

# ARBORNOTES

A Newsletter of the Arboretum Associates

December 2008



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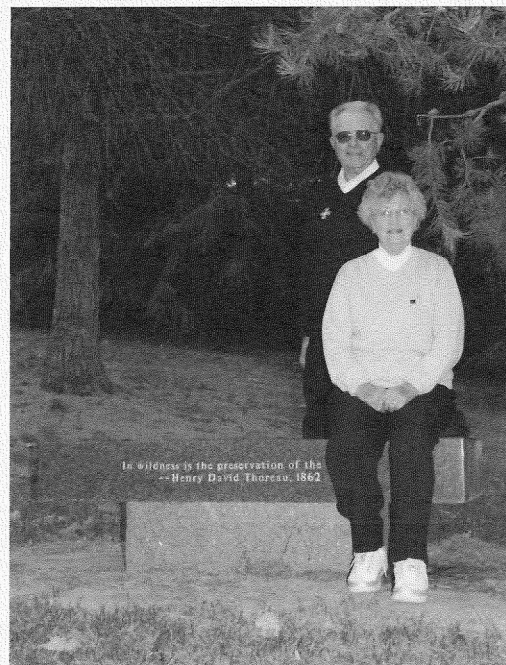
## Treasures in the Arboretum

**A** back corner of John and Winifred Dixon's basement is completely stuffed with golf balls. Stacks of egg cartons contain dozens of balls carefully sorted by brand, quality and color. On shelves below, empty milk jugs overflow with balls yet to be placed in cartons. Boxes full of balls are tucked under the lowest shelves, on the floor. "I know more about golf balls than I ever wanted to know," said Winifred with a laugh.

The Dixons started collecting the golf balls during their regular walks through the University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden more than 10 years ago. John, 81, and Winifred, 80, retired from UI in 1990 after decades of service. John was a professor in the agricultural engineering department beginning in 1954. Winifred started at the University of Idaho Library as the assistant U.S. documents librarian in 1971. The two were recently given the Idaho Treasures award at the University of Idaho Retirees annual meeting. The Dixons remained close to the university after their retirement, living less than a mile from the arboretum.

At first, the golf balls they collected were just an interesting side note to their walks. "We're walkers for exercise, and we'd see a golf ball and pick it up and throw it in a box in the garage," Winifred said. John, an occasional golfer, used a few for games. The Dixons gave some to a friend to sell at a pawn shop. Then they decided they could do something better. The Dixons started selling cartons of balls at the Moscow Farmers' Market in the 1990s. They originally gave the proceeds to the UI Found Money Fund, but were convinced by former arboretum director Richard J. Naskali in 2000 to send their money back to the place of the balls' origin. "After two or three years of Richard nagging us, we converted to the arboretum," John said. The Dixons drive to the arboretum every day during the summer and frequently during the spring and fall.

They walk through the trees and gardens to hunt for golf balls. They've developed a careful, winding route over time, starting at the bench dedicated to UI retiree James Peek and reuniting there at the end of the walk to rest. During their walks, the Dixons soak in the beauty, peace and quiet of the arboretum. John loves watching the different plants develop from dead-looking wood in the early spring to leafy branches by sum-



John & Winifred Dixon pause for a moment in the arboretum.  
R.J. Naskali photo

*continued*

COME GROW WITH US



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University of Idaho  
Arboretum and Botanical Garden

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mer. The first to sprout greenery is the forsythia, followed not long after by lilacs, a favorite of John's. Before long, it's autumn. "We walk in and say, 'Oh, there's the first tree with leaves starting to turn,'" John said.

The Dixons also love watching the resident wildlife in the arboretum, including squirrels, birds and otters. Winifred fondly remembers observing a family of quail one day. "There was one little quail that was kind of hanging back and messing around," she said. "Well, papa came and gave him two head-butts and made him get back to his brothers and sisters."

The Dixons have collected hundreds of golf balls on their walks over the years. They collect a dozen balls a day on average, but their record is 36. "When the golf course is open, we never come home empty-handed," Winifred said. The couple raised \$736 for the arboretum selling the balls at the Farmers' Market this summer, and \$1,001 in 2007. Most balls sell for \$2 a half dozen or \$3 a dozen, but some top-quality brands go for a dollar a piece. "Those sell out right away," Winifred said. "Golfers look for us and wait for us to show up, and they come running over to get them."

The Dixons have become a well-known fixture at the market over the years. The couple loves meeting new people at the market, listening to the live bands and watching children dance to the music. Since their stand is posted at the top of the aisle for non-profit groups, a primary entrance to the market, they've become familiar faces to marketgoers. "Everybody seems to know who we are," Winifred said. Winifred said she and John plan to keep up their arboretum walks and golf ball collecting "as long as our legs will let us." John said finding golf balls and enjoying the psychological lift of spending time in the arboretum have become motivating forces for them to continue their walking routine. "We need to walk. That's the whole point," he said. "The arboretum is a fun place to walk and a beautiful place to walk."

