it is dioecious, we have both the staminate and the heavily fruiting pistillate tree. The recently planted cultivar 'White Shield' was selected for its freedom from thorns and fruits with potential as a street tree.

Although native to the southern US, it has proven winter hardy in USDA Zone 4. Prior to the invention of barbed wire, this thorny tree was planted as a living hedge over much of the Midwest.

The wood is very heavy and durable. Next time you visit Olbrich Botanical Gardens, seek out the pair of osageorange benches and attempt to lift one!

—Ed Hasselkus

## Member Potpourri & Annual Meeting Wrap-up

The Annual Meeting on December 7 included the introduction of three new members to the board—Lynn Belanger, Linda Brazill and Cindy Hoffland—and the confirmation of officers and continuing directors for 2012.

The Board also announced donations to several entities, using funds raised at the 2011 Plant Sale: \$3,000 to the Longenecker Endowment Fund; \$2,000 to Olbrich Gardens; \$1,000 to Rotary Gardens; \$1,000 to Allen Centennial Gardens; \$500 to West Madison Agricultural Research Station.

Members presented a variety of views of their gardens and gardens they had recently visited. Thanks to Mark Golbach; Gene Dewey; Norma & Mike Briggs; Marlette Larsen; Rita Thomas; Judy Crandall; Frank Greer; Ed Lyon; and Cindy Hoffland and Jane Gahlman, who presented photos taken during the 2011 trip to Green Bay/Sturgeon Bay.

Thanks to Jane Gahlman for once again organizing the Seed Exchange, which was so successful it will be continued January 15 at the Potluck Brunch, so if you have seeds to contribute, bring them with you to the brunch.

Another successful year for WHPS, thanks to the interest and participation of all of our members!

## The Tree Next Door



Not long after we moved into our current house in 1994, we met the couple who owned the house directly behind us. I was particularly excited to meet the man who had built the beautiful three-bin compost system that I could see in their yard. But it wasn't

until my husband Mark and I crossed the boundary of trees and shrubs along the lot line that I could see the real treasure their yard held: a huge tree that was completely unfamiliar to us.

We learned our neighbors names—Jack and Louella Wells—at the same time we learned the name of their tree: Dawn Redwood. “Repeat after me: *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*,” Jack announced. He told us that if you are going to have a tree like the Dawn Redwood in your yard, you need to know the name of it—and how to pronounce it. From that day on, Mark and I joined the ranks of neighborhood stewards of the tree, as well as learning its name. Indeed, it is probably the only botanical name that Mark and I both know and rarely forget.

*Metasequoia glyptostroboides* is native to China and was first described from fossil records in 1941. Live plants were discovered not long after. Seeds were collected in the late-1940's by the Arnold Arboretum and brought back to the U.S. to be dispersed around the world—which may or may not be how the tree wound up in a Madison back yard.

Dawn Redwoods are fast growers, typically reaching 75' to 100'. They are deciduous conifers (like bald cypress) with a very uniform conical shape. For me, part of their appeal comes from this dramatic size and shape. But their foliage is equally appealing. It's feathery and very soft to the touch, bright green in the summer and turning a warm cinnamon in the fall.

The tree is located in the back corner of our neighbor's yard, where four different lots converge, and its branches stretch into all three neighboring yards. The property with the Dawn Redwood has been sold twice since we've lived in our house. Each time the new owners have understood their role as stewards of this special tree.

The owner of the house right after Jack and Louella was a city forester who planted three white pines in the yard which

are now magnificent specimens. We often talked with him about the Dawn Redwood and speculated on who planted it and when. I've researched this but have come up empty so far.

All of us, however, thought that the tree was big enough and old enough that it must be unique. I knew that the Wisconsin DNR keeps records of big trees via Bruce Allison's book, *Wisconsin's Champion Trees*, so our neighbor contacted the DNR, who sent someone out to measure the tree.

We all waited excitedly to hear the results—even as our neighbors were in the process of selling the house. The news was mixed—the house was sold but the DNR employee had retired and the paperwork seemed to have been lost. According to the 2005 edition of Allison's book, the champion Dawn Redwood at that time was located in Milwaukee on N. 52nd St. We'd heard the Milwaukee redwood had died which is why we—including the newest owners—were all so anxious to have “our” tree measured.

