



Perennial Notes

Newsletter of the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society, Inc.

January 2023



K&A Greenhouse Owners Chris & Angie Hendrickson

A Gardener's Christmas Fantasy

by A. Hort Hound

This all began on dreary mid-December day a couple of weeks before Christmas. I was having lunch in Mt. Horeb's Sjolinds Chocolate House with Chris Hendrickson, owner, with his wife Angie, of K&A Greenhouse garden center. We were chatting about changes to the Madison gardening scene over the years from a business perspective, including the competition from the big box stores.

As an aside, I noted that I was still in mourning over the demise of Johannsen's Greenhouses on Todd Drive. Yes, I know, that happened nearly ten years ago! During the gardening season I would make the ten-minute jaunt over there nearly every weekend to pick up something needed for the garden. Whether it was a bale of sphagnum moss or a Long Tom terracotta pot, they always had just what was needed for the moment. I got to know Lynn, Gary and

(continued on page 10)

WHPS coming events!

Questions about our events?

Email wisconsinhps@gmail.com for specific info.

NOTE: In-person meetings are held at Olbrich Gardens, links to Zoom meetings are sent the week of the scheduled meeting.

Wednesday, January 18, 7:00 pm., WHPS Meeting (VIA ZOOM ONLY): Topic After The Flowers Have Faded – Plants with Fabulous Foliage with speaker Andrew Brand. Flowers always get most of our attention when we are selecting plants to add to our landscapes, but most plants only flower for a short period of time out of the year. It is the foliage that we will be looking at the entire growing season. Join speaker Andrew Brand as he explores a broad diversity of awesome perennials whose leaves will shine in the garden. Andy will share some of his favorite plants, amazing photography and his role at the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens where he is Director of Horticulture. Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens has 19 acres of cultivated land and 300 acres in total. The botanical gardens include a mix of nonnative plants and plants that are native and near native to the Eastern Seaboard, making for interesting plant combinations. Brand joined the CMBG in 2018 as the curator of living collections, a job in which he worked with staff horticulturists to choose plants for the collections. Now, as Director of Horticulture, he continues to oversee the collections but also manages 11 fulltime horticulturists, as well as interns and seasonal employees. He arrived in Maine after



27 years as Nursery Manager at Broken Arrow Nursery, a small nursery specializing in rare and unusual trees, shrubs and perennials in Hamden, Connecticut. Brand says, "I've spent most of my life doing plant production and growing plants and trees and shrubs and perennials. And now I'm surrounded by gardens full of not just trees and shrubs and perennials, but thousands of different types of annuals that are so new to me, and other plants that I've never seen before...it kind of reinvigorates you...at least for me, that's what I've felt has happened...just a whole new zest for gardens and gardening."

February 10-12, WHPS at the 2023 PBS Gardening and Landscape Expo. That's right, WHPS will be back full steam at the upcoming PBS Gardening and Landscape Expo February 10-12, 2023, with opportunities for WHPS members to volunteer for a number of time slots at our booth over the three days of the Expo (NOTE: Volunteer signup email was sent to members on January 7). Our booth number has not yet been confirmed, but we will send out an email to members before the expo. We are also sponsoring the presentation **The "Art" in Garden Design on Saturday, February 11 from 1:00-2:00 pm in Mendota 1-2** with speaker Sheila Glaske, Curator of Horticulture at the Paine Art Center and Gardens. Sheila will reveal the artful design concepts she likes to follow, along with where she finds inspiration for creating masterpiece displays that make the Paine such a destination for garden



(continued on page 2)



President's message

see p. 4.



Cherith Bruckner

see p. 11.



City-County Gardens

see p. 8

WHPS Events (cont. from p.1)

enthusiasts. You will find out which plant combinations Sheila loves – plus a few she does not – and tips she’s learned throughout more than 20 years of horticultural creativity. Tickets to the Expo are on sale now at <https://wigardenexpo.com/tickets/>.



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Wednesday, February 15, 6:30 pm., WHPS Meeting (IN PERSON and VIA ZOOM): Discovering Olbrich’s Insects with Volunteer Bug Scouts. With speakers Katey Pratt and Samantha Malone. Put on your bug nerd hat with Katey and Sam as they dive into a general overview of all things bugs. Learn how the Garden Scout Volunteers at Olbrich Botanical Gardens are working to help identify all the small creatures that run the world. You’ll learn what plants attract beneficial insects, as well as our top ten favorite insect-friendly plants. Check out their iNaturalist Project observations and see videos of insects in action. Katey Pratt has worked as a horticulturist and mapping specialist at Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison, WI, since 2016. She maintains the Event Garden and Tower Garden areas. Her interests include native bees, art and design, edible flowers, bromeliads and tillandsia, to name a few. Her background is in landscape design and construction, with degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in Landscape Architecture and Environmental Studies. Samantha Malone has worked as a horticulturist at Olbrich Botanical Gardens since Spring of 2017. She maintains the Sunken Garden, Morse Terrace, Donor’s Arbor and Atrium Shade Garden. Before working at Olbrich, she worked in the landscape industry doing landscape maintenance, installation and design at commercial and residential properties. While plants are her main focus and passion, she has a love for all the insects and animals that are proving to be extremely beneficial to maintaining a healthy ecosystem.