~Tara Roberts

Tara Roberts graduated with a bachelor's in English from the University of Idaho in May 2007. She lives and works in Moscow with her husband, Tim. Their first baby is due in February.

### LICHEN

Not moss but slower, a kind of *lumpenproletariat*  
fungus come in bunches no one keeps an eye on.

Grandmother ones, grandfathers, though where they're at  
they're babies, half birthed among a thousand tiny generations.

And lacey they are, tightly massive as minimal forests,  
but always more beautiful the closer you look.

And holding the dew in billions of pin-prick droplets,  
they drink their fill and wait, the very name meaning to lick.

~Robert Wrigley

Arboretum Associates are grateful to Robert Wrigley, professor of English at the University of Idaho, for giving us permission to reprint two of his poems: "Lichen" and "Morelity" (page 4). Wrigley's latest book of poetry is *Earthly Meditations: New and Selected Poems* (Penguin, 2006).



## A New Collection with an Historical Twist

Beth Seale wanted an appropriate planting in the Arboretum as a memorial to her husband, Bob Seale, a long time professor in the College of Forestry. She selected a project, dwarf European pines, from the list in the new Donor Policy.

I had several goals in mind when I originally came up with the idea for this collection. The first goal is to illustrate the differences between selected cultivars of Mugo pine and Bosnian pines and their more commonly available seedlings. Mugo pines are one of the very few widely propagated ornamental shrubs that are still routinely propagated from seed. Most other ornamentals are now propagated as clones, from cuttings, grafts, divisions or tissue culture. Since Mugo pines are often propagated from seed, there can be tremendous variation within a group. Although many nursery tags will say the Mugo pine will grow four feet tall and wide, the size can easily range up to 12 feet or more.

In 1998 a grouping of ten Mugo pines was planted on the slope at the south end of the European lilacs. After ten years they are beginning to show their variability, with some growing taller and more upright, and others more spreading. The original plants grew from seed as *Pinus mugo* var. *pumilio*, a variety from a population in Europe known for being compact. However, from seed, there is still a lot of variation in their size and growth habits.

Over the years many nursery people have observed Mugo pines and selected unusual plants to propagate. In the past, the most common way of propagating these plants was by grafting, which tends to be an expensive, slow way to propagate plants. Because of that, selected cultivars or clones of Mugo pine were not widely available in the nursery trade. In the past few years some nurseries have been able to propagate Mugo pines from cuttings. This makes it easier and less expensive to produce large numbers of plants, so they will hopefully become more widely available.

The new collection of dwarf European pines has thirteen cultivars of Mugo pine, some extremely dwarf, compact

growers, one tall, narrow selection, and two with golden needles (especially showy in colder temperatures). One is a medium sized plant with a mounded growth habit which reminded the person who introduced it, of the rolling hills of the Palouse—so he named it 'Palouse'!



Workers install historic steps in the Robert Seale Mugo pines collection.  
Paul Warnick photo

The other goals of the new planting were to eliminate a steep bank of turf that was difficult to mow and to simplify maintenance and access down into the European lilacs below the planting. I wanted to maintain access to the terrace path above the planting and avoid the look of just a straight line of green shrubs.

My original idea was to incorporate some rocks into the planting to help break up the line of shrubs, and utilize flat rocks to make informal

steps up the short bank to the upper terrace. While looking around the facilities storage yard at some landscape boulders, I saw the pieces of granite steps that were salvaged from the remodeling of the historic Administration steps on the hill southeast of the Administration Building. The granite came from the entrance steps to the original Administration Building constructed in 1899. That building burned down in 1906. The granite was salvaged and stored until 1936 when the granite was used to construct a set of steps on the current site. Those steps were in place until 2002 when they were taken apart, re-cut and re-squared and set on new concrete footings. The pieces in the storage yard were the 'scraps' left over from that project, ranging in size from about four feet long down to about a foot. There were enough pieces to do the steps, and Charles Zillinger, Director of Building Exteriors, agreed that this would be a great way to utilize a piece of Idaho history.

As a great final connection, when I took Beth Seale on a tour of the project, she remembered her husband talking about eating lunch on those granite steps back in the 1940's when he was working on his master's degree in forestry. She said that as an avid Idaho Vandal and history buff he would have greatly appreciated the pieces of granite in the grove commemorating his life and career at the University of Idaho.

