



Perennial Notes

June 2011

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society—an unincorporated nonprofit association

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.

Thursday, July 14, 2011, WHPS Garden Tours, 5:00 p.m.-dark, West Side of Middleton. We'll tour the gardens of Betsy True and Danny Aerts, Betty and John Moore, Sue and Dick Nielsen and Conrad and Mary Wrzesinski. More info and directions on page 4 of this newsletter.

Wednesday, August 17, 2011, Member Potluck Dinner and Walk Through Olbrich Gardens. 5:30-dusk. Bring a dish to share and your own plate and utensils. We'll supply the coffee, juice and lemonade. We'll also have an opportunity to tour Olbrich's beautiful and varied late summer gardens!

Wednesday, August 24, 2011, Rotary Botanical Gardens Tour, 6:00 p.m., Janesville. Join us for a tour of one of the area's premier botanical gardens, 20-acre Rotary Botanical Gardens in Janesville. At 6:00 p.m., we will gather in the Parker Education Center for a one-hour historical presentation by Horticulture Director Mark Dwyer. Refreshments will be provided. From 7:00-8:30 pm, Mark will lead us on a walking tour of the gardens, including the internationally themed English Cottage, French, Italian, Scottish and a spectacular Japanese gardens. Mark is known for his creativity in plantings, and we all anticipate what clever designs and colors he will produce with thousands of plants. Check out <http://rotarybotanicalgardens.org/> for directions, more details about the gardens and note Mark's blog!

Sunday, September 18, 2011, WHPS Member Plant Exchange 10:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Allen Centennial Gardens. Bring plant(s), get plant(s)! Members bring extra plants dug from their gardens, purchased and not-used perennials, woodies, annual bulbs, even a few houseplants. The plants will be set out between 10:30-11:00 a.m. and the picking will begin at 11:00. Great FREE plants for your garden with time left to plant them before the end of the gardening season. And what a perfect time of year to take a walk through the Allen Centennial Gardens!

Wednesday, September 21, 2011, Michael DeHart, supervisor of the grounds and gardens at the Getty Center Museum in Los Angeles. Michael will talk about both museums. The Villa was remodeled years over deadline and millions over budget. The gardens are Italianate and have a view to the ocean, including an interesting and beautiful meadow garden on the new parking garage. The contemporary museum has an avant garden and a cacti roof garden that overlooks LA and the surrounding expensive suburbs. Mike has an image of the azalea maze-on-water in full bloom on his Facebook page. The story of how the museum complex—three large areas (museum, education center and restoration center)—was built after a battle with the neighborhood is a fascinating story: the

hundreds of shiploads of hand-cut stone that came over from Italy; the fact that they can survive three months in the event of an earthquake; a heliport on site. Much like Disneyland, there is an entire "city" under the facility. The artwork they are restoring from all over the world is amazing in quantity. Michael's discussion should be interesting on many levels!

Wednesday, October 19, 2011, Sustainable Gardening Maintenance Tips and Tricks, Tibi Light, owner of Fine Gardening Designs in Madison, <http://tibilightgardens.com/>.

Wednesday November 16, 2011, Program TBA.

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

2011 BUS TRIPS

(Brochure mailed April 1; can also find info on website calendar)

July 20-24—Gardens in northern Ohio. Wonderful public and private gardens to tour, including a complete circuit that routes from Columbus to areas surrounding Mansfield, Cleveland, Akron and back to Columbus, and a few key garden stops on the bus trip out and back. Cost is \$350, with \$145 single supplement fee. **Registration deadline is June 17.** No refunds after June 17. Questions? Contact Jane LaFlash at whps05@yahoo.com or 608-243-1208.



September 17—One-day Trip to Rockford, IL Gardens

Tour through gardens in the Rockford, IL area, including: two lovely private gardens; J. Carlson Growers, Inc., a 79-acre, full-scale plant supplier, retail nursery and the Rock River Valley's source for obscure and hard-to-find trees, shrubs and related items; La Paloma Garden, a four-plus acre private garden, opened for tours by reservation only (<http://www.lapalomagardens.com>); Anderson Japanese Garden, an authentic Japanese Garden (<http://andersongardens.org/plan-your-visit>). (Note: Lunch will be provided.) *Details:* Cost for this trip is \$45.00. Depart via Badger Bus Saturday morning, September 17 at 7:25 a.m. from the Dutch Mill Park and Ride, Highways 12/18 and 151.

