



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.

SHOW YOUR PHOTOS!

Wednesday, December 1, WHPS Annual Meeting, Member Potpourri and Seed Exchange, 6:30 p.m. Seed Exchange; meeting at 7:00 p.m. This is one of our most popular events and we welcome member presentations of slides, photos, videos. Presentations should be 10 minutes maximum; contact Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com before December 1 to reserve a spot on the program.

Sunday, January 16, 2011, Member Potluck Brunch, 10:00 a.m.-noon. Enjoy great food, take a walk through the tropical conservatory and, with some cooperation from the weather, take a walk through the winter gardens. The buffet opens at 10:00 a.m., so plan on setting up your potluck items before then. John Fritsch and John Cannon will present *photos of the WHPS Trip to England* taken earlier this year. Juice and lemonade will be provided (there is a soda machine available). Bring your own plates and utensils.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, February 11-13, 2011 WHPS Booth at the WPT Garden Expo. WHPS will once again have a booth at the Garden Expo. We'll also be sponsoring a presentation at noon on February 12 by Dr. Laura Jull, UW-Madison Associate Professor and Extension Specialist for Woody Ornamentals—*Low Maintenance Woody Plants for the Home Landscape*. You can be a part of the Expo by volunteering for 2 1/2 hours at the booth. It's a great chance to catch up with friends and encourage others to join our organization. Email Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com, or sign up at the January Potluck Brunch.

Wednesday, February 16, 2011, Meeting at Olbrich Gardens. Program TBA.

Wednesday, March 16, 2011, Meeting at Olbrich Gardens. Program TBA.

Wednesday, April 20, 2011, Jeff Epping will discuss the 2010 Trip to England. Meeting at Olbrich Gardens.

Wednesday, May 11, 2011, WHPS Garden Tours, Midvale Area. We'll visit the gardens of Ruth Cadoret, Rhoda Braunschweig, Lois Kinlen and Phyllis Lathrope.

Saturday, May 14, 2011 WHPS Plant Sale. A perfect time to pick up plants for your garden that you know will do well in

our area. Plan to donate plants, or if you have a lot to donate, have a dig. or volunteer to help at a dig. We'll be setting up for the sale the day before and volunteers are needed for a variety of duties that day, as well as the day of the sale.

Thursday, July 14, 2011, WHPS Garden Tours, West Side of Middleton. We'll tour the gardens of Betsy True, Ron Meerhoff/Michael Rhoads, Conrad Wrzesinski, Linda Grosz and Jennifer Ondrejka.

Wednesday, August 17, 2011, Member Potluck Dinner and walk through Olbrich Gardens.

Wednesday, September 21, 2011, Meeting at Olbrich Gardens. Program TBA.

Wednesday, October 19, 2011, Meeting at Olbrich Gardens. Program TBA.

Wednesday November 16, 2011, Meeting at Olbrich Gardens. Program TBA.

Wednesday, December 7, 2011, Annual Meeting and Member Potpourri.

2011 GARDEN TOURS

Now in the Planning Stage



June 4-5—A bus trip to Green Bay/Door County and surrounding area.

July 21-24—Gardens in northern Ohio.

September 17—One-day bus trip to the Rockford, Illinois area.

DUES NOTICES WILL BE MAILED IN JANUARY

If you have already paid your dues through 2011, you will not receive a dues renewal form.

Have you visited our website?
www.wisconsinhardyplantsociety.com

Other Events of Note

Saturday, December 4-Thursday, December 31, Olbrich's Holiday Express: Flower and Model Train Show, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. daily. Members of the Wisconsin Garden Railway Society come from all over the state to show off their large-scale model trains. Bring friends and family and enjoy holiday refreshments available for purchase in the lobby. Olbrich's Photo Depot also provides the perfect background for a holiday photo! Admission for Olbrich Botanical Society members is free. Admission to Olbrich's Holiday Express for the general public is \$3 for adults, and \$2 for children ages 3 to 12. Children 2 and under are free.

