Newsletter of the



Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society

Penennial Notes

December 2008

WHPS COMING EVENTS!

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

THIS WEEK!

Wednesday, December 10, *Annual Meeting, Seed Exchange and Member Potpourri*. Always a fun event, with the Seed Exchange at 6:30 p.m. (and continued after the meeting), followed by the Annual Meeting and then presentations by some of our members of photos and video from their gardens. If you have 10-20 photos you'd like to present at the Member Potpourri, contact Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com or call her at 608-256-6108. You will need to put the photos on a CD or flash drive, which will be loaded into the presentation laptop prior to the start of the meeting. If you want to learn more about saving seeds and the Seed Exchange, go to our Web site at http://www.madison.com/communities/ wisconsinhardyplantsociety/ (can also Google "Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society") and click on "Newsletter Articles" to find *Sept 2002 Seed Exchange FAQ.*

CORRECTED DATE. MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Sunday, January 18, 2009, *Member Potluck and Program*. 10:00 a.m.-noon. In addition to catching up with friends and enjoying some great food, *WHPS President Frank Greer will present photos from the recent trip to Ireland*. With some cooperation from the weather, members will also be able to take a walk through the winter gardens, or enjoy a walk through the tropical conservatory. The buffet opens at 10:00 a.m., so plan on setting up your potluck items before then, and don't forget to bring your own plates and utensils. Juice, lemonade and coffee will be provided, and there is a soda machine just outside the meeting room.

February 13, 14, 15, 2009 *WPT Garden Expo*. WHPS will once again host a booth at the Garden Expo, focusing on photos from member gardens. We are also sponsoring a speaker on Saturday, 2/14. Ed Lyon's presentation will track two shade gardens he has created, including his new garden in Oregon from a yard of grass to a shade garden filled with a wide variety of perennials. **If you would like to volunteer to work the WHPS booth** (with free admission to the Expo), please contact Stephanie O'Neal at 608-256-6108, sone2@aol.com.

Wednesday, February 18, 2009. It is all too rare that "howto" gardening books are written by noted nurserymen with dirt under their nails. One of the most highly respected in our area, Roy Diblik, co-owner Northwind Perennial Farm, Springfield, WI, not only has written the definitive perennial how-to, he also brings his distinctive perspective and philosophy on the need for plant communities, focuses on plants that grow in regular soil, suggests plantings that are compatible in water and sun requirements, and shows dozens of plant schemes divided into categories (calm, fresh, elegant and friendly). The title says it all: Roy Diblik's Small Perennial Gardens, The "Know Maintenance" Approach ("...a cookbook approach to solving the garden recipe problem."). After 30 years experience, growing 40,000 plants annually, input into the installation of the Lurie Garden in Millennium Park and incorporating educational display gardens into Northwind, Roy is more than qualified to talk about what plants need.

Wednesday, March 18, 2009, *speaker Dr. Darrel Apps*, one of the most highly recognized daylily breeders. Called "Dr. Daylily" by *The New York Times*, App's love affair with

daylilies began 57 years ago, growing them under the eaves of the one-room school house he attended. His Woodside Nursery was one of the largest on the East coast (sold to new owners in 2007), with 14 acres in South Jersey producing more than 400,000 plants annually, including 300 hybrids that he produced from two distinct varieties. Ten of his hybrids have been patented, and he produced a line of everblooming daylilies marketed under the Happy Ever Appster® brand. These plants all descended from his famous 'Happy Returns', and extended the color range of rebloomers beyond 'Stella de Oro'. It is likely that many appear in local gardens, including 'Apricot Sparkles', 'Big Time Happy', 'Just Plum Happy', 'Red Hot Returns' and 'Sunset Returns', just to name a few. A graduate of UW-Madison, he also taught ornamental horticulture and did research at the University of Kentucky before developing the renowned Woodside Nursery.