~Paul Warnick



## A Traveler's Tribute to the Arboretum

Like travelers of ancient times, we packed our bags and marched south. We ascended the steps of the Memorial Gym with enthusiasm, leaving behind us a windowless classroom. The dark basement started to fade as the last of us let the door loose. The whole scene reminded me of my last year in high school when we used to go on field trips. The green orchards of Gaza city, its strawberry farms and watermelon fields smelled fresh in my nostrils. The memory flashed in front of my eyes, though the setting was utterly different. The awakening sun gently brought me back to reality as it started to light our path. After everyone assembled, we set out to observe the arboretum and collect information.

"That way," I said to my students. "If you look up there, you will see the Shattuck Arboretum." It took us two minutes to get there. It took us two minutes more to reach the main street on the southern side of the Shattuck. My twenty students arrived one after another. They took a deep breath before they started to cross the street to the new arboretum, officially called the University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden.

The earth was dressed in green, crabapple trees pregnant with green and red fruits, the trails covered with fine gravel and wood chips. Following the narrow path, we started to disappear into the thick trees. Underneath each tree is a small sign. Bend down, and you will read "Vine Maple," "Incense Cedar," "Red Maple," "Eastern Hemlock," and "Giant Sequoia." The trees are classified into four groups according to their geographical areas of origins: Asia, Europe, Eastern North America, and Western North America.

In the middle of the arboretum, surrounded by giant oak trees that serve as a huge umbrella, rest two big ponds, shallow hearts beating with waves of life. Red, orange, black, and gray fish form a fascinating exhibi-

tion in response to the sunbeam, which gently brushes the surface. Near the farthest edge of the northern pond, two tiny turtles feed on the green grass, unmoved by our presence.

"Look right there," a student tried to capture our attention. "It is there, behind that tree." Two brown rabbits hopped a few steps away from one another. They looked like a couple. They stood and looked at us and then ran away. We thought we had scared them, but we were not the reason they disappeared. We heard voices approaching and saw a child running their direction. His mother ran after him. Jumping up and down, now excited to see the fish, he dragged his mother all the way to the pond. Above us, at this moment, a big hawk flew. Undoubtedly, it did not expect such a number of observers to be here at this early hour of the day.

Carefully, I watched my students listening attentively to every word I said. They were hypnotized by the magic of the place. The new arboretum is a piece of art meant to attract not only humans but also different species: trees, flowers, birds, and animals. It resembles a unique example of coexistence—nature safely exists with humans. The East meets the West.

Unless we look carefully around us and examine our surroundings, we will not be able to see the beauty of our world. To me the arboretum is a creative piece of art that evolved into a magnificent portrait of creation. It shows the possibility of human-nature coexistence. It teaches us a lesson—a priceless one: We can live in peace and harmony with the creation.

If you get the chance to visit the arboretum, try to look beyond the large picture: try to see yourself as part of the creation. Enjoy the creative art that you will see, and experience the pleasure of discovering the art of creation.

~Adam Yaghi

### MORELITY

Heavy thatch of leaf and needle,  
sun-mottled also,  
so the eye you need to find them  
almost always fails.

But when you do, their dark knuckles  
rucking up the duff,  
their airy reticular brains  
bobbing in the air

and breathing a sexual musk—  
after that they're everywhere.

Your grocery bag grows as heavy  
as a child, and limp,

as if plucked up they could only sleep  
and dream, of how the sun  
they had yearned for awaits them  
in the butter's slick

and a skillet's sublunary  
bed, where they'll sizzle  
from fungal unto meat  
which you will take and eat.

~Robert Wrigley



## Message From The President

We are very grateful to the new voices who contributed to this edition of ArborNotes. They include three recent graduates of the University of Idaho: Brittney Carman, M.F.A Creative Writing, 2008; Tara Roberts, B.A. English, 2007; Adam Yaghi, M.A. English, 2007, and former Fulbright Scholar from Gaza. Robert Wrigley, a distinguished poet and Professor of English at the University of Idaho, has also been generous in giving us permission to reprint two of his poems, "Lichen" and "Morelity." Wrigley's most recent book of poetry is *Earthly Meditations: New and Selected Poems*. As always, we are grateful for the news from the Arboretum Horticulturalist, Paul Warnick. We also thank him for his hard work and dedication to this beautiful place.

The Arboretum Associates Board continued its efforts in 2007 – 2008 to enhance and protect the character of the arboretum and its surround-

ings. The south parking lot was expanded from 10 to 28 visitor parking spaces, significantly increasing accessibility. Earth berms were constructed along the West Palouse River Drive road frontage, allowing for the planting of trees and shrubs. These plantings will screen the automobile and road noises from the arboretum and provide six months of color.