Wednesday, March 15, 6:30 pm., WHPS Meeting (IN PERSON and VIA ZOOM): Big, Bold Perennials. With speaker Heather Prince. Discover how to add height and drama into your garden with big, bold, bodacious perennials. Tall plants are cool plants! The secret to a stunning garden design is a variety of plant layers that draw the eye up, yet many gardeners shy away from plants that grow to more than three feet tall. Heather will review some of her



favorite tall perennials and chat about how to create layers of color and texture in your garden. Heather has been a part of the green industry for more than 20 years, including experience at The Morton Arboretum, Chicago Botanic Garden, The Growing Place, The Pizzo Group, Wannemaker’s Home & Garden, and the American Horticultural Society. She is a trained horticulturist specializing in trees, shrubs, and natives with a passion for connecting people with plants. Heather currently balances a busy freelance writing and teaching schedule with her role as email marketing manager for The Garden of Words, a firm that does Website development and email marketing for businesses in the horticulture industry. In addition, her freelance writing includes work for Chicagoland Gardening, The Landscape Contractor, and numerous newspaper articles, blog posts, newsletters and more. Heather also relishes sharing her knowledge and experience by teaching at The Morton Arboretum, Chicago Botanic Garden, Chicago Flower & Garden Show, Farnsworth House, as well as garden clubs, groups and industry gatherings. She firmly believes anyone can garden and everyone will fall in love with plants, given the chance.

Wednesday, April 19, 2023, 6:30 pm., WHPS Meeting (IN PERSON and VIA ZOOM): Making Landscapes that Matter.

With speaker Scott Beuerlein. This talk is a rambling ride through human history, human nature and why horticulture, which does all its best work at the subconscious level, means so much to human well-being and how we can tweak our garden designs to amp up the benefits. Scott Beuerlein is the Manager of Botanical Garden Outreach at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden. He runs the Zoo’s Botanical Garden educational programs, including three symposiums, various plant trialing programs, the Zoo’s “Best Plants for Pollinators” brand, and the Plant for Pollinators Challenge. Scott is also a garden writer and horticultural speaker. He has published hundreds of articles and columns in several gardening and green industry publications. He currently pens two columns in each issue of *Horticulture Magazine* – the humorous (usually, hopefully)



(continued on page 3)

2023 – Other gardening events of note

Key events of interest listed but please visit the following websites for more info on events:

- [Allen Centennial Garden in Madison](#)
- [Boerner Botanical Gardens in Milwaukee](#)
- [Chicago Botanic Garden in Chicago](#)
- [Green Bay Botanical Garden in Green Bay](#)
- [Lynden Sculpture Garden in Milwaukee](#)
- [Mitchell Park Horticultural Park \(The Domes\) in Milwaukee](#)
- [Monk Botanical Garden](#) in Wausau
- [Morton Arboretum in Lisle, IL](#)
- [Olbrich Botanical Gardens in Madison](#)
- [Paine Art Center and Gardens in Oshkosh](#)
- [Rotary Botanical Gardens in Janesville](#)
- [University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum](#)

January/February Virtual Lecture Series - Friends of Allen Centennial Gardens 2023 Winter Presentation Series - Seeds of Change. Five virtual lectures on Saturday mornings during January and February, 10:00-11:30 am. More info at <https://allencentennialgarden.wisc.edu/>. Free for Friends of ACG; \$15 for the general public.

- **January 21, Seed to Kitchen Vegetable Variety Trials**, Julie Dawson, UW-Madison.
- **January 28, From Seed to Farmer to Table - Lessons Learned along a Food Justice Journey**, Philip Kauth, REAP Food Group.
- **February 4, BIPOC Foodways: From Africa to Madison**, Yusuf Bin-Rella, Chef, UW-Madison & Cofounder, TradeRoots Culinary Collective.
- **February 18, Activity of Woody Perennials Through Winter**, Al Kovaleski, UW-Madison.
- **February 25. Gardening for the Seasons: Lessons from Lurie Garden**, Kathryn Deery, Lurie Garden at Millennium Park, Chicago.

January - May 2023 - Virtual Lecture Series - Olbrich Botanical Gardens - Resilient in Nature. Learn from talented professionals in the gardening community about the many ways resilience inspires their work and helps us understand relationships within gardens and natural spaces.

- **Saturday, January 28, 11:30 am.- 1 pm, Perennials that Stand Up for Themselves**, Dr. Noel Kingsbury.
- **Thursday, February 23, 7-8:30 pm, Foraging for Resilience (and Deliciousness)**, Tama Matsuoka Wong.
- **Thursday, March 23, 7-8:30 pm, The Invincible Garden Ladies**, Abra Lee.
- **Thursday, April 27, 7-8:30 pm, Attracting Bees and Beneficial Insects with Native Plants**, Heather Holm.
- **Thursday, May 25, 7-8:30 pm, Resilient in Nature at Olbrich Gardens**, Olbrich Botanical Gardens. Horticulture Staff.

Saturday, January 14 - Sunday, March 26, W-F: 9am-5pm, Sa-Su: 9am-4pm, Train Show: Plant-itary Orbit, Mitchell Park Domes, Milwaukee. More [info](#).

Saturday, January 28, 9 am-5 pm, Winter Celebration, Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay. A celebration of winter with outdoor family activities. More [info](#).

Saturday, January 28 - Tuesday, February 28, 10 am-4 pm, Orchid Escape - Under the Glass Top, Bolz Conservatory, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. Olbrich's month-long orchid show with this year's theme: Circus!

Sunday, January 29, 10 am-2 pm, Winterfest, Boerner Botanical Gardens, Hales Corners. Cure your winter cabin fever. You'll enjoy indoor activities, guided winter walks and more. More [info](#).

Saturday, February 4, 10 am-4 pm & Sunday February 5, 10 am-3 pm, Orchid Quest, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, Madison. The Orchid Growers Guild's annual orchid show with exhibits, lectures, vendors, and more. More [info](#).

Wednesday, March 8-11, 8 am-4 pm., African Violet and Ornamental Shamrock Sale. Edgerton Hospital & Health Services in the lobby. Proceeds benefit the healing garden.

Saturday, March 25, 8 am-3:30 pm, 2023 Garden Conference, Outagamie County Master Gardener Association, Appleton, WI. With speakers Melinda Myers, Susan Carpenter, Doreen Hamburg, and Jason Granberg. More [info](#).