Wednesday, April 15, 2009, A Passion for Hosta,

Timothy Blumentritt is co-owner of Shades of Green (shadesofgreenusa.com) in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Shades of Green specializes in hostas, with an astounding array of specimens and plants for sale. Hostas are offered through mail order, or retailed at Family Tree Floral in West Salem. The nursery features over 325 varieties for sale and approximately 500 varieties in the display gardens. Plants sold from the nursery are soil grown and hand-dug so that they adapt quickly to garden soils. You may think you know the genus Hosta, but we invite you to join us as Tim shares his passion and expertise on this ubiquitous and reliable mainstay to every perennial garden.

-Those Darn Bugs!

I am generally not one to use herbicides or pesticides in my garden. But the mosquitoes and Japanese beetles this summer forced me to compromise on this.

My garden was on the June 25 WHPS evening tour. I was certain not one single person would do more than stick their heads around the corner before running to their cars to escape the gazillion mosquitoes in my back yard.



I stopped at Ace Hardware on Cottage

Grove Road and picked up a bottle of Cutter Bug Free Backyard. This is a product that you attach your hose to and spray around the yard. I was concerned about damage to my plants and worried that I might kill off all the beneficial insects on the east side, but I was also desperate. Following the directions on the product, I sprayed early on the morning of the tour.

It was a miracle! There were NO mosquitoes that evening. I stood in the garden for four hours with no insect repellant on and had no problems. The bottle said it would work up to four weeks, which I found unbelievable, but indeed I did not feel a need to spray again for 3 ½ weeks. I also noticed no plant damage and had plenty of other insects in the garden.

I later asked Phil Pellitteri about the product and he said as long as you only sprayed a couple times a season and not, say, every week, there should not be damage to plants. I also asked if I had gone a bit overboard with safety glasses, face mask, gloves and long sleeves/pants while spraying. His reply was that you can never be too careful when using any product.

I have a large birch tree that completely canopies my back yard. The Japanese beetles love birch trees and at times they were literally raining down from the tree, dropping on other plants and my head. Many, many leaves were skeletonized and fell, making it seem like autumn for much of the summer. I do not want a repeat of this next year.Again, I asked Phil Pellitteri about this and he recommended Bayer Advanced Tree and Shrub Insect Control (I got a 32 oz. bottle for \$19.99 at Farm and Fleet). Since my tree is so large, I needed two bottles and have already applied it around the base of the tree for next year. It is taken up by the tree and makes the leaves unpalatable to the insects. Phil says it works.

I'll let you know next summer.

—Jane LaFlash

Every year, usually about June 13, the mosquitoes appear and make it impossible for me to work in (forget about sitting and enjoying) my garden. I'm either walking around spasmodically swiping them away, or completely covered in clothing head to toe, including a black net mosquito hat that I can barely see through and is so hot to wear that my glasses fog and I can't see where I'm going!

I've tried sprays and coils and sticks and pellets and torches and lemon dish deter-

gent on strategically placed plates and sticking dryer sheets through the button holes in my shirt and spraying Listerine. I can't afford the propane powered machines and don't want to have to bomb my yard and kill off all the beneficial insects, which I have designed my garden to attract. The entire summer usually finds me walking very fast through my garden, cursing and waving wildly—ahhh gardening, such a restful summer activity!

I heard about Cutter Bug Free Back Yard from Jane LaFlash and hemmed and hawed for weeks, worried about doing damage to the ecosystem that has finally begun to develop in my garden. Finally, I bought some at Menards (5,000 square feet of coverage for under \$10).

I sprayed on a Wednesday evening two days before an expected visit by friends, and by the next evening I could walk through my garden at a leisurely pace with no—I'm not kidding, NO—mosquitoes bothering me. This was beyond miracle. I could actually walk, work and occasionally sit and enjoy a day in the garden with no mosquito swarms. And I still had butterflies and saw fireflies and spiders and I was so happy I was practically weeping with relief everytime I went out, seriously.

It was three weeks before I began to notice them again. By that time, fall was about to begin and I managed to make it through the rest of the season without spraying again. But you can bet that next year on June 13 when those mosquitoes start to find me and make it impossible to enjoy the thing I love to do so much in spring and summer that I will spray, and hopefully only have to spray two or three times at the most to make it through the gardening season.