Registration deadline is August 1. No refunds will be given after that date. Questions? Contact Jane LaFlash at whps05@yahoo.com or 608-243-1208.

Five Fave Daylilies

When Stephanie suggested I write an article on my five favorite daylilies, I knew this would be a challenge. It is not that I do not have enough plants to select five favorites, as I grow 350 named cultivars from over 100 hybridizers. Not only is narrowing the list to five a challenge, but walking through the garden on any given day during the bloom season the list of five favorites can easily change. The Five Fave Daylily list represents a snapshot in time and will in all likelihood change as new cultivars flower for the first time this summer.

Daylilies are in the genus *hemerocallis*. The name *hemerocallis* comes from two Greek words meaning day and beautiful, which alludes to the fact that flowers of this genus typically last no more than a day.

Each cultivar in the list of my five favorite daylilies has some unique characteristics in form, flower, fragrance or name. The list is in no particular order.

H. 'Eye on the Sparrow' is a butter yellow color with a velvet wine eye and edge above an emerald green throat. Karol Emmerich from Springwood Gardens, which is located near Edina, Minnesota, is the hybridizer of this daylily.



H. 'Judy's Penthouse Double' is a tall, ivory yellow, very fragrant double daylily introduced by Bob Schwarz.



H. 'Malachite Prism' was introduced by George Doorakian. This green and lavender daylily with a purple eyezone above large green throat is an 'eye catching' focal point in the garden.



H. 'Primal Scream' was introduced by Curt Hanson.

The intense orange tangerine color and unusual form of this daylily is a garden favorite. 'Primal Scream' is a winner of the Stout Silver Medal, which is the highest award given a daylily cultivar by the American Hemerocallis Society.



H. 'Conrad' was hybridized by David Hall and introduced 1966. Though the deep cream colored flower with a rose border and yellow throat would not be considered exceptional among the daylilies available today, for me the name says it all!



—Conrad J. Wrzesinski
(article and photos)

Plant Sale Thank-yous

Another great plant sale! The weather was just cold and threatening enough to allow members and guests to put off working in their gardens and stop by the sale to purchase plants for planting on a better day. We had a great turnout.

And so many thank-yous to offer, beginning with my co-coordinators Linda Marx (plant digs) and Jeannette Golden (volunteers and setup day). More thanks than I can say in the space provided.

Great Location

Thanks to Judith Reith-Rozelle and the staff of the West Madison Agricultural Research Station for allowing us to use their hay barn for our sale site. Holding our sale on the same day as their Family Horticulture Day allows our members to gain extra value from stopping at our sale, and we have added a few new members/shoppers from visitors to their event.

Dig Hosts and Volunteers

Huge thanks for the more than 150 flats of plants donated by our Dig Hosts: Norma and Mike Briggs, Linda Dauck, Jeannette Golden, Frank Greer, Erv Koenig, Marlette Larson, Stephanie O'Neal, Marlene Richard and Margie Van Handel. *Other members donated plants dug on their own time from their gardens:* Lynn Belanger, Ruth Cadoret, Gene Dewey, Jane Gahlman, Laura Ward Good, Katherine Harriman, Ed Hasselkus, Bill Hoernke, Brende Hofer, Paula West Kaplan, Lois Kinlen, Jane LaFlash, Ed Lyon, Nancy Mohs, Lloyd Ravet, Marla Robinson, Cheryl Solaris and Conrad Wrzesinski. Member Tom Brunner donated a pickup truck full of dahlia tubers, calla lily bulbs and pineapple lily bulbs to the sale. Thank you Tom!

And we could not possibly have prepared all of those plants without the volunteers potting up and labeling the plants at the digs. Thank you Bonnie Berg, Nancy Businga, John Cannon, Nell Cummings, Mary Erickson, Donna Freiman, Mary Hegge, Christl Iausly, Linda Marx, Paul Miller, Nancy Mohs, Richard Mueller, Carol Olsen, Marla Robinson, Diane Scharkey, Jeannette Tierney and Stacey Wright.

Setup and Transportation Volunteers

Thanks to those who picked up plants at the dig sites and delivered them to the sale site: Stephanie Bloomquist, Cherith Bruckner, Nell Cummings, Greg Dauck, Bill Hoernke, Dee Kanter, Erv Koenig, Marlette Larsen, Caryn Stone.

