



## Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society

# Perennial Notes

January 2007

**Dues notices for 2007 will be mailed to members later this month.**

If you have already paid your dues for 2007, you will not receive a notice.  
(Check your newsletter mailing label to identify the year you are paid thru.)

### WHPS COMING EVENTS!

#### WHPS Potluck Brunch

**SUNDAY, January 21, 2007,**

10:00 a.m.-noon, Olbrich Gardens Commons  
3330 Atwood Avenue, Madison

#### Why attend?

#### Tasty Food

*Lots of treats, from hors d'oeuvres to salads to entrees to sinful desserts.* Bring a food item (with serving utensil) anytime after 9:00 a.m. Lines form to start eating at 10:00 a.m. Beverages provided; bring your own table service.

#### Entertainment

*Slides of the 2006 England Trip presented by WHPS President Frank Greer.*

#### People

A chance to meet, mix and mingle with fellow WHPS members.

#### The Gardens

Snow is questionable and temperatures have been mild, just right for a walk through Olbrich Gardens—rose hips, grasses and some great ideas for landscaping a winter garden.

(We need to be completely finished, cleaned up and have chairs arranged for the Olbrich winter concert by 1:00 p.m., so clean-up help will be appreciated.)

**See you Sunday, January 21!**

**Wednesday, February 21, 2007,** Olbrich Gardens, 6:30 p.m. social, 7:00 p.m. program. **Speaker is Neil Diboll of Prairie Nursery—*Prairie Gardening on a Small Scale???***

**Wednesday, March 21, 2007,** Olbrich Gardens, 6:30 p.m. social, 7:00 p.m. program. **Speaker is Roy Klehm of Song Sparrow Farm—*Gems From My Garden.***

Wednesday, April 18, 2007, Olbrich Gardens, 6:30 p.m. social, 7:00 p.m. program. **Barbara Geiger, *Chicago World's Fair, Jackson Park and The White City—View from the Landscape Architect's Point of View.***

**Saturday, May 19, 2007, WHPS Annual Plant Sale 9-noon.**

**June/July, Garden tours** (Locations TBA)

**Wednesday, August 15, WHPS Summer Potluck** at Olbrich Gardens, 6:30 p.m.

**Saturday, September 15, 2007, WHPS Member Plant Exchange,** 10:00 a.m.-noon

**Fall Programs—all at Olbrich Gardens, 6:30 p.m. social, 7:00 p.m. program**

- **Wednesday, September 19, 2007,** program TBA
- **Wednesday, October 17, 2007,** program TBA.
- **Wednesday, November 14, 2007,** Member Potpourri, Seed Exchange and Annual Meeting.
- **Wednesday, December 5, 2007,** program TBA

February 9, 10, 11

#### WHPS Booth at WPT Garden Expo

WHPS will once again participate in the Garden Expo sponsored by Wisconsin Public Television at the Alliant Energy Center. Members can volunteer to help at the booth (see page 2) or stop by and sign up for the prize drawing and see some great photos of member gardens.

WHPS President Frank Greer will speak on Saturday, February 10 at 3:00 p.m. with *Inspirations for a Wisconsin Garden.*

With a strong roster of seminars and more display booths than ever, it's a great way to spend a winter weekend! For more info, go to [www.wpt.org/gardenexpo](http://www.wpt.org/gardenexpo).

## Free Attendance at Garden Expo!

As noted on the previous page, WHPS will have a booth at the WPT Garden Expo. Members can attend the Garden Expo free (although you pay for own parking) if you sign up to volunteer at the WHPS booth. Shifts average 2 1/2 hours, which leaves plenty of time for sitting in on lectures and viewing displays.

Sign-up opportunities will be available at the January 21 Potluck Brunch, or you can contact Stephanie O'Neal at 608-256-6108, or email her at sone2@aol.com to discuss available openings for volunteers.

## What's Up at Rotary Gardens for 2007?

We are looking forward to a wonderful year at Rotary Gardens, with new garden areas and displays. Please come and visit often and enjoy the seasons.

We will be developing our Woodland Walk to include a wonderful collection of hostas, ferns, rare Asiatic woodland plants and choice understory trees and shrubs. Our focus will be on entirely new varieties to the gardens, although we will maintain the extensive masses of native spring ephemerals already in that area. This space will be developed over the next two years.