Also in the works is the development of pergola designs to permanently showcase the Asian vine collection. This structure will replace the temporary trellises installed over ten years ago.

The generosity of the members of Arboretum Associates makes such projects possible and the Board wishes to thank all the members and friends for their support of the University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden.

~Jan Leander



Arboretum Barn, Spanish Gold™ *Cytisus* in foreground.  
Nick Camp photo



Kniphofia 'Flamenco' with Arboretum barn. Nick Camp photo



## Arboretum Experience Pays Off

Jesse Dahl, a senior majoring in horticulture at the University of Idaho, worked in the arboretum for the past year. He hadn't really considered a career in public horticulture before he started working in the arboretum; he discovered that he enjoyed the Arboretum and decided to look for jobs in a public garden. He applied for a job as horticulturist at the Morton Arboretum at Lisle, Illinois west of Chicago. After a tough telephone interview and another on-site interview, he was hired as one of six horticulturists at the Morton Arboretum. That arboretum is one of the premier public gardens in the United States. It has over 1700 acres of grounds and more than 4,000 different kinds of trees, shrubs and other plants. It has 130 full time employees and 114 part



Jesse Dahl standing by the Camperdown Elms.  
Paul Warnick photo



Jesse Dahl working in the arboretum. Paul Warnick photo

time and seasonal workers. Jesse will be responsible for caring for their Asian collection.

Jesse is originally from Buhl, Idaho. He attended the College of Southern Idaho, studying horticulture with David Kiesig, the head of the horticulture department there. Jesse worked various jobs in the industry while going to school, landscaping and irrigation installation, as well as greenhouse and nursery work.

As a member of our arboretum crew he was introduced to all the phases of the arboretum from maintenance chores like pruning, mowing and irrigation to labeling and using the arboretum data

base. He has been a valuable employee and I am sure will prove to be a great addition to the staff at the Morton Arboretum.

~Paul Warnick

## Arboretum Associates Annual Meeting

The 31st Annual Meeting of Arboretum Associates was held April 23, 2008, in the Moscow Senior High School auditorium. Gina Taruscio, President of the Arboretum Associates Board, welcomed members and guests and introduced Arboretum horticulturist Paul Warnick who presented an overview of the Arboretum year.

Hans Kok, representing the UI Arboretum Advisory Board, made a brief presentation regarding the Board's activities for the year including modifications of donor policies, the development of pergola designs to permanently showcase the Asian vine collection, and the location of the new chilled water tank proposed for campus.

Treasurer Joy Fisher distributed a financial report showing net income to the Associates for calendar year 2007 of \$7,553 and an ending fund balance of \$45,479. The three largest expenditures funded the expansion of the parking lot, an aeration system for the ponds, and continuing support for the installation of automatic irrigation system.

Keith Bromley was elected by unanimous voice vote to fill an open three year Member at Large position on the Board.

The evenings keynote speaker was Professor Mark Hoversten, Dean of the UI College of Art and Architecture, who presented, "Think Big – Act Big: The Role of an Arboretum on a University Campus."



## Gardeners Brave Cold Weather to Support Arboretum

Each year the Arboretum Associates host our annual plant sale around the last weekend of May or the first weekend of June. The effort required to put on this one day sale is tremendous. Throughout the year Paul Warnick and his group pot trees, shrubs, iris, daylilies and other specimens from the arboretum that need to be divided. We are also fortunate to have members of the Associates who share some of their own treasured plants from their personal collections. In particular, Marlene Johnston provides numerous unique items from her Orofino garden. In March we gather to pot the plants which we have purchased from well known catalog merchants. These plants have to be fertilized and watered until the date of the sale.

Wednesday evening the week of the sale the Palouse Ice Rink starts its transformation into a greenhouse. Tables are set up and covered with protective plastic. Thursday at noon the hauling begins. It takes several trucks and trailers and numerous volunteers to transport all of the plants from the hoop house, the greenhouses, and individuals homes. Friday is spent organizing, deadheading, and making everything look its best for the sale.

In past years around 8:15 a.m. eager shoppers begin gathering in anticipation of the opening of the doors at 9:00. This did not happen for the 2008 sale. We woke Saturday to a miserable, cold, rainy, blowing morning. The few faithful huddled in the entry to the Ice Rink. While the opening crowd was sparse compared to our usual standards once the heavy rains hit we benefitted. Customers started arriving and sales began to pick up. We were all surprised to find that the 2008 sale was the second largest in our history with total gross sales exceeding ten thousand dollars. It just goes to show foul weather doesn't keep gardeners from adding tried and true standards as well as unique plants to their collections at great prices.