Allison's book also listed another Milwaukee tree on S. Pine, nominated by Kechaver and Rideout and measured in 1983, as the third largest specimen. Today the section of the DNR website devoted to champion trees no longer lists the top two redwoods in Allison's book, suggesting that the Milwaukee tree had in fact died. But the tree on S. Pine now appears at the top of the DNR Web list with 169 total points, and the Madison tree just behind it at 161 points. But this number and the other stats of our local tree are printed in gray, indicating the tree has not been measured in the last ten years. The point total being so close to the champion Dawn Redwood total, however, suggests to us that number is from the recent DNR measurement, even though the individual new numbers have not been entered.

This leaves us not quite where we started. We're still hoping to find the tree's history via a search of Madison property records and we plan to have the tree measured again. But now we know that even though the Milwaukee Dawn Redwood champ died, our tree is not the new champ. Still it is up there near the top of the list: a tree of great size and presence, “a majesty,” as Marlyn Sachtjen called them.

Living next to such a magnificent tree pretty much means that you'll want one yourself sooner or later. In 2003 we planted a yellow-needled variety, *Metasequoia glyptostroboides* ‘Gold Rush’, in an area where it can spread out like our neighbor's tree. In 2006, we added the pendulous ‘Miss Grace’. Alas Gracie shows no inclination to weep, which may have us crying in the future. We planted her in a fairly restricted location as a slow growing “dwarf” version of the species. In five years, she's already reached the suggested 10-year height; where she's headed is anybody's guess.

You can find detailed information on how to measure potential champion trees, as well as lists of the state champs and runners-up on the DNR Website at

<http://dnr.wi.gov/forestry/UF/champion/>.

—Linda Brazill

## Other Events of Note

**February 10-12, 2012 WPT Garden Expo**—Exhibition Hall, Alliant Energy Center, tickets range from \$7-\$16. <http://www.wigardenexpo.com/>

**March 10-18, 2012 Chicago Flower & Garden Show**—Navy Pier, Mon.-Sat. 10:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.; Sunday 10:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. Tickets range from \$15-\$19, <http://www.chicagoflower.com/>

**April 10-17, 2012, Rotary Botanical Gardens** is sponsoring a *trip to the Netherlands*, including the Floriade World Horticulture Expo. Mark Dwyer will be the horticulturist leading this tour. <http://www.rotarybotanicalgardens.org/events/horticulture-heaven>

**May 13-23, 2012, Olbrich Gardens** (in conjunction with Burkhalter Travel) is sponsoring *Magnificent Gardens of Europe*, including the Floriade World Horticulture Expo in the Netherlands, the Chelsea Flower Show in London, and Giverny near Paris. Jeff Epping will be the horticulturist leading this tour. <http://www.olbrich.org/>



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### Contribute to our list!

Our annual list of garden sales, tours and events will be published in our April newsletter. If you know of a plant sale, garden tour or trip, or any other garden-related event we can list, please send it to [sone2@aol.com](mailto:sone2@aol.com). Our desire is to publish as comprehensive a list as we can for reference throughout the gardening season. Deadline for submitting info for the April newsletter is March 15.

## Farewell to a gardening friend

*WHPS members may remember Arrowhead Alpines from a previous trip to Michigan. We recently received the following note from Brigitta Stewart regarding the recent passing of Bob Stewart.*

On the morning of December 16th, Bob Stewart, great plantsman and co-founder of Arrowhead Alpines, passed after a long and brave battle against cancer. He was 59. Bob will be remembered for his vast knowledge, his boundless passion for the natural world, and for the immense generosity with which he shared these parts of himself. Whether through his epic catalog copy or long phone conversations or personal greenhouse tours, he enriched the lives of those in the horticultural community, as Allen Bush so vividly portrays in his wonderful article, *Bob Stewart's Never-Ending Nursery*. We will miss Bob's energy, his wit, his genius, and even his rants.

We'd like to thank you, our customers, for perpetuating Bob's legacy in the beautiful gardens created with the plants he so lovingly nurtured. We will be having a public remembrance for Bob at our Winter Sucks Party, which will be on Saturday, February 25 at Arrowhead. This annual gathering of gardeners always attracts a great mix of people, and this year's party will be extra special.