As for Japanese Beetles, I'm a picker not a sprayer and the battle ground is my Bonica rose and Purpleleaf Sandcherrys—part of my daily routine. I'll wait for Jane's report before tackling this foe with anything more.

-Stephanie O'Neal

WHPS Proposed Trips for 2009

The WHPS Trip Committee has met and is recommending the following trips for the coming year. As you can see dates are not yet final and more information will be included in a future newsletter. All of the trips would include a combination of public and private gardens, with the promise of a nursery visit (or two).

Woodstock, Illinois— One-day trip—June 13

Michigan—4-5 day trip—July 29-August 2

Iowa—Two-day trip—October 3-4

NOTE: The trip planned to South Carolina has been cancelled, due to high costs and the state of the economy.

Olbrich Botanical Gardens and Allen Centennial Gardens Present **Midwest Gardening Symposium: Incredible and Edible Gardens** February 19, 2009, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. Olbrich Botanical Gardens, 3330 Atwood Avenue, Madison

Four prestigious authors, five hands-on experts with practical and useful advice geared to the Midwest with its unique regional environmental and cultural considerations. We have gathered them for a full day of education and camaraderie, with time to plan for the 2009 season. Take a winter break from books, catalogs, the Internet and blogs to learn from actual people who have dealt with real situations, as well as sharing successes and failures with fellow attendees.

In 2006, at the American Public Garden Association conference in San Francisco, keynote speaker Elizabeth Goldstein, President, California State Parks Foundation, started the conference with this statement, "The environmental movement is dead." After the gasps of 650 attendees died down, she went on to explain that, whereas there was a time individuals felt they could make an impact in the degradation of the environment, current news was so overwhelmingly bad that the general population was giving up any hope that personal efforts were making any difference.

Midwest gardeners know that their love affair with plant materials does make an impact in an age when forests are disappearing for the sake of parking lots. This symposium has been developed for gardeners and non-gardeners alike to address contemporary concerns, including conserving nonrenewable resources, reclaiming the health of our soils, bringing back the safety and flavor of our foods, reducing high maintenance in home landscapes and other issues, but from a regional and local perspective. And for the bona fide gardener...the always welcome opportunity to view new plant materials!

This symposium is for a wide variety of people. If you are a gardener, come to learn how you can expand your plant palette to enhance seasonal splendor, yet increase functionality. Discover how locality affects your perennial plantings. If you love growing your own produce, investigate new plants that are as decorative as they are functional, learn about heirloom advantages in flavor, and discover how to design your own kitchen garden. If you are concerned about where your food is grown and how safely and if you want to know how you as an individual can make an environmental impact within your own yard, come explore options beyond the farmers' markets you may never have considered. If you are a student or Master Gardener, expand your knowledge base and learn about contemporary concerns. If you are in the green industry, update yourself on new customer needs and trends as well as fresh ways to incorporate plants into the landscape. Regardless of your interests, come expand your horizons.

Fritz Haeg: Edible Estates: Attack on the Front Lawn The Edible Estates project proposes the replacement of the domestic front lawn with a highly productive edible landscape that reflects a nationwide interest in and revival of the "Victory Garden" movement. It was initiated by architect and artist Fritz Haeg on Independence Day, 2005, with the planting of the first regional prototype garden in the geographic center of the United States, Salina, Kansas. Since then five more prototype gardens have been created—in Lakewood, California; Maplewood, New Jersey; London, England; Austin, Texas; Baltimore, Maryland—and will ultimately be established in nine cities across the United States. *Edible Estates: Attack on the Front Lawn* documents his first four gardens with firsthand accounts written by the owners and with garden plans and photographs illustrating the creation of the gardens—from ripping up the grass to harvesting a wide variety of fruits, vegetables and herbs. In this presentation, Haeg will explain the concerns associated with America's love affair with the lawn. He will provide alternatives from his book and from owners of other edible front yards around the country, as well as some helpful resources to guide you in making your own Edible Estate.