The success of this sale was due to a lot of hard work by the arboretum staff, the Associates and the many volunteers who donate their time and plants to make this sale possible. We also have great customers that keep coming year after year. We are currently in the planning the next sale. We look forward to seeing everyone when we open the doors at 9:00 A.M. on Saturday, May 30, 2009.

~Bev Rhoades



Carol Kraut was the lucky winner of this beautiful planter at the plant sale. Bill Bowler photo



Shoppers quickly choose their favorites from the large selection of plants and move then to the holding table manned by our cheerful volunteers. Bill Bowler photo



A selections of plants scooped up by an early shopper. Bill Bowler photo



## *Arboretum Associates Donor Roll*

Thank you to the many generous donors who supported the University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden from July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008. A total of \$48,236 was received from membership gifts, gifts for Arboretum endowments, and gifts to support specific Arboretum projects. Your support makes a difference.

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***New Donor Policy Approved***

A new donor policy for the Arboretum has been approved by Doug Baker, University Provost. The policy was developed by the Arboretum Advisory Board in conjunction with the new Arboretum Master Plan. A copy of the policy is available on the Arboretum website, at <http://www.uidaho.edu/arboretum/pdf/ArborDonorPolicy.pdf>.

The goal of the new policy is to encourage donations toward larger projects that will work towards the educational mission of the Arboretum. This can be accomplished by becoming a member of the Arboretum Associates, donating to or creating a new Arboretum Endowment fund; or, sponsoring a specific new planting collection. The policy includes an addendum listing twelve projects with sponsorship costs ranging from \$2,500 to \$5,000.

Arboretum Associates raises funds through memberships and their annual plant sale. The Associates Board of Directors works with the Arboretum Advisory Board and the Arboretum Horticulturist to decide where their funds should be spent. They have funded various maintenance projects, including irrigation installations and painting the barn; equipment purchases, including a new tractor and the pond aeration equipment; new developments, including the parking lot expansion and the new *Hosta* garden; and ongoing expenses for new labels and underwrite annual flower beds.

There are currently five active Arboretum Endowments: Arboretum Associates Centennial, Norma and Gene Slade Arboretum, Elisabeth and Don Mackin Arboretum, Bob Steele Family Arboretum, and the Richard J. Naskali Arboretum endowments. Each of these endowments have different rules specifying how the money should be spent, and all of them are set up to provide perpetual income to the Arboretum.

If you have any questions about how to support the Arboretum please contact Paul Warnick, Arboretum Horticulturist, at (208) 885-5978 or [pwarnick@uidaho.edu](mailto:pwarnick@uidaho.edu).

~Paul Warnick



## Report from the Horticulturist

The weather on the Palouse has been typically unusual (interesting combination of words—but descriptive) this year. We had by far the most snow since I started eight years ago, with drifts 8-10 feet deep in the arboretum. The snow cover may have contributed to a very late spring. Early flowering shrubs like forsythia were almost a month later than usual, and even the later flowering plants like lilacs were significantly later than usual. Usually lilacs would be near their peak flowering for our mid May commencement; this year with commencement nearly a week earlier than usual and the late flowering season there were only a few of the earliest cultivars in bloom.

Then, on June 11 nearly two inches of snow fell. There was enough snow that even after it turned to rain later that afternoon, there was still some snow in shady spots the next day. Fortunately, it warmed up enough to change to rain before the weight of the snow caused much damage to the deciduous trees. Summer was perhaps less unusual, although it was somewhat cooler than most years, and we actually had a few summer rain storms. Fall started out mild and dry with a couple of light frosts in late September, but on October 11 the low temperature was a record 18°. That was enough to freeze many leaves that had not yet turned color, especially on ashes and ginkgos. Maples and oaks that make up the majority of the fall color show in the arboretum were mostly unaffected by the cold temperatures, so there was still a very colorful fall season.

We completed three projects this spring: planting the Robert Seale collection of dwarf European

pinus (see separate article), the expanding south parking lot buffer strip, and adding a collection of southern Idaho native wildflowers in the xeriscape garden. The buffer strip planting was installed on berms between the lot and Palouse



Scott Plummer holding an 8' pole by Snow Drift. Paul Warnick photo

River Drive. Plants were chosen from selections all ready in the arboretum to give a 'preview' of the arboretum and to demonstrate six months of color from deciduous trees and shrubs. The color starts with the pink flowers of Mt. St. Helens Purple Leaf Plum and ends with the striking, bright orange fall color of Fritsch spiraea. When the xeriscape garden was originally designed, the section on the east side of the gravel road was designated for Idaho native plants, with

plants native to northern Idaho at the north end, and plants native to southern Idaho at the south end. The north end has filled in nicely with trees, shrubs, grasses, and wildflowers. The south end was planted with several trees and shrubs, but until this year there were only a few scattered forbs and grasses. This spring, Steve Love, an ag extension agent at the University of Idaho's Aberdeen Research Station, provided more than 50 southern Idaho native plants for the garden. One of Steve's projects is working with the

Idaho Native Plant Society to find native plants that can be used in landscaping. He has been collecting seeds from various species and sites, then testing them in trials at the Aberdeen site. We will be providing him with information on how these plants fare under our much different growing conditions, especially our gray, wet winters. Steve continued his project this summer with more collections, and he has promised



Beth Moosman and Paul Warnick working on new xeriscape trail. Nick Camp photo



more plants for next spring.

