



Perennial Notes

December 2009

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. Programs at Olbrich will conclude promptly at 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, December 9, Annual Meeting, Seed Exchange and Member Potpourri! This is the meeting where you can show off your garden, give us views of favorite gardens you've visited, or even show an artistic garden video you've created. We'll confirm officers and directors for the coming year, and announce recommendations for donating funds raised through the plant sale. And before the meeting, members are invited to bring seeds to share with other members. *To learn more about saving seeds, see the article on page five.*

We encourage members to bring with them 10-15 photos of their garden to present at our Member Potpourri. This can be a PowerPoint presentation, photos in a folder, even DVD. **If you have taken photos of your garden or photos of gardens you have admired, before December 9 please contact Stephanie** at 608-256-6108 or email her at sone2@aol.com to let us know you will be presenting. It's fun, it's easy and this is always a favorite member program.

Sunday, January 17, 2010, 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 I have been working with Jane Gahlman today on a presentation for the January Brunch. Our working title is 'Magnificent Michigan Gardens', featuring the gardens visited during the WHPS Michigan garden tour held July 30 - August 2, 2009.

Our 2010 Schedule of Meetings

We are presently working to firm up speakers for upcoming meetings, but please mark your calendar as we promise you a great selection of programs in 2010!

February 12, 13, 14, 2010 WHPS Booth at the WPT Garden Expo. The Garden Expo is a great way to bring gardeners together inside as winter continues its grip on the outside world. We'll have more on the Expo in the next newsletter, but we hope you will consider signing up for a shift at our booth as we present photos of member gardens and encourage membership in our organization.

Additional Program & Event Dates in 2010

Wednesday, February 17, 2010

Wednesday, March 17, 2010

Wednesday, April 21, 2010

Saturday, May 15, 2010 WHPS Plant Sale

Summer Garden Tours July 13 and July 29

Wednesday, August 18, 2010 Potluck Dinner and Walk Through Olbrich Gardens

Wednesday, September 15, 2010

Wednesday, October 20, 2010

Wednesday, November 17, 2010

Wednesday, December 1, 2010

England Trip 2010

A reminder that you can still sign up for the 2010 Trip to England. The trip will officially begin SUNDAY June 13, 2010 at Gatwick Airport, ending back at Gatwick on Monday, June 21 FOR THE FLIGHT HOME on Tuesday, June 22. Among the gardens to be visited (and this is just a small sample) are Mottisfont Abbey Garden, Wisley, Great Dixter, Sissinghurst, Beth Chatto's Garden, Canterbury Cathedral and gardens, and Queen Victoria's summer home and garden on the Isle of Wight.

For a complete itinerary email

Frank Greer at

frgreer@sbcglobal.net.



Cost will be between \$2200 and \$2350 (\$300 single supplement extra), depending on the number of people who sign up. Cost does not include airfare. A \$200 deposit is required to hold your place.

DUES NOTICES WILL BE MAILED IN JANUARY

If you have already paid your dues through 2010, you will not receive a dues renewal form.

*All through the long winter, I dream of my garden. On the first day of spring,
I dig my fingers deep into the soft earth. I can feel its energy, and my spirits soar.* —Helen Hayes

OTHER EVENTS OF NOTE

BEASTS IN THE CONSERVATORY:

CARNIVOROUS PLANTS

September 8, 2009-January 3, 2010. 10 am - 4 pm Monday - Saturday, 10 am - 5 pm Sunday, Olbrich Gardens.

See the carnivorous plants living in the Bolz Conservatory up close! Learn how carnivorous plants attract and eat live insects. This walk-through exhibit will explain how each plant has its own tricks to attract prey. Some carnivorous plants are brightly colored or sweetly scented, while others have parts that are sticky, making it difficult for prey to escape. The Bolz Conservatory is home to more than 650 species of tropical plants. Enjoy a stroll through exotic plants, bright flowers, a rushing waterfall, fragrant orchids, and free-flying birds.