WHPS Events (cont. from p.2)

"Deep Roots" column and the "Green Views" series of interviews with top horticultural professionals such as Allan Armitage and Jimmy Turner. Scott is a partner in the long-running and highly respected Garden Rant blog site and posts about twice a month, including a series of spirited and passive-aggressive letters in which he spars with garden writer Marianne Wilburn. Among the many recognitions for his horticultural efforts is the recent 2022 Silver Medal for blogs from the International Association of Garden Communicators.

Sunday, May 21, 10 am. – 2 pm., WHPS Plant Sale - West Madison Agricultural Research Station. More information on time of sale, volunteer requests, plants and other information will be emailed to members and included in the April newsletter.

WHPS Membership Report

As of December 31, 2022, the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society had 757 memberships in 14 states divided into four categories: Individual, Family, Business, and Newsletter Only. Counting family memberships as two people each, the total becomes 909 members. Breaking it down, there are 578 individual, 152 family (= 304 individual members), 25 Business, and 2 Newsletter Only. The Newsletter Only members are the Olbrich Botanical Gardens library to which, as our home organization, we donate the newsletter, and the Oregon Hardy Plant Society with which we exchange newsletters.

Breaking down numbers by states, it is not surprising that the vast majority, 865, live in Wisconsin. But we do have members elsewhere. Illinois leads with 16, followed by Minnesota with 7, North Carolina with 4, 3 in Florida, 2 in each in California, Iowa, Michigan, and Ohio, and, finally, 1 each in Alabama, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon, and Pennsylvania.

Message from the President

— Stephanie O’Neal, WHPS President

I’d like to take a brief look back at 2022 and welcome our terrific membership to a great year ahead in 2023. WHPS will continue to offer good value with our programs, sale, and tours – all allowing members to meet each other and learn more about this avocation we all love.



In 2022 we made much progress in working our way out of COVID. In September we restarted our in-person programming but we continue to offer the online option. This hybrid experience is still not perfect for either audience, but we are working hard to improve it with every meeting we present. We do owe slight gratitude to COVID (yes!) for forcing us to initiate the online programming. This allows us to reach members who cannot attend in person due to distance, timing or health concerns. But make no mistake, there is nothing like coming in person to a meeting for a chance to connect with other members and meet our speakers. As always, if you have ideas for future programs, speakers or events, please let me know.

Three of our long-time directors – Emily Buckingham, Jane Gahlman and Jane LaFlash – left the Board at the end of their 2020-2022 term. The Board formed a committee in 2022 to identify a list of potential directors and recommended JoAnne Kriege, Mary Ellen La Chance, Rebecca La Rose and Cheri Schweitzer. We were pleased to welcome them to the Board at our Annual Meeting and Party in December. We offer our appreciation to the prior directors and introduce the new directors. If you are interested in serving on our Board at some point in the future, please contact me (sone2@aol.com).

Getting out and about was definitely on the agenda in 2022, and our Local Garden Tours and Open Gardens programs were a great success. The Open Gardens program allows members to offer a tour of their garden in its prime on a week’s notice. We’ll have info on the Open Gardens in our April newsletter, as well as on our Plant Sale and any other special additions to the schedule for the upcoming gardening season.

I hope you have all signed up for our Facebook Group, where members (and friends) can post info about their gardens, books read, gardens visited and participate in our #WeeklyChallenges.

I also hope you continue to look forward to our newsletter, *Perennial Notes*. We publish it and send it out via email five times a year (January, April, June, September and November). It offers timely info about our programs and events, along with interesting articles on plants, gardening people, principles and tips. We take a lot of pride and care in the newsletter, and we value suggestions for future articles and information you might like to see or offer.

You ARE the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society, and the Board is here to make sure that this organization continues to thrive and make your experience as a member worthwhile.

I deeply appreciate your ongoing membership and wish for you to have a wonderful and successful gardening season in 2023 and beyond.

Deep Gratitude and Thanks to Outgoing WHPS Directors

WHPS would like to thank our three outgoing directors for their contributions to the growth of WHPS during their tenure and their efforts to make WHPS a valued organization to its members and the gardening community at large.

Emily Buckingham has been on the Board since 2015, and has served as Vice President and Secretary, coordinator of the Facebook Committee and creator of our Facebook Group Page Challenges; creator and coordinator of WHPS Workshops; coordinator of our New Member Social. She was instrumental in helping us to continue to create value for our members during COVID. We wish her much success with her family’s move to their restored prairie in Verona and look forward to future reports on their progress!



Jane Gahlman joined the WHPS Board in 2007, serving as Vice President and then President from 2017-2019.



She served for many years on the Trips Committee, organizing trips both near and far (and who can forget her great itinerary last spring that allowed members to take a Self-Guided Road Trip to the Amish Area). She has also been responsible for (and will continue) our yearly Seed Exchange in December and has recently been assisting coordinator Linda Marx with hospitality at our potlucks and parties. Jane has opened her garden so many times to members and was a great contributor of plants to our pre-jumping worm Plant Sales. We look forward to Jane’s continued participation in the Seed Exchange and other events and will always value and rely on her experience as a Board Director.

Jane LaFlash began her service on the Board 22 years ago in 2000. Her leadership and coordination of almost every aspect of our organization has made her a WHPS MVP: Membership Coordinator; Local Garden Tours Coordinator; coordinator of Open Gardens; coordinator of logistics for the Trips Committee; Olbrich Liaison; Garden Expo Volunteer; plant contributor and volunteer at Plant Sales; articles for the newsletter; posting information and personal observances to our Group Facebook page; offering tours of her garden (called by many a “jewel box garden”); historian of our activities (see the list on our website); and a friendly and welcoming face that has represented WHPS at so many garden-related events and programs. All of these and more have been invaluable to our organization and are only the visible examples of the care and commitment she has made to WHPS. On a personal note, I thank Jane for being a trusted and ongoing counsel, for her great institutional memory of WHPS, for keeping deadlines and reminding me of them, and for being someone we have all come to count on for so much. Jane will remain a valued member of WHPS and someone the Board will continue to rely on for her thoughtful opinions and advice. For this, Jane, we thank you.