Like a system of crop rotation, Fritz Haeg works between his architecture and design practice Fritz Haeg Studio, the happenings and gatherings of Sundown Salon (now schoolhouse), the ecology initiatives of Gardenlab (including Edible Estates) and other various combinations of building, designing, gardening, exhibiting, dancing, organizing and talking. Haeg has produced projects and exhibited work at Tate Modern, London; the Whitney Museum of American Art; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; Casco Office of Art, Design and Theory, Utrecht; Mass MoCA; the Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; the Wattis Institute, San Francisco; the Netherlands Architecture Institute, Maastricht: The Indianapolis Museum of Art: and the MAK Center, Los Angeles, among other institutions. He studied architecture in Italy at the Istituto Universitario di Architettura di Venezia and Carnegie Mellon University, where he received his B. Arch. He has variously taught in architecture, design, and fine art programs at CalArts, Art Center College of Design, Parsons, and the University of Southern California. In 2006, he initiated Sundown Schoolhouse, the self-organized educational environment originally based in his geodesic dome in Los Angeles. Now that he is mostly on the road for projects, exhibitions and talks, it continues as an itinerant companion to his various initiatives. (www.fritzhaeg.com)

Jennifer Bartley: Designing the New Kitchen Garden

Jennifer Bartley spent a blissful childhood picking wildflowers, black raspberries and building secret forts in the ravine near her home. She once ran away to a special nook formed by the branches of an apple tree growing at the foot of an ancient Indian mound, picked a green apple and savored the enclosure of this special place until she wasn't mad anymore. Years later she realized the power of welldesigned spaces to change our minds.

She is a registered landscape architect and holds a bachelors degree and a master's degree in landscape architecture from Ohio State University, where she has served as an adjunct continued on next page

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professor in the design studio. She is founder of the design firm American Potager LLC, and is passionate about creating outdoor garden spaces that are well designed, functional and beautiful—gardens that feed the soul as well as the stomach. She is committed to choosing the right plant for the right place and is an expert in creating seasonal, and edible, sustainable garden designs.

She is the author and illustrator of the book *Designing the New Kitchen Garden: An American Potager Handbook*, published by Timber Press and is working on her second book entitled Seasonal Harvest.

How do we create the beautiful kitchen garden the French call the potager? How can we integrate this into our residential landscapes so that we walk out our kitchen door to gather edible flowers, basil for the pasta and heirloom greens for our salad, yet want to linger because the garden is well designed? All successful design projects begin with the inspiration of great gardens. The most famous kitchen gardens in the world are in France, and we will look at images from five and glean their design principles. Three American potager gardens and a few chefs' gardens will also be presented in this delightful talk that will have you ordering and growing your own heirloom vegetables and flowers so that your garden fits your landscape and attracts beneficial insects, hummingbirds and butterflies.

David Cavagnaro: Back to the Future, Heirlooms for the Midwest Gardener

In recent years, there has been a resurgence in interest in heirloom plants, whether for flavor, fragrance and other "lost" attributes; connection to the organic/safe-food movement; historical significance for the older home; or simply nostalgia.

David Cavagnaro, known as the "Fork-to-Fork" organic gardener and a professional photographer, brings personal experience—with three acres of gardens and work with Seed Savers Exchange—as he displays heirloom vegetables, fruits and flowers through his stunning professional photography. Over 15 years of intensive flower, fruit and vegetable gardening in Central California, and eight subsequent years managing the genetic preservation gardens for Seed Savers Exchange in Iowa lead David to establish his own three acres of personal flower and vegetable gardens near Decorah. This expanded his expertise into transforming lawns into food-producing gardens and an emphasis on the kitchen garden and edible landscaping.

As a professional photographer, Cavagnaro has contributed to over 45 national and international books on natural and horticultural subjects. He has had museum exhibits at the Oakland Museum of Natural History, Point Reyes National Seashore Visitor Center, the Smithsonian "Seeds of Change" exhibit and many others. His books include: *Feathers with Frans Lanting, The Pumpkin People, Almost Home, This Living Earth* and *Living Water*. His passion for the natural beauty of the earth is conveyed through his gardening experiments and his photographs.