Saturday, December 4, Rotary Botanical Gardens' Taste of Chocolate Dinner—Chocolate Enchantment, 5:00-8:30 p.m. 5:00 p.m. Cocktails and Silent Auction.

December 17-23 & 26-31, Holiday Light Show, Rotary Botanical Gardens, Janesville. When you visit the Holiday Light Show, you will experience over 200,000 seasonal lights. Inside the Parker Education Center, you'll find electric trains, entertainment, refreshments and more! Tickets at door—\$5 Adults (12+), \$3.00 Youth (2-11).

December 31, US Bank Eve, 5:00-9:00 p.m. Olbrich Gardens. Enjoy New Year's Eve family fun at Olbrich. See the Bolz Conservatory and Olbrich's Holiday Express: Flower and Model Train Show. Sponsored by U.S. Bank - Madison. Call 608-252-4053 for more information.

Sept 2-January 7, Bolz Conservatory Exhibit—Life in the Canopy, ongoing. The lush plants on the forest floor of the Bolz Conservatory draw the attention of most visitors...But look up! Up to 90 percent of life in the rainforest exists in the trees—colorful orchids, bromeliads that provide watery homes for tree frogs, birds, animals, and more. Discover the Bolz Conservatory's canopy layer and the plants and animals that call the canopy home. The Conservatory is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is \$1 for the general public. Admission is always free for Olbrich Botanical Society members and children 5 and under, and is free for the general public on Wednesday and Saturday mornings from 10 a.m. to noon. Visit www.olbrich.org or call 608-246-4550.

Thanks Bill!

Earlier this month, WHPS board member Bill Hoerneke tendered his resignation. Bill has been an invaluable member of the board, coordinating the digs in preparation for the plant sale, helping with audio-visual needs at our Member Potpourri, and being one of the first to volunteer when other help was needed. He will definitely be missed by the board, but we are grateful that Bill has promised to remain a participating member of WHPS, and we'll continue to look forward to his great photo presentations at the annual Member Potpourri. Thanks so much Bill, for taking an active role in our organization!



We are looking for someone who would like to serve on the board and, in particular, someone who can coordinate the plant digs for the Plant Sale. Please contact Stephanie O'Neal at 608-256-6108 or email sone2@aol.com if you are interested. Thank you in advance for your interest and your help!



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Blodgett Garden Center Survives

Members who live in the Fort Atkinson area are very familiar with the Blodgett Garden Center. Earlier this fall it suffered a devastating fire that many thought put the business in jeopardy.

Jack Blodgett reports that the plant buildings are fine and they are in the midst of remodeling their nursery yard. A new building will replace the old one for all of the gifting and pet foods. He says that once cleanup is completely finished, rebuilding will move quickly.

They are looking forward to a great 2011. We wish them much success!

The last minute—the really last minute

Procrastination can sometimes get the better of me. Two years ago I found myself on December 1 with some last-minute cleanup in the garden and bulbs to plant that had been dug up earlier in the season. The weather report predicted snow later that day and I finally got myself out in the garden at 8:30 a.m. that Saturday, bagging up weeds (just the mushy ones) to take to the Badger Road drop-off (the last day to do so) and planting the bulbs. Well, the planned digging in the front garden failed due to absolutely frozen ground, so I began to randomly search for softer soil in the back semi-shade garden.

After 45 minutes of sticking a bulb here and a bulb there (so much for garden design), I watered in the plantings, gathered up the bags of weeds, loaded up the car and headed the couple of miles over to the drop-off. I had just emptied the bags and started driving out of the drop-off area when the first spits of snow began and continued through the day and night. The ground was not seen again until February. One would think a lesson would be learned, but my current garden is evidence that history is doomed to repeat itself.

—Stephanie O'Neal

Allen Centennial Gardens—A Look at 2010

I think that after the wonderful crowd of WHPS members toured the Gardens with me in September, many people either discovered it for the first time or were surprised at how accessible it is. I hope to see many more of you visit now!