And we appreciate so much help with so many projects on setup day from Lois Anders, Aleta Barmore, Jane Barnette, Lynn Belanger, Stephanie Bloomquist, Nancy Businga, Judy Crandall, Susan Francis, Shirley Haidinger, Katie Harriman, Joan Lawrence, Percy Mather, Pat McSweeney, Nancy Mohs, Evelyn Shimshak, Judy Stevenson, K. Ritchie Rheume, Marlene Richard, Cathie Richards, Diane Scharkey, Theresa Seeley. And a HUGE thanks to John Cannon and John Fritsch for once again organizing all of the plants on the tables.

On the day of the sale we had excellent help from: our team of cashiers—coordinator Laurie Zimmerman, Kathy Hauptert, Christl Iausly; volunteers Aleta Barmore, Bonnie Berg, Chris Biedermann, Stephanie and Richard Bloomquist, John Cannon, Bruce Christofferson, Judy Crandall, Donna Freiman, Jim Gentry, Shirley Haidinger, Ed Hasselkus, Greg Hauptert, Ellen Henningsen, Paula West Kaplan, Jane LaFlash, Barb Littlewood, Paul Miller, Donna Nosek, Diane Scharkey, Peggy Sharpe, Brigid Stark, Jim Zimmerman.

Members and guests

Thank you to all of the members who attended and purchased plants.

Thank you all! Stephanie O'Neal, Plant Sale Coordinator

Woodland Peonies

Peonies are a sentimental garden favorite whose luscious flowers never fail to conjure up memories of other Springs, other gardens. What I love about peonies is also what I hate about them: these beauties can't seem to hold their blowzy heads up, even in the best of weather. Though many gardeners seem unaware of them, there are other kinds of peonies which don't have this problem.

Known as species or woodland peonies, they are members of a complex family and I find it's easy to get confused, if not entirely lost, when trying to figure out their parentage and origins. Suffice it to say that they are very early blooming, herbaceous peonies that die back each year just like the more well-known *Paeonia lactiflora*. But these peonies can take a bit of shade, like that at the edge of a woodland.

All are single flowered with petals that are silky with a faint crinkled edge reminiscent of the deckle on handmade paper. I'm currently growing *Paeonia japonica* (white flowers), *P. obvata* var. *alba* (also white) and *P. obvata willmottiae* (pinkish mauve blooms that are slightly smaller). They were initially planted in 2006 and all three literally flowered on the same day for the first time: May 7, 2008.

Early May continues to be the typical flowering time. Mine are growing in filtered shade under old Austrian pines, and a Washington Hawthorn. Neighbors on both sides of the corner garden where these peonies are located have black walnuts which do not seem to affect them. They also do not seem to mind late snowfalls which have hit them when they were more than half up and leafing out.

All three have leaves fairly typical of garden peonies except for those of *P. obvata* var. *alba* which emerge the most amazing soft copper color and stay that way until just after the plant blooms. After blooming, the *obvata* and *japonica* seed pods split to reveal gorgeous metallic-blue seeds against a red backdrop. Quite a spectacle, I can assure you!



Photo by Mark Golbach



Photo by Conrad Wrzesinski

Alas, you will have to do a little searching to find these peonies. I have not found a local source, and my favorite — Seneca Hill Perennials—closed last year. Even the Klehm family, who have been breeding peonies for generations, only offer a couple of varieties of such peonies—and then not every year. Plant Delights Nursery is currently the best source with three varieties listed in their online catalog when I last checked in mid-May. Prices ranged from \$24 to \$45.

—Linda Brazill

POTS AND FLATS NEEDED

Now that the Plant Sale is over for 2011, we need to stock up on pots and flats for next year's sale.

If you have 4-inch pots (both short and taller), flats for 4-inch pots and 8-inch square pots, please email Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com. If you have any questions about contributing pots and/or flats that you have, email Stephanie or call her at 608-256-6108.

GARDENS NEEDED

If you have a suggestion of a nice garden (including your own) or group of gardens for a 2012 WHPS evening tour, please contact Jane LaFlash at whps05@yahoo.com or 608-243-1208.