For all of this and more, we offer our sincere thanks and appreciation to these outgoing directors who have given us a firm foundation on which to thrive in 2023 and beyond.

Message from the President (cont. from p. 4)

Introduction of New Board Directors

We welcome our four new Board Directors with much enthusiasm and expectation! Their introduction of themselves:

JoAnne Kriege - My passion for gardening began with and continues to be fired by starting and saving seeds. I garden in the Town of Middleton and now enjoy making mixed beds of woodies, perennials, bulbs and oodles of annuals, and helping my husband with an area of prairie restoration. I have enjoyed being a WHPS member for many years, and have given some workshops on seed starting, seed saving, and annuals for late-season interest. Semi-retirement in 2021 freed up more time to garden, participate in WHPS and hang out with the best people on Earth – plant people.



Mary Ellen La Chance – I grew up in Monona, WI on a lovely wooded lot with a manicured lawn that my dad maintained meticulously. My Mom felt that a large planter with petunias in the summer was all she could manage with six kids and a full time job, so my own foray into gardening began as a newlywed. Our first apartment was in an older home that had a small fenced in enclosure out back that I was told could be used as a garden. I thought it would be sweet (and easy) to grow a pumpkin for our “first Halloween.” Knowing that a pumpkin vine takes up room, I carefully cleared a large area that had obviously been overgrown with weeds, planted my seeds and watered them in. It came as quite a surprise when the young man who lived next to us arrived at our door later that day in a fury demanding to know what I was thinking - ripping up all of his carefully cultivated marijuana plants - who knew? Luckily my plant identification skills have improved since then.



For over thirty years I taught in the Madison public schools. I have a degree in Speech Pathology and also loved teaching Kindergarten and first grade. My final 12 years were as a leader of Reading Recovery Teacher training and working with challenged learners in literacy interventions. Those were hectic years, raising three children and working full time. We built our current home in Fitchburg 22 years ago and had Steve Lesch design a landscape plan for us. Gradually, our once blank yard became wooded and shady.

The yard became my first “project” when I retired 11 years ago. With great enthusiasm I began experimenting, adding perennials and expanding beds, inviting the grandkids to join in with me and inventing ways to keep the rabbits and the dog out. Missy Bodden invited me to join WHPS and with all the opportunities to learn from presentations and visits to other gardens, my garden projects became a new passion. My yard has become a place where I can experiment, experience creativity, joy, discovery and peace. As a self-taught gardener always interested in learning more, I have found WHPS has promoted the inspiration and information that is making me a more accomplished gardener.

I am honored to be asked to serve on the Board and to have the opportunity to contribute to an organization that provides support for public gardens and presents so many educational and social events to the gardening community.

Rebecca LaRose - I graduated from UW-Madison with a degree in Wildlife Ecology, and took additional courses in botany, horticulture, plant pathology, and soil science. I'm also a Wisconsin Master Gardener. I've spent many years gardening in rentals, other peoples' yards, and community gardens.



In 2019, I bought my first house in Edgerton. I've been having fun creating something more permanent in a space of my own. In 2022, I completed the conversion of the main front yard to a mixed native and ornamental pollinator garden and added more land to my Homegrown National Park plot. Since having a verified rusty patched bumblebee observation this summer, I've become even more committed to increasing native plants, shrubs, and trees on the property. My other loves are hostas and ferns, and I'm now trying home fruit cultivation. There's always something new to learn!

Cheri Schweitzer - Cheri Schweitzer has been happily digging in the dirt since her parents gave her her first trowel as a little girl. Her grandfather was a Wisconsin farmer and she grew up visiting his farm in Pardeeville. Her family's backyard garden in Racine was full of peonies, roses, lilacs, fresh vegetables and a mix of perennials and annuals. Both her parents were self-taught, avid gardeners.



Cheri is a self-proclaimed garden and craft fanatic. Her husband of 23 years often has to come outside at dusk to retrieve her once the season begins. He is also roped into a lot of planting and lifting! They live in Fitchburg in a 125-year-old Victorian that they have been lovingly restoring since 1998. All of the trees and perennial plantings – except two lilac bushes – have been planted by the Schweitzers. They have five raised beds and a full herb garden and enjoy cooking with all the bounty.

Cheri splits her time between house projects, crafts, care for her garden and running her own business. She has a Masters Degree in biology and completed her Master Gardener training in 2007. She has served on the Madison Area Master Gardeners Board and is delighted to be joining the WHPS Board. Some of her favorite garden moments have been on trips or tours with WHPS, and she loves learning and being inspired by all the talented gardeners.

Members in the News/in Print

American Roots, Lessons and Inspiration from the Designers Reimagining Our Home Gardens, by Nick McCullough, Allison McCullough and Teresa Woodard (book available October 25, 2022) features, among others, WHPS members **Jeff Epping** (Olbrich Gardens Director of Horticulture) and **Erin Schanen** (*The Impatient Gardener* blog and YouTube videos).

Fine Gardening February, 2023, page 76, *Early Risers for Your Region – Midwest*, features the recommendations of WHPS member **Ed Lyon**, Director of the Reiman Gardens at Iowa State University at Ames, Iowa.

WHPS Grants Program update

Anderson Farm County Park –

The calendar year of 2022 was a highly successful year for planting, growing and maintaining native plant beds at Anderson Farm County Park, 914 Union Road, Oregon, WI 53575.

Strategies

During 2022, Anderson Park Friends, Inc. had an active group of 10 volunteers who focused on native plant gardens and plantings at the park. The group met on Monday mornings from May 2nd to October 8th. The activities included planning new beds, selecting plants, planting and/or moving plants, weeding beds, and general monitoring for water and other plant needs.