Arrowhead Alpines will continue to be run by Bob's wife, Brigitta, as the same on-site retail and mail-order nursery that you've come to love. The only difference is that we will no longer publish a paper catalog, which was a herculean task that Bob took on solely each year. We will continue to update the plant listings on the Arrowhead Shopping Cart, and we are taking orders now for 2012 spring shipping. The first ship-week is March 5, but if you absolutely have to have something earlier, send us an email or call 517-223-3581. <http://www.arrowhead-alpines.com/>

*Arrowhead Alpines is a retail and mail-order plant nursery located at 1310 N. Gregory Road in Fowlerville, Michigan, 48836. We have Michigan's largest selection of perennials, woodland wildflowers, dwarf conifers, unusual ferns, rare alpines and unique trees and shrubs.*

## A Prairie In Illinois

*This is the prairie of WHPS members Barb and Bob Wetzel in Barrington Hills, IL.*

It is such an amazing sight to watch our prairie emerge in the spring from the bare newly burned ground, transforming itself gradually but completely into a lovely and distinctive tall-grass prairie by summer's end.

Our six-acre property purchased 20 years ago was originally part of a large farm. It was covered primarily with large oak trees, (Red, Bur, White, Black and Hills) large wild cherry and hickory trees and thickly interspersed with buckthorn. It had previously been the wood lot for the farm where the cattle grazed and wandered in the shade. Initially, our efforts were spent in the woodland. Several winters were spent cutting down about 1500 buckthorn and chemically treating the trunks to prevent their resprouting. Then, a continuing battle with garlic mustard began and the transition into, in part, a native plant woodland began.

The acre and a half to the rear of our property was farmed for many years along with the properties adjacent to ours. This area was so atypical of the majority of our property that it was the last parcel with which I concerned myself. It was covered mostly with scruffy turf, ringed by an assortment of spruce, pine, cherry, poplar and more buckthorn trees. The center of this area contained a large group of trees, which were mostly wild cherries and more buckthorn around a center grouping of four mature weeping willows.

After several years, we attacked the grouping of buckthorn and wild cherries in the center of this section and discovered a wonderful black oak, which was happy to be relieved of its invasive neighbors. The weeping willows never were favorites and were removed.

At first, a significant portion of the area in the center of the 1 ½ acres was rototilled and a vegetable garden started. Raspberry plants and asparagus were planted, along with the traditional garden vegetables. Moderation has long been one of my problems. So the vegetable garden had 30 bean towers, 20 tomato plants, six rows of corn, peas, bush beans, green pepper plants, various lettuces and eight zucchini vines (which, despite my best efforts at picking them, often produced zucchinis which could be carved out and used to float down the Mississippi). It became an overwhelming chore to pick, preserve, distribute to friends and at last eat the harvest from this garden.

As a volunteer with a wetland restoration group at the Morton Arboretum and a volunteer with a woodland restoration group at the Chicago Botanic Garden (CBG), I began to think about alternative ways to develop this area. Many of the members of our restoration group at the CBG were also involved with the prairie restoration efforts. Both groups had nurseries for propagating endangered species of plants to be used for our restoration efforts. All of the seed for their propagation was collected within a 25 mile radius of the CBG for propagation. After viewing the annual burning of the Schulenberg Prairie

at the Morton Arboretum and then visiting Ray Schulenberg's private prairie at his home, I began to think about starting a prairie of my own. After a number of errors and much trial and error, I decided to put the prairie in the center of this section of our property, surround it with a grass line, which varies from 8- to 15-foot wide, to facilitate its burning and then surround the grass line with perennial beds. They are in large part made up of native plants, some of which have seeded in from the prairie.

I have long had an indoor lighting system which was especially useful when I began to order seeds from nearby native plant nurseries. In addition, I began to collect seed as I walked in native areas. In the first years, anywhere from 2,000 to 3,000 plants a year were planted. They were grown to 3- to 4-inch seedlings under the lights, hardened off in a protected area, then planted. The plantings were timed to coincide with forecasted rains. Almost no water was provided even when they were first planted, and none was ever provided afterwards. A few plants were ordered from native plant nurseries. Among these were two native Baptisias, *leucophaea* and *leucantha*. When they arrived they were bare root, scarcely three inches long and mostly root. And surprisingly they all survived and remain where I planted them even today and are a particular joy to me when they bloom. *Baptisia leucophaea* is a particular favorite, so much so that a grouping of them has been planted in one of my shrub borders.