OLBRICH'S HOLIDAY EXPRESS

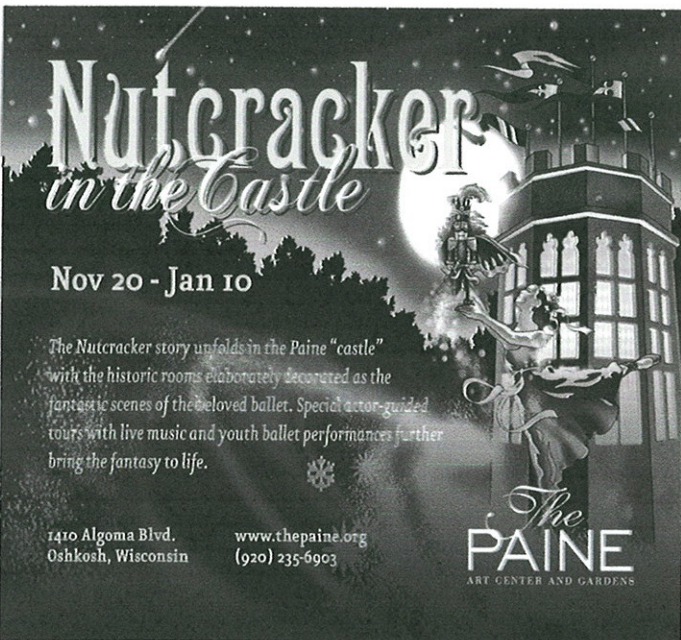
December 5-31. 10 am to 4 pm daily. Closed at 2 p.m. on December 24, closed on December 25 and January 1.

Large-scale model trains wind through festive gingerbread houses and hundreds of colorful poinsettias!

Members of the Wisconsin Garden Railway Society come from all over the state to show off their large-scale model trains during Olbrich's Holiday Express. This year, trains wind through an enchanted land of fanciful gingerbread houses created by Madison area bakers. **Admission**—\$3 for adults, \$2 for children ages 3 to 12; children 2 and under are free, Free for Olbrich Botanical Society Members; admission is free for everyone on Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to noon; Admission to the tropical Bolz Conservatory is included.

HOLIDAY LIGHT SHOW, Rotary Botanical Gardens in

Janesville, December 11-13, 18-23, 26-31 and January 2-3, 2010. Doors open 5:00 p.m.; last ticket sold at 8:00 p.m. Illuminated garden pathways guide visitors on an evening stroll through the various themed light displays throughout the botanical gardens. Step inside to enjoy a warm beverage as you watch The Wisconsin Garden Railway Society's model trains. Surround yourself with wonderful quilted pieces from the Rock Valley Quilter's Guild, along with nightly entertainment and visits from Santa! Tickets are \$4 adults (12 and up); \$2 youth (2 to 11); Admission- at the door \$5 adults (12 and up); \$3 youth (2 to 11).



Nuttercracker
in the Castle

Nov 20 - Jan 10

The Nutcracker story unfolds in the Paine "castle" with the historic rooms elaborately decorated as the fantastic scenes of the beloved ballet. Special actor-guided tours with live music and youth ballet performances further bring the fantasy to life.

1410 Algoma Blvd.
Oshkosh, Wisconsin

www.thepaine.org
(920) 235-6903

The PAINE
ART CENTER AND GARDENS

A Tree for all Seasons

Like many of you, I, too, have been introduced to very desirable woody plants by Ed Hasselkus that now grace our garden. One of these woody plants is *Acer griseum*, which is commonly called the Paper Bark Maple.



The Paper Bark Maple is native to China and was introduced into cultivation in 1901. In 1953, the Morton Arboretum in Lisle, Illinois, obtained their first plants of *Acer griseum*. The Paper Bark Maple is rated as hardy in USDA Zones 5-7/8 with a height and spread of 15 to 25 feet. Hardiness has not been an issue in our Zone 4b/5a garden.

In our garden, the Paper Bark Maple is a small vase shaped tree. The small deep green trifoliate leaves turn a gorgeous



scarlet red in the fall. The cinnamon-colored bark provides a pleasing backdrop to the foliage and an unexpected contrast to the winter snow. With age the bark begins to exfoliate, reminding one of parchment paper, hence the common name, "Paper Bark Maple." Through out the growing season and into the winter the Paper Bark Maple is focal point of interest in our garden.

Visitors to the garden will invariably inquire about the Paper Bark Maple, which is quite uncommon in cultivation. Most of the seed, though quite abundantly produced, is not viable. Each year, if I am lucky, I may notice a couple of seedlings in the gardens surrounding the tree. Though uncommon, the Paper Bark Maple is indeed a tree for all seasons and a worthy consideration for the garden.

—Conrad J. Wrzesinski

Host a Dig for the Plant Sale!

Even though you've put the garden to bed, take a good look and see if you have plants that you need to divide or give away next spring.

If think you'll have at least five flats or more, you can host a dig. We provide volunteers, pots, potting soil and plant markers, turning an all-day job (or more) into a 2-3 hour fun project.

If you would like to host a dig in 2010, contact Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com, or 608-256-6108.