In spite of a smaller student crew than usual, we were able to continue installing more automatic irrigation in the arboretum. Probably the phase that will make the most difference in our labor is the section of turf on the west end of the Shattuck Arboretum. We have now been installing automatic irrigation for five years and we have covered about half of the arboretum. We have focused on the areas that were the hardest to water with hoses and sprinklers, the steep slopes and areas furthest from the water lines. Moving sprinklers and hoses still takes a huge amount of time every day during summer. Now we are able to do a much better job of irrigating and the turf quality is gradually improving. We also installed a drip irrigation system in one bed of mixed perennials in the xeriscape garden. As part of that installation we installed a separate valve and water meter for the xeriscape garden and next year we will be able to track exactly how much water is used. I hope to have an informational sign installed at the south end of the arboretum by next summer, and I intend to post the monthly xeriscape water usage on that sign as well as on the arboretum web site. This year we only watered the Triple Crown Fescue grass section twice. We also hand watered all of the new plants in the southern Idaho section at least weekly and the perennial bed a few times throughout the summer.

One of the major projects in 2007 was installing aeration in the arboretum ponds and treating the aquatic weed Brazilian elodea (*Egeria densa*) with an aquatic herbicide. I think that both of these projects can be called qualified successes. The aeration seems to have diminished the algae problem. The duckweed and *Azolla* plants have disappeared from the larger ponds. We monitored the upper pond for the Brazilian elodea all summer long, mostly visually from shore, but twice we tried to thoroughly sample the entire pond by dragging the bottom. We never found any of the Elodea, so we are hoping that we have eradicated it before it was able to spread to the other ponds, or outside the arboretum.

A class in the geography department that teaches how to use global positioning systems, used the Shattuck Arboretum for a classroom project this semester. Students are mapping trails, significant trees, invasive plants and sites like the Lib-

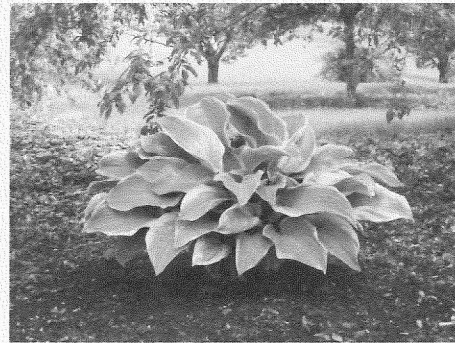


Pond Aerators. Paul Warnick photo

erty Grove, planted in honor of the 32 University of Idaho students who died in WWI. Students will also map the site into 100' x 100' grids and will mark some key grids on the ground. With that information we will be able to begin a formal inventory of trees in the Shattuck Arboretum and identify the trees that still remain from Shattuck's original planting. We will also use the collected information as a base line to monitor the spread of potentially invasive plants like English Ivy (*Hedera*

*helix*) and Money Plant (*Lunaria annua*).

We have been working this fall to prepare sites for new planting projects for spring 2009. In the xeriscape garden, we will add to the southern Idaho native section; we extended the trail to the north end of the garden. This will provide better views to that end of the garden, and expand that bed of mixed perennials, shrubs and grasses. At the north end



Hosta 'Sagae' Beth Bowler Hosta Walk. Nick Camp photo



Hosta 'Tokudama Flavocircularis' Beth Bowler Hosta Walk. Dan Murphy photo

of the arboretum, we will add to the *Hosta* walk project. Bill Bowler has been the driving force behind the *Hosta* collection, donating nearly all of the plants and helping with the design and planting. Bill's mother, Beth Bowler, recently passed away, and in her memory, an endowment has been set up to provide for further development and upkeep for the *Hosta* collection. The third project will be a collection European clematis species

*continued*



and hybrids to be planted on the gabion retaining walls along the west side gravel road. This collection will include the smaller flowered species *Clematis alpina* and *C. viticella*, as well as some of the larger flowered hybrids with European species in their parentage. Although records are not always clear about the parentage of many of the clematis hybrids, it is clear that *Clematis* 'Jackmannii' (probably the most popular cultivar, with large dark purple flowers) does have European species as its parents. 'Jackmannii' is an old selection, dating from 1858, and it has been used as a parent for many new selections. These clematis will provide us with plenty of choices in large, showy flowers for the collection. The goal of this collection is to demonstrate some of the range of clematis that will thrive in Moscow and also to soften the



Lodgepole pine damage. Hans Kok photo

visual impact of the gabion rock wall along the main access road through the Arboretum.