The plants for the beds came from four sources. The sources included; Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society (funded by a grant of \$700); the Plant Dane Program (Dane County Parks); Oregon Nature Alliance; and individuals (e.g., Diane Sharkey, who donated prairie trillium and spring beauty). Some plants were donated by friends of APF members, with care to avoid any jumping worms, and a couple of species were transplanted from other areas of the park where they are more plentiful.

Anderson Park Friends, Inc. appreciates the grant received from WHPS. The funds were used for the acquisition of perennials and spring ephemerals from K&A and Klein's Greenhouses and Prairie Moon Nursery at a cost of \$384.50. WHPS funding made a major contribution to native plants at the park.

In May, APF volunteers planted the following plants: large white flowered trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*); prairie trillium (*Trillium recurvatum*); wild blue phlox (*Phlox divaricata*); dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*); shooting stars (*Primula pauciflorum*); bluebells (*Mertensia virginica*); spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*); mayapples (*Podophyllum peltatum*); wild leeks (*Allium tricoccum*); wild ginger (*Asarum canadense*); and bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*).



2023 Goals

2023 goals include expanding and maintaining the current beds. We anticipate planting more spring ephemerals in the spring of 2023, using the remaining WHPS funds.

Native Plant Bed Summary

Main Park Sign Garden; 35-acre Dog Park (open prairie); Sholts Prairie Pollinator Garden (certified as a Monarch Butterfly Waystation in 2018); Dog Park Parking Lot Retention Basins - 2-large and small (planted with 7,000 native flowers); Metal Sculpture Bed; North Sholts Prairie – Bed A; North Sholts Prairie – Bed B; North Sholts Prairie – Bed C; Sholts Forest-Railroad Tracks; Bike Path – South Bed (near dog park); Bike Path – North Bed utility box); Bike Path - Sholts Forest (Near Boy Scout Sign); Main Street Walk-in Entrance Bed; Ridgeview Lane Walk-in Entrance Bed; Shady Lane Bed; Miscellaneous Plantings (1-4 plants each) at various locations.

– Roe Parker, President

Olbrich Botanical Gardens –

The Olbrich Botanical Society (OBS) is proud to report back to the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society on the progress of the Gardens' 2022 biodiversity project: *Native Plants. Natural Wonders. Increasing Education, Planting Efficiency & Native Plants.* We are very pleased to have your support and partnership this year, which contributed toward a successful project and long-term vision.

The WHPS grant awarded \$1,500 in support of the project. Referencing our proposed budget, funds were used as requested: in support of native planting materials and educational components, noting a request that funds not be contributed toward the tiered trailer. This request was honored, and the trailer was funded in full by the Dane County Environmental Council's Capital Equipment Grant and one individual donor of the Botanical Society.

This project used funds to purchase, plant and educate; highlighting specific native plantings throughout the Outdoor Gardens, in following the Gardens' current programmatic theme, *Native Plants, Natural Wonders.* Dozens of new native plant species were introduced across the grounds this year, including *Chelone obliqua*, *Carex brevior*, *Actaea pachypoda*, and more; some were



Entrance area of the Anderson Farm County Park.



A late-summer outdoor volunteer crew talks with guests about the native plants they are introducing into the landscape.



One of our favorites! The lush perennial & native, pollinator-friendly, *Carex pensylvanica* 'Pennsylvania Sedge.'

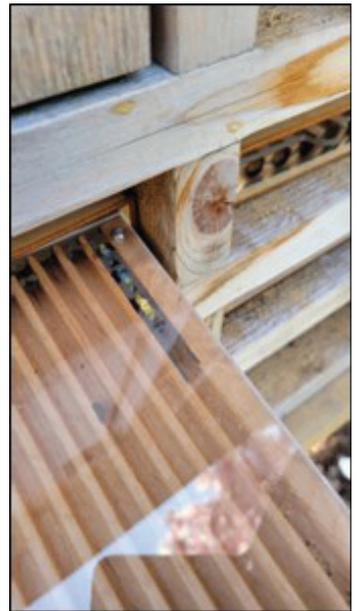
specialy featured throughout the growing season as “pollinator host plant highlights” through the funded signage and the new educational docent program. Plants were also featured in the Gardens’ “What’s In Bloom?” display (located inside the Visitor’s Center Lobby), online social media and Olbrich’s “e-news” email communications, and throughout this year’s return of the annual Blooming Butterflies exhibit. The exhibit additionally used on-site, exhibit-specific materials, web communications, and local media coverage. These advertising and education channels highlighted more than just the butterflies, but also the diverse ecosystems made up of beneficial insects and pollinators, and the native plants that help them thrive. During the months in which educational components took place, June through October, the Gardens welcomed 161,500 guests, including 23,990 guests and OBS members specifically during the Blooming Butterflies exhibit (mid-July to mid-August)!

As an organization of staff and volunteers, the Gardens strive to create a better quality of life for all; for gardeners, members of the public at large, and for the environment, including the intricate web of creatures that live and prosper in gardens. As our world and the Gardens continue to navigate through the COVID pandemic and threat, we are proud to have delivered

Funding for this year’s biodiversity project allowed Horticulture Staff to purchase just under 1,700 individual plants!



Funding also provided materials for new observation trays in Olbrich’s native bee houses, which have been a valuable interactive element for new Educational Pollinator Docents to highlight!



high-quality programs and educational resources to learn about the benefits of native plant landscapes and garden styles. Olbrich continues to work toward a plant composition goal of at least 70% native plants within Olbrich’s collection, as advised by entomologist and author Douglas Tallamy.