If you have a couple of unusual plants ready to be divided, we welcome the contribution of those plants to the sale.

WHPS Summer Tour to Northern Illinois— Happy Hostas, Art in the Garden, Conifers Galore, Rich's Stories and Some Great Tips

Even on a rainy Saturday morning this past summer WHPS members were excited to have a chance to visit four gardens and Rich's Foxwillow Pines nursery in northern Illinois. (The rain was a piece of cake compared to the all-day downpour on the 2008 trip to the Chicago Botanic Garden.)

The first garden, home of Jim and Jerry Lee, was a hosta wonderland in various shades of green with bright splashes of yellow (everyone was very interested in Hosta 'Vim and Vigor') and occasional pieces of garden art and whimsy, including some interesting stakes made out of three-foot rebar. A steady sprinkle did not deter our members (see picture right).

As the rain finally began to fade and the walking became easier, we visited the garden of the Lees' neighbor, Mary Laice Bernardin, which emphasized art in the landscape and was fascinating for the striking pieces around every bend and emerging (as in the photo below) from the creek and the lamium and other groundcovers. It also included a charming garage decor that had annuals in window baskets and a gray dog forever standing guard at the door (see below right).

The garden of John and Margaret Havlis was a conifer lover's paradise, and most of them were placed for the future size of the conifer. This is something many of us should think about more often, although I was told that the Pseudolarix in a small bed many of us were oohing and ahing over would have to be moved soon or it's 30-foot height would become a problem. It also had a terrific beech espalier on the back of the house whose dark purple leaves looked perfect against the gray of the wall. I also really liked the idea they had for replacing a splashblock with rows of smooth stones in a splashblock shape.



From there we were off to visit Rich's Foxwillow Pines Nursery (www.richsfoxwillowpines.com). As we enjoyed lunch under the large oak tree, we were treated to great stories by Rich Eyre himself, his wife and co-owner Susan's kind hospitality and, of course, shopping (with discount!).



We then had a chance to visit Rich and Cheryl's home garden. Needless to say the conifers were plentiful. Most of us were especially taken with a horizontal Ginkgo at the corner of the patio. If Rich had put a flat of that conifer in front of us, it would have sold out in minutes.

Our final garden of the day was the small urban garden of Tricia McCoy, with a welcoming front landscaping and a view from her second-floor deck that overlooked the backyard of conifers, shrubs and perennials. The garden also included some simple yet interesting touches, like a hosta (Paul's Glory'?) in a small wooden wheelbarrow with some sedum trailing over the side and a half-round stone used in place of a stoop at the bottom of the small side door to the garage.



The bus ride back was full of great memories and ideas and time to write a few notes. Those of us who can't always make the extended trips really appreciate these fun and garden-filled day trips!

—Stephanie O'Neal

The Great Gardening Workout—Grow Fitness and Health in Your Garden

Reprinted from *Bottom Line's Daily Health News* June 30, 2009, http://www.bottomlinecrets.com/articl.html?article_id=49119

Gardening may be one of the very best-for-you activities around. Not only do many of us love the whole process of planning, planting and cultivating our little corners of the earth, but growing things like herbs, fruits and vegetables also provides nutritional, environment, financial and—according to new research—significant fitness benefits. According to Candice Shoemaker, PhD., a Kansas State University horticulturist who has conducted numerous studies on the physical activities involved in gardening, working daily outdoors is a great way for older people to meet the physical activity recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which urges at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity most days of the week.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN THE GARDEN

Current research being conducted by Dr. Shoemaker and her colleagues compares the long-term health of non-gardeners, gardeners (those whose gardening doesn't meet the CDC definition of moderate physical activity) and active gardeners (those whose gardening can be classified as moderate physical activity). Early findings showed that the "active" gardeners are in significantly better physical health than the other two groups—and that both the gardening groups have greater hand strength and pinch force (two areas often weakened with age) than the non-gardeners.

Previous research had found that gardening tasks that use the whole body (like raking) meet the CDC and American College of Sports Medicine definition of moderate intensity physical activity. And Dr. Shoemaker points out that all that lifting and stretching involved in gardening can improve body strength and flexibility.

GET READY TO GARDEN

Is there a way to get in shape for gardening? I asked Paula Kramer, PhD., chair of the department of occupational therapy, University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, an avid gardener herself, to suggest some warm-up activities. Her advice was to practice some range-of-motion stretching of arms, back and torso (holding each stretch at least 20 seconds each time) for several days before digging in.