All of these projects are completely funded by direct donations and earnings from arboretum endowments. No state money or student fees are used for plant additions to the arboretum. The maintenance budget for the arboretum has recently been cut quite dramatically to help achieve the cutbacks mandated by the State of Idaho and university administration. Your

continued support of the arboretum is more vital than ever in order for the arboretum to continue to develop and grow. You can specify that your donation go toward one of these specific projects or it can go to support the general Arboretum Associates fund.

~Paul Warnick

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## *The Last Leaf of Fall Asks the First Snowflake to Dance: Homage to a Granite Bench*

First, a warning: November comes cold to our neck of the woods. It's a month the poet Tony Hoagland calls, "a train wreck —/ as if a locomotive made of cold/ had hurtled out of Canada/ and crashed into a million trees/ flaming the leaves, setting the woods on fire." The train comes every year to Moscow, and if you've walked an autumn in the arboretum, you've seen the splendid wreckage of fire and flames. But it's late-November, colder now, and the fire has all but died out. Maples that only weeks ago lit pink and orange are settled into a sleeping, winter brown. Plums and crab apples have lost their leaves. The Camperdown elms lining foot paths across campus have their long, knuckled fingers laid bare. Still, a few embers burn on the hillsides. Larches with their golden needles stitch the ridgeline in saffron thread. But it's November, and the cold has sharpened. On a clear night, the veil between earth and the white heat of a million stars is thin as your breath, evanescent on the air.

It is not a clear night and colder than I thought. I haven't properly dressed. What was rain on my windshield has turned solid, and its pelting stings my cheeks. "It's snowing," I yell, throwing my voice, trying to project above the wind. "What?" my friend shouts. "I can't hear you." She's turned her back to the hill we're inching down, but it's small shelter from the storm. The wind is screaming, spitting snow in our eyes. The sky is pushing in. We link arms and pull our hoods up. Like this, we navigate the dark. "This is crazy," my friend yells, her head thrown back to the slick wet night. The wind carries it over the trees.

She's right, of course, it is crazy: night time in November and we're in sweatshirts and jeans, poking around the arboretum in a storm. The weight of the dark is so laden that, even with headlamps, we are, at times, walking blind. I remind myself to step carefully: somewhere in this darkness there are bodies of water; at this rate, we're as likely as not



to fall in. We slow for a minute and laugh at ourselves. My friend blows into her hand.

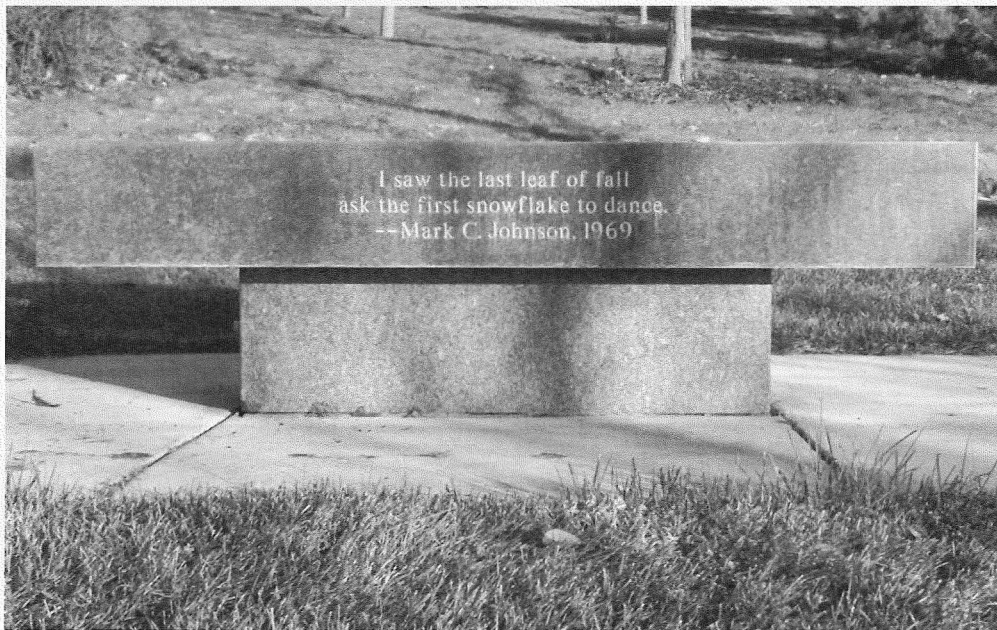
In November, the arboretum is haunting. Trees like thin and naked bodies. Wind raking husks of withered leaves, rasping along the gravel path. Birches, with the bark of their long trunks peeling, shine silver under snatches of moon.