As a volunteer at the CBG I worked with the woodland restoration group which also included many people who were involved with the prairie restoration efforts there. These groups in the summer worked in the nurseries where native plants for the woodland and prairie were grown. Late in the summer and fall, we collected the seed, dried it, separated it from the chaff, and then distributed it in the CBG woodland and prairie or distributed it to other restoration groups when we had sufficient quantities of some species for our purposes. I used to collect the chaff after cleaning the seed, putting it in large bags and then bringing it home to distribute in my woodland and on my prairie. From this, many native plants were acquired, including *Lobelia cardinalis* in my lower woodland (which has reseeded generously and has begun to spread to other areas of my garden), various asters, solidagos, and various and a sundry grasses and forbs. Lest I forget, some plants have been introduced by birds and other critters, i.e. a population of *Lobelia siphilitica* (both white and blue), *Asclepias tuberosa*, *Agastache foeniculum*, *Asclepias verticillata* and others.

In a dry year, the prairie is 4 to 4 ½ feet at its tallest, while in a year such as 2010—when there was a continual abundance of rain, it reaches 7–8 feet tall. One year—which was particularly dry—not only were the prairie plants short, but even the petals on the echinacea's were 1/3 their natural length.

Propagation of plants from seeds continued for some five years until the area was filled. It was surprising how well all the plants did, even without any watering other than that

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Continued from previous page...*A Prairie in Illinois*

which occurred naturally. Some plants were also given to me by the staff at the CBG, which added more diversity.

The prairie is now about 12 years old. It has been fascinating to see its growth and transition over these years. Some of the plants have totally relocated themselves to other areas of the prairie, to presumably more preferable sites. Some have reseeded generally over much of the prairie, and others have stayed right where they were first planted. It is a wonderful mixture of grasses, many tall, and a wonderful assortment of forbs. I did most of the work for many years by myself but was helped in subsequent years by a part-time gardener who knew little about plants when he first started here. His first job was to remove all of the Queen Anne's lace, then the thistles. Together we worked, removing any invasives and then annually burning the prairie.

The burn is done each spring, weather permitting, as soon as the grass surrounding it is green and can be mowed down close to remove any brown duff, which could enable the fire to leapfrog to other areas or, in recent years, to be so wet that a fire isn't able to travel. It is amazing that, even immediately after the fire has passed, the ground remains cold to the touch. Each year the burn proceeds more rapidly as the prairie continues to mature.

Since the prairie is burned in the spring, usually in April—but occasionally in March—it begins each season with a clean palette. Each day brings a slight but perceptible and enjoyable transition. It also changes noticeably from year to year, with the grasses and forbs moving around to what they consider to be a more acceptable location. It is fascinating to see this annual movement.

Our prairie is now home to some 130 species of grasses, carex and forbs. The grasses are primarily *Andropogon gerardii* (big blue stem), *Schizachyrium scoparium* (little blue stem), *Sporobolus heterolepis* (prairie dropseed), *Elymus Canadensis* (Canada wild rye), *Bouteloua curtipendula* (side oats gamma), *Panicum virgatum* (switch grass), *Spartina pectinata* (prairie cord grass), and *Sorghastrum nutans* (Indian Grass). The plant list is quite diverse and includes many asters, solidagos, baptisias and others. I seldom add new species, although I will try to add some of the gentians in the coming years. One of the most difficult plants to establish was the common milkweed, which only last year finally took hold, and this year produced seed pods for the first time.

Some of my favorite forbs are *Amorpha canescens* (lead plant), *Asclepias tuberosa* (butterfly weed), all of the asters, *Baptisia leucophaea* (cream wild indigo), *Cacalia mühlenbergii* (Great Indian plintain), *Ceanothus americanus* (New Jersey Tea), the Daleas (prairie clovers), *Dodecatheon meadia* (shooting star), *Lilium superbum* (Turk's-cap lily), *Melanthium virginicum* (bunch flower), *Phlox glaberrima* (marsh phlox) *Rudbeckia triloba*, *Solidago speciosa* (showy goldenrod), *Verbena hastata* (blue vervain), and *Veronicastrum virginicum* (Culver's root). The cacalia towers above all others and is so majestic. This was the first year that the dodecatheon really bloomed and made a significant presence on the prairie. They grew from seed I scattered several years ago after collecting them on a hike. I have loved the melanthium since I first saw them bloom. The plants are larger each

year. It has not reseeded but remains where it was planted. I collected some seed this year and plan to add more plants of this next year.