We will be enhancing our Fern & Moss Garden with over 40 new species and varieties of ferns, with the intent of more trialing and evaluation in conjunction with the Hardy Fern Foundation. Look for an extensive heuchera, heucherella and tiarella collection to be developed around the gardens, and we're starting to amass a respectable epimedium collection as well. We hope to add over 600 varieties of perennials to the gardens this year.

Seasonal plantings will abound, with a special focus on annual salvia (100+ varieties), basil (60+ varieties) and more unusual annuals. Look for a high proportion of rich maroon and red color throughout the gardens. Vegetable collections will include heirloom tomatoes (50 varieties), heirloom sweet peppers (40 varieties) and eggplants (50 varieties). A spring plant sale (date to be announced) will offer plants of all of these vegetable varieties as well as bagged mushroom compost. Many of our existing hostas will also be divided and offered for sale this spring.

Rotary Gardens will also be offering myriad educational opportunities, bus trips and of course volunteer opportunities will always abound. Please consider visiting us multiple times in 2007, and perhaps become a Friends Member of this important non-profit botanical resource.

Come visit our booth at the WPT Garden Expo in Feb. and/or view our Web site at [www.rotarygardens.org](http://www.rotarygardens.org) for upcoming events.

—Mark Dwyer, Director of Horticulture

## MEET OUR BOARD

### Frank Greer

In its history, the WHPS has had only three presidents, and Frank Greer has served in that role for the last decade. He is a pediatrician/neonatologist at the University of Wisconsin, and gardening is his "full-time" hobby for nearly 12 months of the year. He has lived at the same address in Madison for 26 years, so his garden under white oaks is in the "mature stage." His lovely Nakoma garden is always a favorite on garden tours, and has been featured in magazines like *Better Homes & Gardens*. He is our local expert on epimediems and galanthus, and each year he gives up a third of his driveway for a group of annual containers, creating a stunning "bed" that runs the length of the driveway.



## Other Events of Note

**January 7-March 16, Living Glass**—Blown glass sculpture of flowers, plants and animals at the Bolz Conservatory at Olbrich Gardens through March 16.

**February 3-4, Orchid Quest**—10-5, Alliant Energy Center. One of the largest orchid shows in the Midwest (30 exhibits; over 20 vendors). Admission \$6 one day, \$9 both days, plus parking. For more info: [www.orchidguild.org/](http://www.orchidguild.org/)

**February 9, Mushroom Dinner**—presented by the Wisconsin Mycological Society, February 9, 6:p.m. drinks/7:00 p.m. dinner. Bacchus Restaurant, 924 East Wells, Milwaukee, \$60. Payment must be received in advance. Mail check to John Fetzer, 1309 S. 73<sup>rd</sup> Street, West Allis, WI 53214. RSVP [jpfetzer@aol.com](mailto:jpfetzer@aol.com)

**March 3-18, Olbrich Gardens Spring Flower Show**—Spring Show Plant Sale Tuesday, March 20, 10:00 a.m. while supplies last.

**April 7, Orchid Sale**—Olbrich Gardens, 10:00 a.m. while supplies last. Hosted by the Orchid Growers Guild.

**April 20, 2-6, April 21, 9-1, Leaf Mulch Sale**—Olbrich Gardens

## Host a Dig for the Plant Sale!

It's hard not to think spring with recent mild weather, so if you know you are going to have plants to divide in the spring, think about hosting a dig and donating plants to the WHPS Plant Sale.

We can provide volunteers, pots, potting soil and plant markers for your dig, turning an all-day job (or more) into a 2-3 hour fun project.

If you would like to host a dig, contact Stephanie O'Neal at [sone2@aol.com](mailto:sone2@aol.com), or 608-256-6108.

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## Philadelphia Update

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For those of you who attended the WHPS trip to Philadelphia a few years back, I thought you might like an update on some gardens we visited! Mark Dwyer and I attended the national Garden Writers' conference held there in late summer.