- Arm stretch: Stand up straight and reach for the ceiling. Push both arms as high as you can, then stretch each arm separately—also aiming to reach as high as possible.
- Back stretch: Lean over and let your arms dangle—there's no need to touch your toes. The "downward facing dog" yoga pose (with hands and feet flat on the ground, back arched in a "V") is another good back stretch.
- Torso stretch: Stand with arms straight out to the side and twist slowly to each side. You can even do this while sitting down, just turn your torso to the side and hold it, without moving your seated position.

ERGONOMIC ADVICE

In addition to stretching, Dr. Kramer suggested a number of ergonomic considerations:

- Avoid muscle strain by oiling all tools at the start of the season to ensure they open and close easily.

- Be kind to your knees. Consider buying a gardening stool to sit on, instead of kneeling in the garden. Dr. Kramer likes a fixed leg stool that is low, light and stable. Padded cushions (or folded-up old towels) can also make kneeling more comfortable.
- Buy ergonomic garden tools. Look for a small trowel made of one piece of forged steel (aluminum is too light and might bend). Handles can be rubberized, looped or have plastic grips, all of which allow you to use arm strength. Spring-action, self-opening tools can help prevent muscle and joint strain. Also good is a short-handled shovel, which can be used for digging while seated on a stool.
- Handle your hands with care. Get light gloves that allow you to flex and extend your fingers. If you have arthritis in your hands, warm them in warm water before putting on gloves.
- Get a grip. Get your hands ready by slowly opening and closing them several times until they can move smoothly, so that you are warmed up before you start.
- Pace yourself. Knowing how eager gardeners are at the beginning of the season, Dr. Kramer warns that pacing is important — work no more than two hours at a time (at most) at the beginning of the season and take a break if you notice stiffness, which may be a sign that you've done enough for the day.
- Position yourself for success. Keep your spine in good alignment. Reach forward, not sideways. When lifting, bend your knees and lift straight up, keeping your back straight. Use leg, rather than back, muscles to lift. Avoid twisting and turning while lifting.
- Change position frequently. Work for half an hour, then stop for 10 minutes to walk or relax. If you don't feel stiff, you can go back to gardening for another half hour. This way, says Dr. Kramer, you won't be too sore to go back to your garden the next day.

ALL THIS AND HAPPINESS TOO?

Last but not least, I read a lovely little study that reinforces what gardeners already know—gardening also can facilitate emotional well-being. Research published in the American Society for Horticultural Science journal *HortTechnology* found that caring for a houseplant can bring happiness to those in assisted-living facilities. Study authors Claudia Collins, PhD., and Angela O'Callaghan, PhD., both associate professors at the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, Las Vegas, say changing from independence to assisted living can negatively impact adults' sense of health and well-being if they feel a loss of control over the details of their lives. One way to improve the physical or emotional state of people with diminished life control is to encourage them to take responsibility for a plant, the authors say. Truly, gardening helps plant seeds of well-being.

Source(s):

Candice Shoemaker, PhD, professor, Horticulture, Forestry & Recreation Resources, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas. Paula Kramer, PhD, professor and chair, department of occupational therapy, University of the Sciences in Philadelphia.

Seed Exchange FAQ

Reprinted from *Perennial Notes* September 2002

What is a seed exchange?

Exchanging seed is a time-honored tradition among gardeners. We collect ripe seed throughout the growing season. In late fall or early winter the seeds are brought or sent to a central place and distributed to those who want them.

When should seeds be collected?

Collect seeds all season long! The first to ripen are ready NOW (as I write in mid-May). Pay attention to those developing seed pods as you stroll about your garden. Pick seeds as soon as they are ready or the plant, the wind, the birds or the chipmunk will disperse them. Wait too long and the seeds will be gone.

When is a seed ripe? As you watch the fruiting structure develop, be it seed pod, capsule, seed head or berry, it will expand and change color, becoming darker as the seed ripens. The seed, too, will darken. When ripe, the seed will be hard, so that you are not able to easily crush it between your fingers.

What should I collect seeds in?

Anything that will contain them and allow them to dry. An open dish, glass, jar, envelope or paper bag will do. I am partial to envelopes. Lots are available in junk mail solicitations. When the seed is dry, envelopes are easy to seal up. The envelope is labeled, of course, as soon as the seeds are put in.

How should seeds be stored until exchange time?

Traditional advice is to store them in a cool, dry place. Mine do fine on the bookshelves in my living room. A major exception to this advice is for seeds of most early woodland wild flowers, such as Dutchmans Breeches, Hepatica and Trillium. These seeds should not be allowed to dry out and require special storage conditions.