It is also home to butterflies, moths, dragonflies, bees, mosquitoes, numerous other insects I have yet to identify, tree frogs (can you see the one at left?), an assortment of toads, an occasional brown snake, an amazing number of birds who love to feast on the seeds

produced throughout the summer, fall and winter, and finally, a woodchuck condominium in the center. Once, early in the year, while walking through the prairie after it had been burned, I heard the sounds of some of their babies from their underground burrow. It has been home to bluebirds who finally began to use bird houses put out for them. We watched one fledge her babies several years ago. We also have a resident fox, which lives here sometimes in the winter, raises her young and wanders in and out. She and her offspring enjoy picking and eating our raspberries. It is also a favorite area of my husband and our pets, two dogs and two cats.

The prairie continues to delight us with its unique texture and character. It is amazing how much it changes all on its own from year to year. It is a constant source of interest as we walk around it each evening with our pets. There is nothing more beautiful than seeing the grasses and the flowers on the forbs set aglow by the sun from the west as it lowers in the evening sky. It's fall and as we walk around our prairie, the birds flutter here and there snacking on the fall bounty of the seasons produce. The dragonflies, butterflies, moth and thankfully, the Japanese beetles and mosquitoes are now gone for this season. It is alight once again with the lovely fall coloring of the grasses and forbs.

—Barb Wetzel

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## A Favorite Website

*Fine Gardening* magazine is something many of us look forward to in our mail—a warm companion on a winter afternoon and a great inspiration to make a better garden, and the tips are useful and easy to implement.

I highly recommend you spend some time at <http://www.finegardening.com/>

Their resources include a great **Latin Pronunciation Guide**; the design guide offers articles on everything from *How to Plant Basil* to *Designing on an Axis*; there is a How-to section and a wide range of videos on *Gardening Projects*, *Care and Maintenance*, *Essential Techniques* and many more topics—a favorite video is **Selecting Trees for Structure**—beautiful and informative.

This is just a small part of what they offer. It's definitely worth a visit.

## Meet Our Board

### Linda Brazill



*I'm an artist by training, a journalist by trade and a gardener by choice.* That's the short version of my personal history. But the most important thing to know is that I grew up in Buffalo, New York. To the people who live there, the city is defined not by snow, but by its system of parks, parkways, avenues and circles laid out by the great Frederick Law Olmsted. My high

school was located on one such parkway, my paternal grandparents lived on another, and my maternal grandparents lived on one of the avenues. As a youngster, I went ice skating on the lake in one park, took art lessons at the museum in another park and spent holidays at the flower shows at the 1898 Lord and Burnham Conservatory in yet another Olmsted park. Without realizing it at the time, growing up amidst such natural beauty—within a larger city landscape—is what set me on a lifelong urban gardening path, rather than any family models or mentors.

When my husband, Mark Golbach, and I got married and bought our first house in the late 1980's, we started to garden together, joined Olbrich and then WHPS. During the summer, the garden gets the greatest share of our time and attention; both hands-on and virtual as Mark photographs it and I blog about it at <http://eachlittleworld.typepad.com>.

When not gardening (or reading or writing about gardening), I'm reading on other topics, experimenting with new recipes, drawing, looking at art and antiques. My favorite garden is Bloedel Reserve on Bainbridge Island. It's an elegant combination of what appear to be untouched natural areas interspersed with more designed gardens that are sometimes exciting, sometimes tranquil, but always breathtaking.

*Linda is a new Board member in 2012.*

### John Cannon



I've been a member of the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society since it was originally founded as the Perennial Society in the 1980s. I developed

an interest in gardening at a young age and have enjoyed many aspects of gardening all of my life. I have a B.S. in Biology and have continued to read and learn about growing and caring for plants. I am a Master Gardener and enjoy volunteering for, and participating in, many garden-related activities with the WHPS, Master gardeners, Olbrich Botanical Gardens and our local village flower gardens.

I share a home and garden with John Fritsch on a standard -sized lot in Maple Bluff, WI. Our gardening is mostly ornamental, designed and planted with hundreds of spring bulbs, herbaceous perennials, deciduous trees and shrubs, and evergreens surrounding a water garden to provide four-season interest. It was started in 1986, and has undergone continual refinement since then.

I have worked at the University of Wisconsin in the Chemical & Biological Engineering Dept. as an instrument maker. My hobbies include art and photography, building leaded glass lampshades and scuba diving. I also love traveling, which often includes visiting gardens.

*John is one of our officers, currently serving as Board Secretary.*

### Cindy Hoffland



Cindy Hoffland has been gardening—both vegetable and ornamental gardens—since 1976. She enjoys trying new varieties of fruits and vegetables, and cooking and feeding her family with the “fruits” of her labor. For the last 16 years, her home's location doesn't

provide enough sun for vegetable gardening (or grass), so her entire lot is planted in ornamentals.