**WHPS/MAMGA Garden Tour - Airport Rd/Century Ave and Old Sauk Rd areas
July 14, 2011 - 4:00 PM until dark**

Conrad and Mary Wrzesinski – 3010 Elm Lane, Middleton

The garden of Conrad and Mary Wrzesinski may best be described as eclectic. The 300 varieties of daylilies representing the introductions of over 100 hybridizers provide the garden with a panoply of color, flower, form and fragrance. Interspersed among the daylilies are perennials including peonies, heuchera, lillium and pulmonaria. Shaded areas of the garden include a variety of hostas and an assortment of woodland plants. Stone benches salvaged from building materials of the old Edge-wood Convent and a large specimen of the paper bark maple (*Acer griseum*) provide inviting focal points to the garden. Conrad is past president of the Wisconsin Daylily Society and Mary is the web master for the Wisconsin Daylily Society (www.wisdaylilysoc.org).

Directions: Take Century Ave (also Hwy M) east from the Century Ave/Airport Rd/Hwy 12 intersection. Century Ave and Airport Rd are the same road but change names at Hwy 12. Drive about 2 miles east on Century Ave. Turn right on Elm Lane. Though parking on Elm Lane is limited, ample parking is available at the bottom of Elm Lane on Mendota Drive.

Betsy True and Danny Aerts – 4785 Toepfer Rd, Middleton

Our hilltop home is making use of the sun in so many ways—producing heat, hot water and energy for the house, allowing a seed starting space and growing vegetables and fruits. The emphasis here is on functional use of the yard for efficiency, comfort and food production. A large vegetable garden and several fruit beds range around the suburban acre lot. Hardscape and a pond surround the house; a masonry bread oven is handy to the kitchen. Landscape plants, native, garden and weedy are used for bast fiber, soaps, dyes, and forage for us, our pets and the honey bees. This yard feeds us throughout the year; produce is stored in the freezer, root cellar and canning cupboard. Various ornamentals are included for their color, texture, form and fruit.

Directions: Take Airport Rd west from Hwy 12. Drive 4.2 miles. Turn right on Toepfer Rd.

A convenient route between Airport Rd and Old Sauk Rd is Pleasant View Rd.

Betty and John Moore – 3995 Shawn Trail, Madison

“Glass will make the garden be the building as much as the building will be the garden.” Frank Lloyd Wright made this general statement and applied it to our house when he designed it in 1944 (the Herbert and Katherine Jacobs Second Residence). In 1948 the Jacobs family finished building it and moved in. We purchased the house and 5-6 acres when we moved to Madison in 1989, and since then we have labored to make the grounds pleasing to look on and to be in. The glass walls of the house look out on a large prairie-like expanse to the south that has mown paths through it; there is a large vegetable garden, some planted beds near the house, and a wooded lot on the north side. During the past few years we have worked with Steve Lesch, particularly on the south field, where he has installed trees and shrubs for screening from nearby development as well as for natural beauty. The property is also a sculpture garden holding many large outdoor sculptures that we have collected.

Directions: Shawn Trail is a dead end road south off Old Sauk Rd, just east of Pleasant View Rd. It's the second driveway on the right.

There may be some road construction on Old Sauk Rd but two lanes of traffic will remain open all summer.

Sue and Dick Niesen – 6613 Old Sauk Rd, Madison

This colorful garden began with the help of Grandma Clara sharing some hosta, garden phlox and yellow iris in 1974. The gardens have since grown and evolved to include over 100 varieties of perennials intermingled with annuals, garden art, and more. The “look” changes each year as the homeowner is constantly moving plants to a better location or deciding that a particular plant just does not fit. Most of the annuals are either volunteers or home grown to ensure continuous color throughout the season. Some highlights include the display of Brugmansia along the walk to the front entrance, the Sempervivum ("Hens and Chicks") tucked into stone from the Baraboo bluffs in the front garden, and other examples of creative interplanting and presentation. All of the stepping stones on the walkways were made by the homeowner over a three month period in her garage. In the works is a hosta bed for this ever changing garden collage.

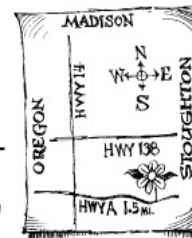
Directions: Continue west on Old Sauk Rd from the Moore garden. Drive 2 miles. The Niesen garden is between Gammon and Old Middleton Road.



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2011 Plant Sales, Garden Tours and Events

Longenecker Horticultural Garden Tours 7:00-8:15 p.m.