I've been asked to discuss the changes I've been making since I took the director's position July 2008. I joke that the first fall I probably scared a lot of people by spending so much time behind a chain saw! Just today I met with Jonathan of the Facilities Planning & Management's Campus Planning Landscape Architecture department, who has taken the lead in assisting me with major hardscaping projects, as we looked back at some of the major work already accomplished and delved into plans for 2011. I told him that as a plantsman, I found it somewhat frustrating that I will spend my first three to four years primarily focused on rebuilding and repairing structural problems. I can't wait until I can get that out of the way and the focus can be primarily on plants!

Not that plants haven't been on our agenda because, along with the structural work, we have also been rejuvenating entire gardens, which includes lots of new plant materials. I am fortunate to have volunteers and students who gallantly rise to the challenges but are probably tired of sanding, painting, staining, hauling, replacing, weeding, transplanting, killing and all of the other tasks that have gone well beyond gardening! I'm not complaining—I came into the position very aware of these challenges and was poised to tackle them. Ask anyone involved in public gardens and they will tell you that 20 years is about when one can expect original infrastructures to start showing deterioration and yes, even crumble, as did one of our stone walls this spring.

Just as a recap, in 2009 we completely rebuilt our long west brick walk, stained the donor arbor, scraped and stained the massive pergola, redesigned and replanted the Iris Garden, rejuvenated the front-of-the-house beds with focus on small-scale trees and shrubs, rejuvenated the Ornamental Shade Garden with new plants, started over with the grossly overgrown West Bank and expanded the exterior Victorian Garden beds—all as staff! Our extremely successful theme was "Ornamental Edibles," and we developed a relationship with University Housing Dining and Catering Services to harvest our produce and serve in-campus dining facilities, which they continue to do.

I had already made provisions to rebuild a large portion of the structural wall and the ramp bordering sections of the Italian, French and Iris Gardens in the spring, and it was good timing because a significant length of it collapsed with snow thaw. Probably our largest project of the year, it was also a challenge because it involved masons, concrete workers, a custom metal company and a landscaping firm with a mandate from me that they had to be completely done by the first wedding on May 29. At 5:00 pm on May 28, the final crew pulled out of the Gardens, leaving us with spectacularly rebuilt new walls, a new ramp and new railings custom built to match our existing Sun King railing. Whew!

Because all of the stone had to be stacked in the Italian Garden and this was the work/staging area, all of the existing

plants except for the center juniper spiral topiary had to be removed, and it gave me the opportunity to totally redesign that garden. My stalwart staff and volunteers tackled the severely peeling bridge and after hours of scraping and sanding, the railings and benches got a coat of primer and two coats of flashy red, while the decking boards were converted to stain with two coats of chocolate brown. They must have all shuddered when they saw how pleased I was with the color it added to the garden and my eyes roved to our weathered grey benches—as a result, we now have two vibrant blue, five grey-blue and four foliage-green benches! We finished by painting the new custom built railings to match the Sun King railing.

We had two new "ruins columns" added to two existing, along with a mini-Stonehenge (by the original artist), commissioned eight "horticulture" garden implement sculptures and a steel larch arbor, as well as a Siberian iris sculpture. Our theme was "Pretty & Practical," demonstrating eight categories of plants that are used for both decorative and functional purposes and made room for demonstration plots of the new *Echinacea*, *Heuchera* and annual *Rudbeckia hirta*. We expanded the popular non-hardy succulent collection to the Corner Garden for even more visibility. We built and planted four ground-level and two elevated enabling square-foot-gardening beds (below) that were replicated in gardens of many of our visitors.

Garden renovations continued with the Wisconsin Woodland Garden, Ornamental Shrub Garden, Entrance Walk, Rock Garden, Larch bed, English Garden, *Katsura* bed and Sunny Annual area. This winter, plans include turning the former Wisconsin Wildflower Garden (marsh) into a sustainable garden and improvements to the New American Garden. I am working to convert the grounds in front of the Plant Sciences building to an ornamental shade garden with my coworker Johanna so the building looks like it says "horticulture"! I am waiting on a crew to replace entirely the Garden's water system, and we have just discovered the pond has a major leak and will have to deal with that.