On behalf of Olbrich Botanical Gardens, the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society’s past financial support of mission-related horticulture programs and exhibits, and especially recent years’ support centered in promoting biodiversity and native plant materials, is incredibly appreciated. We are proud to be partnered with you and look forward to future collaborations.

– *Katey Pratt, Horticulture Staff and Jake Immel, Development Staff*

Help Us Raise Needed Money!
Bloomin’ Bucks
 with Brent and Becky’s

We have lots of time now to think about the garden and plans for the year ahead. Don’t forget that you can help the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society raise money with any order you place at Brent & Becky’s Bulbs. Simply visit bloominbucks.com and select “Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society” and hit “GO” to be sent to the Brent and Becky’s website Bloomin Bucks. Order any item, in any quantity – bulbs, tools, books, supplements, gift certificates and more – and 25% of your purchase will be donated to the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society. This applies to phone and mail orders as well – just be sure to mention WHPS or write us in as the organization you would like to support. As a 501(c) (3) nonprofit, donations like these are essential to continue our mission. Reminder: You can also support WHPS when you shop with Amazon. Go to [AMAZON Smile](https://www.amazon.com/whps) for the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society to designate us as your charity of choice.



New WHPS members

The following members have recently joined WHPS:

Nancy Ahlquist, Monona, WI; Karen Austin, Oregon, WI; Yogi Brown, Belleville, WI; Kathryn Derauf, Sun Prairie, WI; Gigi Kaeser, West Chesterfield, MA; Sue Kunz, Sturgeon Bay, WI; Cynthia Lepkowski, Greendale, WI; Jean Ligocki, Stoughton, WI; Sally Mathews, Milwaukee, WI; Linda McLean, Lake Geneva, WI; Karen Moriello, Brooklyn, WI; Jule Stroick, Madison, WI; Joe Vande Slunt, Madison, WI.

Welcome!

Beauty Hidden in Plain Sight: 25 Years of the City-County Building Gardens

— Sally Averkamp, WHPS Board

For the past 25 years, I have planted a group of public gardens in Madison. Here I'll relate my journey on how the project has changed and grown, from the plants that are used, to the growth in the number of gardeners. I'll share what I've gained and learned, how the project has helped other gardeners learn, friendships have blossomed, and the creative process lives! All done in the name of gardening.



It all began in 1989 when I completed my Master Gardener training in Des Moines, IA. As my MG project for the next nine years, I designed and planted public gardens for the Des Moines Public Library and the Iowa State Fairgrounds. I chose to work with annuals rather than perennials for public gardens because annuals tended to flower more intensely, offer a longer season of bloom, and the designs could be completely different each year. But working with annuals was more challenging than I thought and it took years before I developed a style. In August 1995 I wrote a six-page article that was published in *Fine Gardening* magazine about designing annual gardens of one color.

Gardening with annuals in the 1990s was different from today in that the vast majority of plants available were grown from seed and sold in four- or six-packs. Tissue culture grown plants had not yet become widely available, container gardening was just starting, and most annual plantings consisted of 'carpet bedding' types of designs using upright plant forms. There were almost no trailing plants available – even petunias had been bred to be upright.

Beginning in Madison

Then in 1997, when my family moved to Madison, WI, I immediately contacted the Master Gardeners asking for a public garden to work on. I was directed to Frank Alfano, Facilities Director of Dane County. At that time, Mr. Alfano was looking for someone to continue planting the six gardens around the City-County Building. The beds ranged in size from 5' x 6' to 18' x 5', each set in black granite. We agreed that I would do everything

except till the soil and water. The County would reimburse all my material costs, but my time and expertise would be donated.

As I first drove up to the beds and unloaded the plants from my car, I saw the soil: heavy gravel and clay. I repacked everything and returned with bales of peat moss and my Troy-Bilt tiller. With much improved soil, I planted each of the six beds in a different design, watered them in, and mulched.

At that time, my two children were ages five and eight and I was not working. For the first two years, I worked on this project with no additional help and often came to the gardens with my kids in tow, each with a bag of bribe candy and their toys in the trunk. My son once left a dinosaur on the sidewalk and the attendant inside the City-County Building held it for us until we returned a week later.

During the first years the plants were typical annuals (24" or shorter) but as more variety, especially tropicals, became available it was fun and easy to fill the beds using bigger, more exciting plants. We have used all kinds of vegetables, perennials, tropicals, shrubs, and even Japanese maples in the past 25 years. This project is a gardener's chance to experiment with fun, exotic plants – do whatever they want. We have a budget, but have never come close to going over it.

Years of various mulch have made the soil in these beds like potting soil so we rarely use fertilizers and have never used chemicals.

Around 2010, we added two more gardens around the City-County Building that had not been previously planted. Then, in 2021, we added the 16 beds of the Dane County Courthouse on Hamilton St. (split into four groups). The Courthouse gardens are especially difficult. Each garden resides under the building's overhang, so it receives little natural moisture. All the beds are 1' deep, 1' wide and about 15' long and face west on Hamilton St. Keeping them watered was a challenge, so last summer a Madison resident, Phil Duncan, helped install a semi-automatic watering system. Although it takes us more time when planting and removing the flowers, this helps give the plants more consistent moisture. Two of the beds are also on a ledge 15' in

the air, so the gardener must wear a fall-prevention harness to plant and remove flowers.

Staff and Scheduling

Several of my gardeners have been with me for fifteen years or more. My oldest gardener was 93 when he left (Derek Thomasett) and my youngest is 16 years old (Lily DePauw). I hold a spring brunch potluck at my house in April where each gardener draws the garden that he or



Garden on Carroll St. planted by Jamie Klund and family in 2021. Photo shows it being planted (left) and blooming in August (right).