June 1—Conifers. If you are confused about telling a spruce from a fir, join us on a walk through the Garden's spectacular conifer collection. On this tour, led by Dr. Hasselkus, you will learn about "garden-sized" conifers of many types.

June 8—Shade Trees. Laura Wyatt, WDNR Urban Forestry, will lead the group through the Gardens' extensive collection of larger trees while discussing strategies for growing healthy trees in urban/suburban conditions.

Saturday, June 4, Daylily Society of Southeast WI Daylily Sale 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 13001 W. North Avenue, Brookfield, WI 53045 in the west parking lot of the Unitarian Universalist Church. Over 150 cultivars for sale in all price ranges, colors, sizes and forms. Visit www.dssew.org to view more sale plants and see the list of cultivars offered. Sale profits benefit Boerner Botanical Gardens and other public gardens. Questions? Contact 414-425-7465 or thaasch@wi.rr.com

Sunday, June 5, Wisconsin Hosta Society Plant Sale, Olbrich Gardens. 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. (while supplies last), with an auction of VERY SPECIAL cultivars at 11 a.m. For more information call 608-835-3291.

Wednesday, June 15, Container Gardening, with Mark Dwyer, Rotary Botanical Gardens, Janesville, 6:00-8:00 p.m. No RSVP required. \$5 for the public, free for RBG members.

Friday, June 17 and Saturday, June 18 Habitat for Humanity of Dane County will have its second plant sale of the year at the Habitat ReStore, 208 Cottage Grove Rd, Madison. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Featured this sale are many varieties of perennial grasses donated by the UW West Madison Agricultural Research Station on Mineral Point Road. A wide variety of other perennial flowers will be available. Plant prices are \$4 each or 3 for \$10, unless otherwise marked. All proceeds are used to help build homes for Habitat families in Dane County. **Donations of hardy perennials and plastic planting pots are welcome.** To donate, please contact Ann Eaves at 442-8768 or e-mail at aeaves@charter.net.

Saturday, June 18, Rhapsody In Bloom Benefit, 5:00-10:00 p.m., Olbrich Botanical Gardens. Mingle with friends in the lush summer gardens, then enjoy dinner under elegant white tents at Madison's largest garden party. Enjoy the Rose Garden with night lighting and bid on a variety of plants and container gardens. Ticket info and reservations call 608-246-5616.

Sunday, June 19, Rose Show, noon-4:00 p.m., Olbrich Botanical Gardens. Exhibit of cut roses and arrangements in all sizes and colors, and stroll through Olbrich's two-acre Rose Garden. Sponsored by the Madison Rose Society, and members will be available to answer questions. For more information call 608-845-6063.

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, July 7, 8, 9, Midwest Regional Hosta Convention, held this year in Madison. <http://www.midwesthostasociety.org/>

Friday, July 8 (10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.) and Saturday, July 9 (9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.) Olbrich Gardens Home Garden Tour: Featuring Gardens as a Sanctuary. Tour private

home gardens on the west side of Madison and in Fitchburg. For more complete information, see info on next page.

Saturday, July 23 Home Garden Tour in Janesville, WI. Seven private home gardens and the Rotary Botanical Gardens will be open from 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Tickets are \$10.00 in advance or \$12.00 the day of the event. All proceeds benefit the operation and development of Rotary Botanical Gardens.

July 13-August 7, Olbrich's Blooming Butterflies, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. daily, Olbrich Gardens. The cost is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children ages 3 to 12, free for children 2 and under, and free for Olbrich Botanical Society members.

Thursday, July 14, WHPS Garden Tours, West Side of Middleton, 4:00 p.m.-dark. See page 4 for more info.

Friday, July 15 (noon-6:00 p.m.), Saturday, July 16 (10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.), Windsor Garden Club Tour of Seven Gardens. 100% of proceeds donated to the Paul Carbone UW Comprehensive Cancer Center. For info, contact windsorareagardenclub@gmail.com, or call Monique at 279-0299.

Friday, August 5-Sunday, August 7, Iris Sale, 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Olbrich Botanical Gardens. The Madison Area Iris Society sponsors this sale of iris rhizomes, the roots that grow into iris plants. For more information call 608-271-3607.