One of the private gardens belonged to Inta Krombolz. You may not only remember her lovely garden and beautiful sculptures, but also her wonderful generosity, as she had invited us into her home for lunch since it was raining. I've used a large number of images from that visit over and over again in my teaching. Folks, all I can say is, OH MY GOD; if you thought her garden was lovely then, it has just exploded since. She has expanded farther into the wooded area in her creative style, her containers were even more creative and exuberant, and the plantings (including those two striking *Cornus controversa* 'Variegata') have more years on them and were magnificent. She planted the roadside along the fence in a wonderful display. Every corner was breathtaking and a scenic photographic shot. All of us photographers in the group couldn't get enough. She remembered our WHPS group quite fondly and told me to send her regards! Nothing has changed with her charm and hospitality.

If we ever go back as a group, or if you head that way, two other private gardens I need to put you in touch with in addition to Inta's Fox Hollow are Frog Hollow and Ashland Hollow—both outstanding gardens.

We were in Philadelphia because of Longwood's 100th anniversary, so you can imagine to what measures they made us feel welcome. As usual, the gardens were spectacular. I spent an enormous amount of time in the Idea Garden, which gets better and better. The remodel in the Conservatory was outstanding, and Longwood just keeps getting even better. We actually felt what it might be like to be one of Pierre's guests, with a private water/light and fireworks show on the veranda—big bucks spent impressing us there!

But Longwood had nothing on how my favorite garden, Chanticleer, treated us. Food stations placed throughout the gardens pulled people through for a most pleasant evening. The Gardens are better than ever, and Bill's influence is really starting to show. I did notice that the two 'Crimson

Frost' birch from Wisconsin are no longer there! But the gardens I think you would fondly remember are even better. Mark and I went crazy photographing the Teacup Garden—the blue theme this year beat anything I've seen anywhere where in creativity. Two other areas that have matured spectacularly, in my estimation, were the "xeriscape" area on top of the hill near the Ruins Garden (one of the best treatments and designs I've seen for that kind of plant material) and the pond/bog—that has matured into mind boggling splendor! Kudos Bill!

Another estate garden we didn't get to last time worth visiting is Meadowbrook Farm. A lovely estate home with beautiful formal gardens and a superb garden center that helps support the place financially—some wonderful plants, but I didn't buy because I was already struggling with how to bring back all the free plants and products from our exhibit hall!

Also well worth the visit is the W. Atlee Burpee & Co.'s Fordhook Farm (in spite of what you feel about Heronswood, George Ball is a most generous host). The estate home there is lovely, and they have extensive gardens all over the property that display their products as gardens, not trial beds—many of you would spend lots of time in the kitchen gardens.

I spent some time back at the Morris Arboretum. It is still awe inspiring to see species of trees ages older than anywhere else, and they have some nice, new additions to the ornamental portions of the gardens. I'm going to look forward to the comparisons in the images I took of the same places from both visits!

So, more than an update, this is a reminder to those of you who have been there that this is a destination you can return to multiple times that just gets better and continually provides new places to explore. And for anyone who hasn't "done" the Philly area—DO SO! And make sure you plan a fair number of days!

—Ed Lyon, Executive Director, Janesville Rotary Gardens

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### 2007 Perennial Plant of the year—*Nepeta* 'Walker's Low'

The Perennial Plant Association has awarded the title of Perennial Plant of the Year to *Nepeta* 'Walker's Low'. Introduced in 1988 in Europe, Walker's Low catmint has become increasingly popular with each passing year, due to its lovely blue-violet flowers and its long bloom time, attractive grey-green foliage, ease of propagation, lack of pest or disease problems, and low maintenance requirements.

- Hardiness—USDA Zones 3 to 8
- Size—30 to 36 inches tall and wide. Walker's Low is named for a garden and the name is not related to plant size
- Light—Best in full sun, but can tolerate shade in hot climates
- Soil—Prefers well drained soil and neutral pH
- Uses—Good companion plant for early and late blooming plants. Great for perennial borders, but can be used in herb gardens, rock gardens, as a ground cover, or as a container plant.
- Unique Qualities—Will bloom continuously throughout the season if properly pruned. Great for attracting bees, butterflies and other pollinating insects, but is deer and rabbit resistant. Leaves release a wonderful aroma when crushed.