Gardens on Hamilton St. in front of the Dane Co. Courthouse in August 2022 by Cynthia Albrecht, Lisl Walsh, Angie & Mike Stewart, and Sally Averkamp.



she will plant that year. The project has 12 gardens and 12 gardeners, each dedicated to their chosen garden of that year. In early May, each gardener goes to the greenhouse of their choice and buys plants for their garden. It might be better to do the entire project with just one design, but I love giving the gardeners the opportunity to design their own bed. If they are an inexperienced gardener, I offer to join them and give them a tour and some suggestions about the plants. Around May 15, we all arrive at our garden and plant. The County has tilled the soil and hoses are available. A few days later, I email the gardeners to tell them when I will arrive with a truck load of mulch. All who are available join me in mulching the gardens. After that, we choose an evening (usually every other Tuesday at 6 pm.) to weed and deadhead our beds. Often, a gardener may come at a different time to work on their garden. If they cannot make it that week, they text me and we cover it. Each person gives me their plant receipts and I write them a check. I then organize the bill and submit it to the County for reimbursement. The gardens are removed on the third week in October.

Feedback

People often walk up to us to talk about the gardens or ask questions. I once received a letter from County Executive Kathleen Falk commending us for our work. This spring, Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway came down from her office to talk to us. She said that there had been no gardens on MLK for two years because of construction and she was very glad to see gardens out her office window again. One person stopped gardener Angie Stewart on Hamilton St. and mentioned that the Courthouse gardens were much appreciated because they were so beautiful in a place that was often the site of great pain. It gives one pause.

Today

This year, I reflect on the 25 years that I have worked on this project: how it has changed and why it has been so successful. I certainly do a lot more administration and less planting as it has grown from 1 person to 12 gardeners. Also, I try to make the project a pleasure for each gardener and of minimal effort for the City-County staff. Making sure the beds are heavily mulched (3") reduces the watering and weeding. If a gardener is out of town or ill, their garden is taken care of; if their garden is dry or there is a problem, I see to it;

if a gardener needs any kind of help or inspiration, they receive it. My goal is to make this project all about the enjoyment of working in the soil, the creative process and camaraderie, but with as little difficulty as possible. I don't ever remember having a problem with a gardener. We are all chill, all the time. If a gardener plants a garden that doesn't turn out well, so what? They will do better next year.

If I had worked on the City-County Gardens for five years and stopped, it would have been an interesting experience that helped me grow as a gardener. But continuing it for 25 years has elevated the project – and me – because with each year, my contacts grew, my confidence grew, my creativity grew, my long-lasting friendships grew and my contribution to the city I love grew. It would have been a great loss to me if I had stopped at five years. So I urge people to keep at it, whatever project they are doing. Something small can become something much bigger by just keeping at it.

I will be giving a presentation at the City-County Building on Wed., March 8, at 1 pm. in Rm 354, City County Building, 210 Martin Luther King Jr Blvd titled, "Twenty-five years Planting the City-County Gardens." All are welcome.



A portion of the City-County Garden crew in 2016 (from left): Hannah Burnett, Betz Pilon, and Angie and Mike Stewart.

Christmas Fantasy – K & A (cont. from p.1)

Karen, the offspring of Chuck Johannsen who founded the business in 1960. They had a series of greenhouses and a large selection of plants, and every December the place was transformed into a Christmas shop, with its amazing sales display of glass tree ornaments from Germany.

And then . . . they were gone, selling out to the car dealership next door. How I miss the large selection of *Cleome hassleriana*, including the 'Apple Blossom' variety (pink and white flowers), that I had been unable to source anywhere else (no, it never just self-sowed for me). To this day, I wonder what happened to the enormous fragrant gardenia bush they had in the back greenhouse. Tragically, a decade later, the site remains but an empty grass plot, lost in a sea of car dealerships and, oh, so tired box stores.

More recently, after nearly 40 years of service, we lost Ed and Carol Knapton's America's Best Garden Center in Cottage Grove, the largest garden center in Dane County at the time. Not too long afterwards, adding to a sense of despair, area gardeners lost their beloved Flower Factory, which for several decades boasted the largest selection of perennial plants for sale anywhere in the Midwest (here the woodwinds and brass play several measures of a funeral dirge). I am not sure owners David and Nancy Nedveck will ever be forgiven, but they will never be forgotten!

Now, back to the delicious grilled cheese sandwich, with a chocolate cookie, of course, I was eating at Sjolinds. It is obvious that Chris Hendrickson is a dreamer and he thinks big, though I did wonder why he was just having a couple of meatballs for lunch!

For 40 years or so, K&A Greenhouse had been smoldering along at a site on what was once way out in the country, on Mineral Point Road. If you were a city gardener, it was always sort of an afterthought place. Meanwhile, Chris was growing up in Whitewater, Wis-

consin. I wish I could report that he was a keen childhood gardener who was inspired by those charming grandparents with the beautiful garden from which gardening dreams are made, but, alas, when he came to Madison to attend the UW, he was planning a career in elementary school education (hear the decrescendo notes of an oboe). He was fortunate enough to fall for a classmate, now his wife Angie (from Prescott, WI) and mother of his two young children, or this story would not have unfolded, and I would have missed out on a good grilled cheese sandwich.

While in college, Chris needed a summer job, and Angie, who was already a student employee at K&A, suggested that he try working out there as well. Chris, without any retail or even gardening experience, was put to work at the checkout counter. To his surprise, he found that he really enjoyed kibitzing with the customers and was very happy working there. This did not go unnoticed, as the owners at the time of his graduation in 2004 suggested that he buy their garden retail business! Initially, this did not appear feasible, with Chris's lack of experience. What banker in their right mind was going to finance such a deal? And besides, Chris was already interviewing for school teaching positions. Yes, this was just fairytale thinking, but then Chris' parents magically came to the rescue, mortgaging their house to make the purchase possible. They must have had a lot of faith in their son, or who knows, maybe they just wanted to make sure he did not come back home? In any event, Chris was now a businessman and on his way (hear a handful of notes of an ascending flute arpeggio).