Friday-Sunday, August 5-7, Wisconsin Master Gardener Conference. Hosted this year by the Madison Area Master Gardeners. Go to mangawi.org to see the registration brochure. Keynote speaker is Tony Avent.

Saturday, August 13 (10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.), and Sunday, August 14 (11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.) The Wisconsin Daylily Society Sale, Olbrich Gardens. More information, including a provisional listing of the daylily cultivars available, will be posted on the Wisconsin Daylily Society web site (<http://www.wisdaylily.org>) prior to the sale. For more information call 608-221-1933.

Wednesday, August 17, WHPS Member Potluck, Olbrich Gardens, 5:30 p.m.-dusk.

Saturday, August 20 (noon-4:00 p.m.) and Sunday, August 21 (10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.), Dahlia Show, Olbrich Gardens. Sponsored by the Badger State Dahlia Society. For more information call 608-577-1924.

Wednesday, August 24, WHPS Rotary Botanical Gardens Tour, Janesville, starting at 6:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 17, WHPS Bus Trip to Gardens in Rockford, IL area.

September 18, WHPS Plant Exchange 10:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Allen Centennial Garden.

Wednesday, September 21, WHPS meeting with Michael DeHart, Getty Center Museum. 6:30 social, 7:00-8:30 p.m. meeting.

Saturday, October 8 (noon-5:00 p.m.) and Sunday, October 9 (10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.) African Violet Show & Sale, Olbrich Gardens. For more information call 608-833-5552.

continued on next page

2011 Plant Sales, Garden Tours and Events, continued from previous page

Wednesday, October 18, WHPS Meeting, *Sustainable Gardening Maintenance Tips and Tricks*, Tibi Light, Fine Gardening Designs, 6:30 social time, 7:00-8:30 p.m. program.

Saturday, November 5, Herb Fair, 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Olbrich Gardens. Free and open to the public. Sponsored by the Madison Herb Society. For more information call 608-233-6219.

Saturday, November 5, Fall Symposium, Rotary Botanical Gardens, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$60 public/\$50 RBG Members. Details at www.rot.arybotanicalgardens.org. Dedicated to the appreciation of a wide range of plants that may have future merit and consideration in your own garden. Speakers include Laura Jull, Roy Klehm, Jim Nau, Richard Hawke.

November 11-13, Bolz Conservatory 20th Anniversary Celebration. Special events for children, families, and adults: party in the Conservatory, a nationally known speaker, free rainforest activities, free family concert featuring Ken Lonnquist and the Kenland Band. For more information call 608-246-4583.

Wednesday, December 7, WHPS Annual Meeting, Seed Exchange and Member Potpourri, 6:30 p.m. social and Seed Exchange; 7:00-8:30 p.m. program.

Saturday, December 3-31, Olbrich's Holiday Express: Flower and Model Train Show, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., Olbrich Botanical Gardens.

THE 2011 OLBRICH HOME GARDEN TOUR—Featuring *The Garden as Sanctuary* **July 8, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. and July 9, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.**

The 2011 Olbrich Home Garden Tour will showcase seven exceptional gardens in west Madison and Fitchburg that illustrate this year's theme, *The Garden as Sanctuary*. Garden styles range from Japanese and Eastern meditation gardens to native Wisconsin woodlands, but these diverse gardens are all united by a sense of serenity, peace, and harmony with nature. (Pictured at right, the backyard of Marla Sandridge.)

WHPS member Rita Thomas's garden is included, as is the garden of member Ed Hasselkus's son and daughter-in-law, John and Sarah Hasselkus. The 17 acres of beautiful gardens and naturalized areas at HospiceCare will also be featured. So, it is a great opportunity to support Olbrich Botanic Gardens and HospiceCare, as well as our fellow WHPS members!

Bonus Garden Lectures

As a bonus this year, the tour includes two short presentations to be held in the HospiceCare dining room. Both lectures are free with a Home Garden Tour Ticket, but seating is limited and will be on a first-come, first-served basis.

Friday at 11:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.: Linda Brazill—*Asian Serenity in a Midwest Garden*—How two amateur gardeners turned an urban lot into a retreat of year-round beauty and tranquility.

Saturday at 10:30am & 1:00pm: Anne Walker—*Creating a Garden Sanctuary*—Learn about gardening concepts that will create a sense of sanctuary in your home garden.