—from the Web site of the Perennial Plant Association, [www.perennialplant.org](http://www.perennialplant.org)

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

**THANK YOU!**

Many thanks to the members who presented images from their gardens at the Member Potpourri in October: Norma Briggs; Rita Dupuis; Frank Greer; Bill Hoernke; Christl Iausly; Richard Mueller; Stephanie O'Neal. Members attending noted that the combination of slides, PowerPoint and video made for one of the best Member Potpourris in memory. We hope to have even more participation in November at the next Potpourri.




**Contribute a photo to the Garden Expo Booth**

This year's Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society display booth at the Garden Expo February 9-11 will again feature photos from member gardens for inspiration and to encourage non-members to join.

If you have a favorite photo from your garden, we'd like you to send the 4" x 6" or 5" x 7" photo to Stephanie O'Neal at 1850 Baird Street, Madison, WI 53713, or email a jpeg of the photo to Stephanie at sone2@aol.com. The photo will not be returned. And please write your name on the back of any photos mailed.

Photos must be received by no later than February 1, 2007.

**Web sites of interest:**

 Recent WHPS speaker Anne Raver notes a favorite Web site in a recent article in the *New York Times*: [www.birds.cornell.edu](http://www.birds.cornell.edu)

 For an article by the Flower Bulb Research Program at Cornell on how to keep paperwhites from flopping over: [www.hort.cornell.edu/index.html](http://www.hort.cornell.edu/index.html)

 The American Conifer Society has a terrific database listing information on conifers with excellent photos at [www.conifersociety.org](http://www.conifersociety.org)

**PLANT SALE INFO WANTED**

**We are presently collecting information on plant sales and plant tours for our annual guide to sales and tours that will be published in the April newsletter.** If you have information on a plant sale or garden tour you would like us to know about, send your info to Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com, or mail it to Stephanie at 1850 Baird Street, Madison, WI 53713 by March 31, 2007.

**WHPS Web site: [www.madison.com/communities/wisconsinhardyplantsociety/](http://www.madison.com/communities/wisconsinhardyplantsociety/)**

*Wisconsin Hardy  
Plant Society*



**January 2007  
Newsletter  
925 Waban Hill  
Madison, WI 53711**

- President—Frank Greer 608-233-4686,  
[frgreer@sbcglobal.net](mailto:frgreer@sbcglobal.net)
- Vice President—Diane Scharkey, [dscharkey@aol.com](mailto:dscharkey@aol.com)
- Treasurer—Laurie Zimmerman, [whps05@yahoo.com](mailto:whps05@yahoo.com)
- Sandy Allen, [DSAMR@chorus.net](mailto:DSAMR@chorus.net)
- Ruth Cadoret, [rcadoret@wisc.edu](mailto:rcadoret@wisc.edu),  
Seed Exchange contact
- John Cannon, [jtcannon@facstaff.wisc.edu](mailto:jtcannon@facstaff.wisc.edu)
- Ed Hasselkus, [erhassel@facstaff.wisc.edu](mailto:erhassel@facstaff.wisc.edu)
- Bill Hoernke, 608-873-4994, [bhoernke@chorus.net](mailto:bhoernke@chorus.net)
- Jane Gahlman, 608-837-2317, [jmgahlman@hotmail.com](mailto:jmgahlman@hotmail.com)
- Jane LaFlash, [jlafash@wisc.edu](mailto:jlafash@wisc.edu)
- Terri Maliszewski-Kane, [terrimk1@hotmail.com](mailto:terrimk1@hotmail.com),  
Olbrich Liaison
- Stephanie O'Neal 608-256-6108, [sone2@aol.com](mailto:sone2@aol.com),  
publications & Plant Sale contact
- Susan Robertson [robertson.susan@mail.da.state.wi.us](mailto:robertson.susan@mail.da.state.wi.us)
- Phyllis Sanner, [phyllis\\_sanner20002000@yahoo.com](mailto:phyllis_sanner20002000@yahoo.com)
- Rita Thomas, [rita\\_thomas@charter.net](mailto:rita_thomas@charter.net),  
Web site contact
- Mary Trewartha, [marytrewartha@yahoo.com](mailto:marytrewartha@yahoo.com)

**Someone you know interested in joining WHPS?**

Contact WHPS Treasurer Laurie Zimmerman at [whps05@yahoo.com](mailto:whps05@yahoo.com), (608) 838-4477