It was not long before he realized that, to succeed, he needed the space to grow more plants for his new business. Nosing around, he fell into Fitchburg's Irish Lane Greenhouses and purchased them in 2012. The smoldering K&A was now burning with a low flame. As things heated up, Chris soon needed even more space for the retail side of the business. Buying additional land at the Mineral Point Road site, he soon built a very large greenhouse with all the latest bells and whistles. His dream was to build five more greenhouses on the property for more growing space, but "environmental issues" for a site with a



Madison Greenhouses gone by.

marsh and stream bed doused water on the flames. Undeterred, he was soon fanning the embers looking for more land, and as luck would have it, he secured the 35 acres nearby that Madisonians fondly knew as Appleberry Farm. The flames were now roaring, and up from the ashes of Appleberry Farm soon came five new greenhouses. The phoenix that rose from the flames now had 120,000 square feet of growing space under glass, enough to grow all the plants needed for the business!!

Yet, Chris has more dreams. He fantasizes on how to pay off all debts much sooner than later and hopes his two sons will continue the business. And, of course, there may be time for a few ski trips out west, and perhaps a beach house on one of those barrier islands off the coast of South Carolina (think near Pawley's Island, SC, where the Marquis de Lafayette hid from the British naval war ships 400 years ago).

I suppose most readers of this piece will have made many visits to K&A over the past few years. You would have taken notice of Chris continuously hustling around the place, always helping with whatever needed to be done. Perhaps you are lucky enough to be one of his many part-time employees, who appreciate his offers to buy and bring in your lunch on those really busy days. And there are always those generous employee discounts for plants.

The anecdotal reports of Chris' generosity to customers are legendary. One of my favorites is the story of the elderly woman who wanted to purchase a white crabapple in memory of her recently deceased husband. During the negotiations it became clear that she had limited means and certainly did not have the ability to transport or plant the tree, let alone afford it. In typical Chris fashion, he made it all happen anyway! Chris' success is clearly dependent on the kind way he treats both employees and customers. In the words of a good friend and enthusiastic employee, Chris is a gem!

Now lest you think the story ends here, a few nights later I woke from my own dream, which was really the inspiration for this holiday tale.

I dreamed that Chris purchased the empty Johannsen lot on the West Beltline and was planning (hear a long drum roll and flourish of trumpets) . . . the GARDENER'S SUPER STORE. Lying there in bed, I began to fantasize about what this might look like. Not only would there be



K&A Greenhouse employees in 2022.

Christmas Fantasy – K & A Greenhouse (cont. from p.10)

a crazy assortment of annuals and perennials, but David Nedveck – coming back to reality – is on the scene, as the grower of those rare alpines. There is also a very large display of woodies, heavy on the unusual dwarf conifer cultivars and Japanese maples (all hardy to zone 4). There would be a floral shop, where you could purchase floral bouquets that included gardenias, holly and red carnations, and flowers for your daughter's wedding, resplendent with South African proteas and luscious orchids (think of Andrea Berto of Madison's former Fleurishes florist). Perhaps they would sell those wonderful European forcing glasses for hyacinths and paperwhites. But, of course, there would be a garden bookstore that included a secondhand book section. There is a restaurant/coffee/tea/ shop that served lunch and Sunday

brunch and brought back to life Madison's Odessa Piper Ovens of Brittany sticky cinnamon buns. There would be a garden antique store with all sorts of architectural artifacts (think old millstones as at the now-defunct Monches Farm) with antique pottery and fencing. There would be a garden smithery, where the resident blacksmith fashioned hand forged hanging basket hooks, fences, edging and garden-themed gates and hand railings. There would be a pottery with imported top-quality terracotta from Italy and England, and a resident potter who crafted wonderful clay pots emphasizing the traditional Midwest yellow ware, with or without salt glaze. A garden travel agency that arranged extraordinary garden tours by air, land and sea all over the world would be a must. There would be an acre of beautiful display

gardens that would allow everyone to envision their dream garden (does anyone else recall Craig Bergman's gorgeous autumn display garden at his former garden center in Winthrop Harbor, IL?). And there would be the mandatory seasonal Christmas shop that carried natural wreaths and garlands that allowed decorating more in the style of Williamsburg or Asheville's Biltmore House than Costco or Home Depot. Perhaps it would even host sleigh rides when the weather was appropriate using the trails in the adjacent UW Arboretum (clash of cymbals and mighty crescendo of the entire orchestra).

After all, don't all gardeners believe in Santa Claus? And Chris, you do know that the Phoenix just keeps on rising, and it lives for 500 years?

In Remembrance -



Cherith Bruckner - December 20, 2022

Longtime Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society member Cherith Bruckner passed away on Dec. 20, 2022. WHPS, as well as many other garden groups, were always welcome to tour her gorgeous garden.

Cherith's garden was a work of both art and science. She and her husband Roger, who preceded her in death, were an incredible team, designing and building the entire landscape together over the years. The stream, with three pools and two waterfalls, was hand-dug by Roger. They gathered rocks from all around south central Wisconsin, artfully placing them to line the garden beds and walkways. Cherith was the plant collector and garden designer. She knew the names of each of her hundreds of specimens, including origin and history. Collecting unusual and rare plants was her passion and she kept it up until the very end of her life.



In addition to the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society, Cherith was an active member of the Fitchburg Garden Club and the Wisconsin Hosta Society. Spring and early summer were the highlights of her garden display, but a tour was beautiful almost any time of the year.

Cherith fought hard against cancer and never gave up on the hope she would recover. She will be missed by many friends and acquaintances. May she rest in peace.

— Rita Thomas



2545 Dahle St., Madison, WI 53704 • January 2023 Newsletter

Have questions about your membership? Contact Chris Neumann at wisconsinhps@gmail.com or (608) 249-5750.

Friends of the Arboretum, Inc.

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