Cindy has previously served on several boards and currently serves as board chair for the Friends of Hoyt Park.

*Cindy joins the Board in 2012 and has volunteered to serve as the new Webmaster for our Website.*

### Jane Gahlman



I joined WHPS in 2001 at the urging of my good friend Terri Malisewski-Kane and have especially enjoyed meeting and getting to know all the plant geek types in the group!

I grew up on a small farm outside of Juneau in Dodge County, graduating from UW-Madison with a B.S. in Animal Science. In 1991, I bought a house with two acres on Hwy T just south of Sun Prairie and have gardened there ever since.

I've been gardening pretty much all my life. We had a big vegetable garden on the farm, and I still enjoy growing tomatoes and peppers and any other vegetables the %#&\* rabbits won't eat, which pretty much limits me to tomatoes and peppers, although one year they even ate my peppers... My ultimate goal is to get rid of all the grass and just have flowerbeds everywhere.

My earliest memory in the garden is helping my grandmother pick beans, peas, raspberries, and strawberries in her garden—actually I remember eating most of them as I picked them. I also distinctly remember the beautiful old-fashioned bleeding heart plant growing just outside the old outhouse at my other grandmother's house.

When I'm not working at Jung's Garden Center in Sun Prairie, or working in my own garden, or touring other gardens, or thinking about gardening, I enjoy reading, traveling, yoga, chocolate, and going to the movies, theatre and ethnic restaurants.

*Jane is currently serving as WHPS Vice President and coordinator of the Seed Exchange.*

••••• Member News, Tips, etc. •••••

### Book recommendation from Jane LaFlash

*Chlorophyll in His Veins: J.C. Raulston Horticultural Ambassador* by Bobby J. Ward

A few months ago I picked up an old magazine left on the entry table at a WHPS meeting. This 2009 biography of J.C. Raulston was advertised in it. It sounded interesting and I looked for it in the Madison Public Library. They didn't have it, so I suggested the title to Lynn Jacobson, the Olbrich librarian. She ordered it for their library and I just finished reading it. I enjoyed it very much and now want to visit Raleigh to see the arboretum. Dr. J.C. Raulston was a co-advisor with Dr. Stu Warren at N.C. State University for Laura Jull's M.S. degree. Raulston was also a very inspirational person in Laura's life, infecting her with the "plant bug." Raulston taught there for many years and started what is now the JC Raulston Arboretum. Besides the Olbrich library, the book is available on the author's website [www.bobbyjward.com](http://www.bobbyjward.com).

Jull writes about Raulston: *I think about J.C. often (he passed away at age 56 in 1996) as he was a very kind man, willing to share his knowledge with anyone and without arrogance, something rare these days in plant experts. He made the graduate student to homeowner, nurseryman to academic feel comfortable asking any plant question. He challenged his students to "think outside the box." I was one of his last advisees. I am so thankful our lives crossed paths.....*

### New Webmaster!

WHPS welcomes Cindy Hoffland to the board. (You can learn more about Cindy on page 7.) She will be taking over duties on our Website, so if you have any questions, suggestions, etc. please contact Cindy at [hofflc@chorus.net](mailto:hofflc@chorus.net).

**Take a moment this winter...**to think about and make a list of the plants you'd like to contribute to the plant sale in May. This allows us to plan for the digs, number and kind of plants we need for the sale. We also like to have picture signs for each plant at the sale, so send your list as soon as you can to Stephanie O'Neal at [sone2@aol.com](mailto:sone2@aol.com) so we can start preparing the signs.

### WHPS T-shirts!

At \$10 each, WHPS T-shirts are a real bargain. Only size large remains. **To order a T-Shirt**, contact Jane Gahlman at [jmgahlman@hotmail.com](mailto:jmgahlman@hotmail.com) (or call her at 608-837-2317 and leave a message).

### Members featured in media?

Do you know of a member's garden that has been featured recently in the media? Send info to [sone2@aol.com](mailto:sone2@aol.com).

### Visit our website:

<http://www.wisconsinhardyplantsociety.com>

## Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society



### JANUARY 2012 Newsletter

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**Do you have a question about your membership?** Contact Jane LaFlash at [whps05@yahoo.com](mailto:whps05@yahoo.com), 608-243-1208.