Ticket Information

Advance tickets (\$10 for Olbrich Botanical Society members and \$12 for the general public) can be purchased at Olbrich, Felley's Flowers, or Klein's Floral & Greenhouses. Tickets can also be purchased the day of the tour (for \$12/\$14) at the Agora Pavilion at the Fitchburg Center, 5500 E. Cheryl Pkwy. Beverages, pastries, snacks, and box lunches provided by HospiceCare's Doc Rock Café and selected items from Olbrich's Growing Gifts Shop will also be available at the Agora Pavilion tour center.

Free Ticket for New Olbrich Members

Olbrich memberships will be on sale at the Home Garden Tour sites, and anyone buying a membership during the tour will receive a free tour ticket—a \$14 value! As an added bonus, all new members will receive a complimentary one-year subscription to *Better Homes and Gardens*. These bonuses are in addition to all of the great benefits of being an Olbrich member, including discounts on classes and gift shop purchases, priority shopping hours at the Annual Plant Sale, borrowing privileges at Olbrich's Schumacher Library, and free reciprocal admission to more than 230 gardens throughout the country. If you have been thinking about joining Olbrich, don't miss out on this fantastic bonus.



Gardens of New York

I spent the last week of April in New York City. The city was filled with flowering trees and shrubs, blooming bulbs, and spring flowers. In many neighborhoods, if there was two square feet of soil in front of a building, there were plants in it. This was not at all meant to be a garden trip, but I did visit five gardens.

The Brooklyn Botanic Garden (<http://www.bbg.org/>) is easily accessible by subway. When I came out of the Prospect Park subway station I could see the garden entrance in the next block. I unknowingly visited the garden the weekend of the Cherry Blossom Festival. The good news was the cherry blossoms were at peak bloom. The bad news was many people were there to see them. The Cherry Walk and Cherry Esplanade looked fabulous with all the blooming trees. If you sort of squinted you could somewhat ignore the HUGE white tent set up smack in the middle of the cherry trees to accommodate the vendors for the festival. I believe I saw all areas of the garden, including Japanese Hill and Pond Garden, Children's Garden, Shakespeare Garden, Rock Garden, Conifer Collection, Conservatory, etc. I avoided all the festival activities like the Suzuki Concert and the Parasol Parade. It's a very nice garden. I personally think Olbrich is better.

Paley Park (http://www.pps.org/great_public_spaces/one?public_place_id=69) is on 53rd St., one block from the Museum of Modern Art. It's surrounded on three sides with tall buildings and the size is as if one building was removed and a park inserted. The surface is concrete, round tables and chairs fill the space, and pots of blooming azaleas provide color. The entire back wall is filled with a 20 foot high, 40 foot wide water fall. Traffic noise is literally drowned out by the sound of the water. I felt this was a very ingeniously designed garden for this very urban space. Apparently the park inspired a proliferation of similar "vest pocket" parks in New York City, which often feature water fountains which produce white noise to counter the sounds of the city.

The Central Park Conservatory Garden (<http://www.centralparknyc.org/visit/things-to-see/north-end/conservatory-garden.html>) is entered at 5th Avenue and 105th St. In 1898 a conservatory was built there, but it was demolished in 1937 and a six acre formal garden replaced it, divided into three distinct styles—French, Italian, and English. The French-style garden showcased a spectacular display of tulips in twelve foot deep beds surrounding the fountain with the Three Dancing Maidens sculpture. The Italian garden featured a large lawn surrounded by clipped yew hedges, a 12-foot-high jet fountain, and two exquisite allées of pink and white crabapple trees, which were in peak bloom while I was there and were breathtaking. The English garden contained lovely perennial beds.

I loved the High Line Garden (<http://www.thehighline.org/>). It was originally an elevated railway which had become an eyesore waiting to be torn down until neighborhood efforts turned it into a wonderful garden. When all sections are complete, the High Line will be a mile-and-a-half-long elevated park, running through the West Side neighborhoods of the Meatpacking District, West Chelsea and Clinton/Hell's Kitchen. Currently it's about 12 blocks long and maybe 30-40 feet wide. The plantings feature many grasses and a birch walk reminiscent of Olbrich's. There is an eating area, a small amphitheater, many chairs and benches, and a shallow water feature just made to take your shoes off and walk in. I was there on a gorgeous Sunday morning and the garden was filled with people.