Cavagnaro says, "By 1970, I had begun to return to a childhood passion: gardening. Over fifteen years of intensive flower, fruit, and vegetable gardening in Central California resulted in the beginnings of a new 'career' in horticultural photography. Eight subsequent years managing the genetic preservation gardens for the Seed Savers Exchange in Iowa helped build a definitive file of heirloom flower and vegetable photos and expanded my nature file broadly with Midwestern subjects. Three acres of personal flower and vegetable gardens now afford a living palette of opportunities for highly personalized garden design and horticultural photography. Throughout this personal evolution, interpreting and celebrating the beauty of this world we share has remained the prime inspiration behind my work. Whether through direct or vicarious experience with nature or through the co-creative process of gardening, helping others to reconnect with the Earth remains my fervent passion." (www.naturalight.net)

Janet Macunovich: Local Color

We all deserve more and better color from our perennial gardens. Yet improving what's already colorful isn't a simple matter of addition or a prescription that works across the gardening world. After all, a plant that blooms to say "spring is over" in the Great Lakes, heralds "high summer" to a Scot and "fall" to an Icelander. Selections made for fantastic hue in one part of the world may be duds elsewhere. And the tones and other influences of indigenous plants, light and even building materials can alter perennial color. Here's a chance to learn some color sequences and tricks for your own lovely locality.

Janet Macunovich owns a landscape and design company called Perennial Favorites. A garden designer and lecturer, she also teaches classes in garden design and maintenance techniques in Michigan, where she lives and has been called "the lady with the flower house, the one with no lawn." Janet has taught at Cleveland Botanic Garden, Chicago Botanic Garden, the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, Perennial Plant Association, and University of Michigan Matthaei Botanical Gardens. She has been a featured presenter of such workshops as "One-Hour Per Month Gardening" for over 18 years, averaging 1,000 students per year. Janet's weekly gardening column is distributed by email to thousands of Midwest gardeners, and she also shares her knowledge through radio programs in the Michigan area on a regular basis. A professional gardener, author and educator, Janet is known for her down-to-earth style, and for taking the mystery out of gardening. She has been designing, planting, and maintaining gardens for more than 25 years.

Janet has developed and presented garden and landscape seminars and workshops to meet the specific needs of organizations nationwide. Her horticulture education includes coursework at botanical gardens, colleges and universities, and she is an Advanced Master Gardener. She has authored nine practical books, including 8 Months of Color, Caring for Perennials, Designing Your Gardens and Landscapes: 12 Simple Steps for Successful Planning. Janet

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has also hosted a radio show, published a weekly newspaper column and is currently working on a new book on practical pruning of both woody and herbaceous plants titled *Cutting Back the Rambunctious Garden*.

Mark Dwyer: Ornamental Edibles

Do you love garden-fresh vegetables and herbs, but own a property that seems too small to devote exclusive space to their needs? Are you fond of home-grown produce, but not ready to give up your sunny perennial beds in order to grow them in a traditional manner? The good news is that many vegetables, herbs, and other select plants don't need to be segregated in a suburban-style vegetable plot.Even in a small city garden, tomatoes and turnips are content growing alongside peonies and black-eyed-susans, provided they receive sunshine and a little timely attention. Besides, many edibles are as beautiful as they are nutritious, so it's a shame to hide them away in vegetable gardens lined in rows like soldiers when they can contribute their own charm to an informal border or container as part of an aesthetic combination.

These "ornamental edibles" can do double duty in the garden both as beautiful role-players and as nutritious additions to meals. Vegetables are no longer relegated to the vegetable garden. Instead, they're used for their beauty as well as their bounty. Many traditional garden plants also have edible qualities and it might amaze you that the same beauty that appears in your flower beds may be equally beautiful on your plate!

Director of Horticulture for Rotary Botanical Gardens (Janesville, WI), Mark Dwyer has established his reputation as an innovator in demonstrating horticultural trends in exuberant and spectacular displays. While known for extensive seasonal displays and perennial collections, Rotary Gardens has displayed over 500 varieties of vegetables in the past three years, with a focus on heirlooms and ornamental edibles. Collections have included heirloom tomatoes, heirloom bell peppers, eggplants, amaranth, basils and hot peppers.