What sort of seeds are best to collect for sharing?

Bring seeds of plants that people ask for, from plants you want lots of—and don't want to pay \$5 apiece for, from plants that don't divide well or spread too slowly, reseeding annuals and short-lived perennials. Keep in mind that seed of named varieties and hybrids will, in general, produce plants that differ from the parents. Seeds from an unnamed species will come true.

How many seeds should I collect?

A little bit of seed goes a long way. A teaspoon of primrose seed is enough for 25 people. Collecting into a letter size envelope will prevent over collecting.

How should seed be prepared for a seed exchange?

At minimum, bring seed, clean or not, in a labelled container. It is desirable to have more information about the plant—common name, scientific name, cultural requirements, appearance, why you recommend this plant.

What is seed cleaning and why is it done?

Seed cleaning is the process of separating the seed from the other bits of plant material (chaff) collected with it. Remov-

ing chaff aids seed longevity by removing seed-damaging insects and fungi and keeps seed drier, as chaff tends to attract moisture. Cleaning also vastly reduces the volume of material to store and makes it possible to know how much seed is present. Most national exchanges require seed to be clean, so it is a good skill to learn. It can also be fun devising ways to separate all those little bits.

How is seed cleaned?

Begin the process by separating the seed from its pod or cluster. Shake it, crumble it, rub it over a screen or coarse surface, crush it with a rolling pin—do anything that works. Then shake the seed/chaff mix through sieves and screens of various sizes held over a collecting box. Sometimes the seed will fall through and the chaff will be left on top. Sometimes the reverse happens. When a seed/chaff mix cannot be separated by size, it can probably be separated by taking advantage of weight differences. Place the mix in a shallow box, such as a shoebox lid. Blow very gently at the mix. The chaff, being lighter, should blow off. Another approach is to place the mix at one end of the box. Raise that end about 30 degrees from horizontal, and gently tap the box. The seed, being heavier, generally falls to the lower end of the box. Blowing gently while tapping will keep the chaff at the high end of the box.

—Ruth Cadoret

Join us Wednesday, December 9 for our Annual Meeting, Member Potpourri and Seed Exchange, beginning at 6:00 p.m. at Olbrich Gardens.

A Mini bed within a bed—simple, distinctive

The joys of taking a WHPS Garden Tour include finding a great idea for your own garden, or a tip to make gardening easier or more enjoyable, and, of course, taking in the beautiful plant arrangements that members have worked so hard to create. This little (three feet maximum) rock-edged bed-within-a-bed is simple, yet distinctive and quite versatile, highlighting everything from annuals to small conifers.



Members in print

If, like me, you regularly read *Garden Gate*, you are in for a treat in the December 2009 issue. I always do a quick glance through before then enjoying a full reading of each article. The word Wisconsin in the "Nature's Masterpiece" article caught my eye, and then a slow realization that I know that garden! The garden of Jane LaFlash, which was highlighted as part of the 2008 WHPS Garden Tour schedule, was also given coverage in the Great Gardens supplement *Solutions for Small Spaces*, in the article "Behind the Scenes." It was good to see Jane receive the recognition, for she has truly made a gem of a small garden that is framed beautifully in her picture window, designed to be enjoyed throughout the year, no matter the weather. Congratulations Jane!

Members on video

Most of you know that board member Ed Lyon is also the garden director of Allen Centennial Gardens on the UW Campus. WISC-TV's *Live at Five* recently visited the garden and was surprised by the existence of this fascinating and varied garden in the middle of campus. In particular, this piece looked at the vegetable garden and the donation being made of fresh vegetables to the community. Ed actively encourages volunteers to sign up and work in the garden. Go online to <http://www.channel3000.com/localvideo/index.html?v=25072> to see the video.

Have you bought your WHPS T-SHIRT?

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

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

Would you like to become a member of the WHPS board?

If you think you may be interested in serving on the board, now or in the future, please call Stephanie at 608-256-6108 or email [WHPS05@yahoo.com](mailto:whps05@yahoo.com).

If you have not provided us with your email address and would like to receive the newsletter via email, please contact us at whps05@yahoo.com.

The next WHPS newsletter will be mailed in early January. Members are encouraged to submit information on upcoming garden related events, articles on their gardens, favorite plants, favorite books/magazines and Web sites/blogs of interest, etc. Email Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com.

WHPS Web site: www.madison.com/communities/wisconsinhardyplantsociety/

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society



December 2009 Newsletter

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Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society—an unincorporated nonprofit association

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