I am also in the process of buying a laser engraver so we can start identifying plant materials with permanent markers, which will take a large amount of time playing "catch-up" with existing plant materials. That's only the major projects—wow, we should be exhausted!

Next year's theme is "Color Your World," and we'll use seasonal plantings to demonstrate color themes and terms. We have already planted a color wheel and winding/alternating complementary and analogous "rivers," with thousands of tulip bulbs, primary-color hyacinth beds and a polychromatic mixed Italian Garden center circle. We will continue these themes and others with the annual plantings. The non-hardy succulents, which are capturing a great deal of attention—now with three year's growth—will move to the cast-iron urns and the Victorian Garden will be a tropical paradise.

We utilize winter to expand our education. January through March we have volunteer "classes" where I provide my

—continued on next page

— Allen Centennial...continued from previous page

programs and we share gardening experiences and ideas. From there we head to the greenhouses to start seed for what we can't buy readily as plants and look forward to another busy season. And you thought we were hibernating all winter!

If this crazy and wild ride of continually looking for ways to expand and improve a public garden's offerings excites you rather than scares you, we welcome you to join our volunteer "family." Access to these Gardens are offered free to anyone 365 days a year, and keep in mind we are doing that 100% self-supported with no operational revenue from University or state. We can't do that without our dedicated volunteers.

Do make a point of visiting us throughout the season. Parking is most readily available in the ramp on Observatory Drive directly across the street with 54 two-hour meters on the top level. Say hi when you visit!

—Ed Lyon, Director, Allen Centennial Gardens

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Reading garden catalogs in the winter is like having cocktails in the evening: after one or two, your big plans begin to look feasible.

—Texas Bix Bender, "Don't Throw in the Towel"

..... **Member News, Tips, etc.**

**Before the (shh!) snow,
take a walk through your garden**

Now is a perfect time to take a walk through your garden, taking stock of the plants you plan to divide, move or remove next spring. While you do, keep in mind our May Plant Sale. Make a list of plants you'd like to contribute to the sale. If an unusual plant in the garden has done particularly well, please consider dividing it and contributing one or two of the divisions to the plant sale.

**Got a story idea? A tip?
Know of a member in the news?**

Let us know. Email sone2@aol.com if you have information regarding articles or photos of our members' gardens, or if you'd like to see us do an article on a particular topic. Is there a helpful tip you'd like to share—great! Just send it along. The next newsletter will be out in early January.

WHPS T-shirts!

At \$10 each, WHPS T-shirts are a real bargain. Sizes currently available are medium and large.

To order a T-Shirt, contact Jane Gahlman at jmgahlman@hotmail.com (or call her at 608-837-2317 and leave a message).

Visit our website:
www.wisconsinhardyplantsociety.com

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society



**NOVEMBER 2010
Newsletter**

**211 S. Fair Oaks Avenue
Madison, WI 53704-5822**

President—Frank Greer, 608-233-4686,
frgreer@sbcglobal.net
Vice President—Jane Gahlman, 608-837-2317,
jmgahlman@hotmail.com, Seed Exchange Coordinator
Treasurer—Diane Scharkey, dscharkey@aol.com
John Cannon, jtcannon@wisc.edu
Judy Crandall, 608-884-8258, jmcrans@aol.com
Jeannette Golden, 608-767-3736, jeannettyzq@yahoo.com
Ed Hasselkus, erhassel@wisc.edu
Jane LaFlash, jlafash@wisc.edu, Membership Coordinator
and Trip and Tour Co-Coordinator
Edward Lyon, 608-658-3456, eslyon@wisc.edu, Program
Coordinator and Trip and Tour Co-Coordinator
Terri Maliszewski-Kane, 608-513-4189, terrimk1@hotmail.com,
Olbrich Liaison
Stephanie O'Neal, 608-256-6108, sone2@aol.com,
Publications and Plant Sale contact
Rita Thomas, rita5586@hotmail.com
Conrad Wrzesinski, 608-231-3279, conradw@charter.net

Do you have a question about your membership? Contact Jane LaFlash at whps05@yahoo.com, 608-243-1208.