A popular speaker for his wit and candor, Mark is developing a regional following that appreciates his down-to-earth and practical advice. Ornamental edibles is a trend that Dwyer has been putting to use at Rotary Botanical Gardens while others are only just catching on to the popularity. As a proficient photographer, his images will make an impact and inspire you to find ways to use ornamental edibles in your landscape. Visit www.rotarygardens.org for more information regarding Rotary Gardens, and you're invited to visit Mark's daily gardening blog at www.rotarygardens.blogspot.com.

\$99 Olbrich member /\$119 non-member/\$99 Educational rate—horticulture students and certified Master Gardeners. Register by phone at 608-246-4550 or by mail, or register on-line at: http://www. cityofmadison.com/olbrich/vsiwebtrac or by phone 608/246-4550 or by mail.

Details at http://www.olbrich.org/

ROTARY GARDENS' HOLIDAY LIGHTS SHOW!

Come enjoy Rotary Gardens' 14th annual Holiday Lights Show from December 13 thru December 31 (not open on Dec. 24 or 25). The show runs from 5:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m. with the last ticket sold at 8 pm.



Tickets are \$5 for adults and \$3 for kids. Tickets purchased in advance are \$1 off those prices.

The lights show includes 280,000 lights, over 90 specialty displays (many botanically themed), walking paths with over 2,000 half-gallon milk jug luminaries, and lots of holiday spirit. It takes about 30 minutes to walk thru the gardens for this event. The visitors center will feature a large model train display from the Wisconsin Garden Railway Society, along with refreshments, nightly enter-tainment, a gift shop sale and a quilt display from the Rock Valley Quilters Guild.

For more information, please call (608) 752-3885 or check out our Web site at www.rotarygardens.org for more event specifics. This is a vital fundraiser for us and all proceeds benefit the continued operation and development of Rotary Gardens.

-Mark Dwyer, Director of Horticulture

Olbrich's Holiday Express — Flower and Model Train Show

December 6-21, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. daily

Twinkling lights, festive poinsettias, tiny landscapes, and large-scale model trains: all aboard for Olbrich's Holiday Express!

Using large-scale model trains, Olbrich's horticulture staff is showcasing miniature landscapes among hundreds of colorful poinsettias. During Olbrich's Holiday Express, members of the Wisconsin Garden Railway Society come from all over the state to show off their large-scale model trains.

Relax with friends and family and enjoy tea, coffee, hot chocolate, and cookies 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. Admission to the tropical Bolz Conservatory is included. For more information, visit Olbrich's website at www.olbrich.org or call 608-246-4550.

A TIMELY SERVICE!

WHPS Business Member Franklin Kellet offers snow removal services—residential and commercial.

Contact Franklin at 608-345-1992 seasonslawn@aol.com



What's happening at Rotary Gardens?

Mark Dwyer of Rotary Gardens has been faithfully updating a daily blog for the gardens since March earlier this year. For pictures and a daily dialog about Rotary Gardens, go to: http://www.rotarygardens.blogspot.com/

Do you have a garden Web site or blog that you visit often and would like to recommend to our members? Just send along the URL and why you enjoy the site to Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com

Familiar Garden in Print

I was reading the latest (December 2008) issue of *Garden Gate* this a.m. and one of the photos caught my eye—I was sure I had been in the garden that was pictured. It turns out that I was, along with everyone else who went on the WHPS Portland trip last year. The article entitled *Restful Retreat* on pp 32-37 is about Tom Vetter's garden. It brought back good memories!

-Barb Herreid

Emerald Ash Borers—on the march?

Most of you probably know that in August the Emerald Ash Borer was positively identified in Ozaukee County in Southeastern Wisconsin and has been identified in other areas since then. One way to keep them from spreading any faster is to purchase and use local firewood. Do not use any firewood brought in from other states, campsites, etc.

For more information, go to: http://www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov/#TOI

<u>WHPS Web site</u>: www.madison.com/communities/wisconsinhardyplantsociety/



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