Behind the library on the corner of 10th St. and 6th Ave. in Greenwich Village is the 1/3-acre Jefferson Market Garden (<http://www.jeffersonmarketgarden.org/>). This site was at one time the market, then for decades the Woman's House of Detention (with the likes of Emma Goldman, Mae West, and Angela Davis incarcerated there at various times). The garden is all done by volunteers and is beautifully landscaped and maintained, with interesting and varied plant material. It was just two blocks from my hotel and I enjoyed spending peaceful time there away from the hustle and bustle of the city.

—Jane LaFlash

Learn Porcelain Painting

Take a photo of your favorite flower, a backyard scene, Olbrich Gardens, and bring it to life on a porcelain plate, bowl, or vase.

Capitol Artists are looking for six students to learn porcelain painting. No experience is necessary; the three-hour lessons are 6:00-9:00 p.m. Tuesdays. Students will learn techniques and gain the level of skill necessary to complete a successful project. Classes will be held in Madison at the studio of WHPS member Annette Minter.

The instructor is Randy Wollet from Jefferson. He has won Best in Show at both the State Orchid Show, Mitchell Park, Milwaukee, and Orchid Quest here in Madison for a lovely porcelain vase he delicately covered with orchids. He travels out-of-state to teach seminars.

Annette is also a winner! One of her pieces was chosen as Wisconsin's best at a six-state convention held in Dubuque last fall. It is now on display for two years in Oklahoma City at the World Museum.

Lessons start the third week in June.

If you are interested, contact Annette, 244-2564.

Garden Plots Available

Middleton Outreach Ministry has 20' X 20' garden plots available. The cost is a donation of 25% of the produce to the food pantry and eight hours of volunteer service in the communal garden. For more information, contact Dan at 608-836-1638.

••••• Member News, Tips, etc. •••••

Alfalfa "Tea"

In January, WHPS member Judith David sent a question to "The Mad Gardener" at Klein's Floral & Greenhouses, Inc. in Madison. It was chosen for insertion in their February newsletter.

NATURAL NEWS

This column devotes itself to organic techniques, products, pest control, etc.—anything that educates us on the means to protect our environment.

A recent Mad Gardener question prompted this article for our Natural News Section and provides a fantastic and easy alternative to chemical fertilizers:

Dear Mad Gardener -

I've recently learned of the recommendation to brew a "tea" of steeped alfalfa pellets (containing no additives) for watering my hostas. I understand this essence of grass will improve the nitrogen content in the soil (for all outdoor plants), but am concerned it may attract critters--particularly rabbits. What's your opinion in this regard? Judith

Hi Judith,

Alfalfa pellets, available as rabbit, guinea pig and hamster food, are great organic alternative to chemical fertilizers. Alfalfa, like all legumes, is a source for nitrogen and a host of micronutrients. The brew recipe I found online says to fill a garbage can with 20 gallons of water. Then add 16 cups of alfalfa pellets and 2 cups of Epsom salts. Stir well and allow to steep for one week. Before use, stir again and pour by the cupful on flowers, veggies, shrubs, roses and, yes, your hostas! I found no reference regarding the attraction of critters to the garden. My assumption is that as the brew ferments, it loses much of its appeal for rabbits and other critters. Use the "tea" weekly during the growing season.

Thanks for your great question, The Mad Gardener

Have you read...?

Judy Crandall recently finished reading **Gardening for a Lifetime—How to Garden Wiser as You Grow Older** by Sydney Eddison, and says, "I find it delightful. And it's not just for 'olde' people!"

Stephanie O'Neal just finished **Designing with Grasses**, by Neil Lucas. "It's a really good overview of planting the right grass in the right place in all gardens, from small urban gardens to wetlands to containers to huge prairie gardens—and it's filled with great photos."

Do you have suggestions for our members on great garden reads? Send your suggestions and comments to Stephanie O'Neal at sone2@aol.com.

WHPS T-shirts!

At \$10 each, WHPS T-shirts are a real bargain. Sizes currently available are medium and large. **To order a T-Shirt**, contact Jane Gahlman at jmgahlman@hotmail.com (or call her at 608-837-2317 and leave a message).

Members featured in media?

Do you know of a member's garden that has been featured recently in the media? Send info to sone2@aol.com.

Visit our website:

www.wisconsinhardyplantsociety.com

Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society



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Newsletter**

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