I'm not a newcomer to the arboretum. I've walked these paths so many times. My daughter has chased her father to the water's edge and stood, holding her breath, to watch turtles tak-

ing sun. We've clamored after rabbits. We've tracked hawks across the sky. Once, by some stroke of migratory luck, we happened upon a pin oak full of Cedar Wax Wings. Literally, the birds dressed every limb. I've panted behind girlfriends who ran in college when, after my second baby, I decided

it was time to get back in shape. On sunny days, I walk with a friend on our hour lunch from work. I've shared my joys and heartaches, small secrets and nagging fears, all on the woodchips of these trails. And often, in the act of walking these woods, I have found catharsis, beauty, release. But tonight I'm looking for something else—a story I've heard—and it's drawn me here, though the days have turned short, and we're caught in darkness. To put it plainly: I'm looking for a granite bench.

But the night isn't making this easy, and as we move through the dark, stumbling, the fact is, I've become a little scared. The darkness has given legs to lilacs and hydrangeas, and suddenly, I'm seeing strangers lurking. Suddenly, the wind is someone breathing. Suddenly, danger abounds. "This is crazy," I say. "Let's get out of here." Christina says, "Don't be a chicken, woman. Be calm."



From the bench dedicated to Bonnie Mckay Johnson. "I saw the last leaf of fall ask the first snowflake to dance." Mark C. Johnson, 1969. Bill Bowler photo.

The calming effect of gardens is no new discovery. As humans, we've understood it for thousands of years. In the U.S., gardens have long been fixtures of psychiatric rehabilitation and care. In the wake of the physical and emotional devastation of the Iraq war, VA medical facilities across the country have designed and implemented therapeutic gardens to facilitate the rehabilitation of those thousands of soldiers whose lives and bodies have been forever changed by the war. Two years ago, as a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the Department of English, I had a student who recently

returned from Iraq. He was a beautiful young man with a limp that I could see, and a metal plate in his head that I couldn't. I wondered at the things he had endured. Once, in a conversation after class, I asked him about his major, Landscape Architecture, and for the next half hour I listened as he shared the details of his

wounds and recovery, which, as it so often does, included deep darkness and thoughts of suicide. "The garden at the VA in Houston," he told me with quavering voice, "honestly saved my life."

As Christina and I move deeper into the trees, I am reminded of his story, of the fear and darkness, but ultimately of the calm, and in my mind, I wish him luck as a landscape architect. Good luck, to you, Chase. You give me hope.

But the snow has turned back to rain, and the wind has become angry and wild. "We should go," Christina finally yells. We've found a few others, but we haven't found the bench I'm looking for. Still, she's right, and so we turn to leave.

The story goes like this: Time turns us old and frail beneath its weight and takes the things we cherish. Sometimes, like a cold snap, a train wreck come early, it takes what we love,



still young. Somewhere in this garden, among the naked magnolias and golden larches, benches mark the deaths of mother, father, sister, child. Some were taken suddenly, saplings broken, others dug deep and took root. Still, they are gone now. Stone stands in memoriam. Somewhere, Emerson and Thoreau lend their voices. Somewhere, Cummings' rosebugs dance. Somewhere a family pays tribute to a loved one, marking, forever, the first falling flakes of snow. Near a stand of European Lilacs, now receding in the dark, there is a bench dedicated to Dean and Ruth Tousley. Ruth, though Alzheimer's disease had taken her ability to speak, loved the arboretum where, in the birds and the hush of wind stirring trees, she could hear the beating heart of life still fluttering around her. Her daughter, Eleanor Michel, had the bench inscribed with this, from Wendell Berry: "I part the out thrusting branches and come in beneath the blessed and the

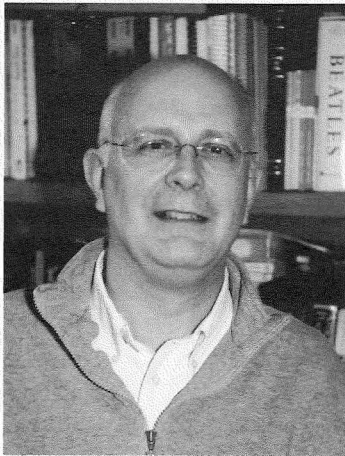
blessing trees. Though I am silent there is singing around me." As life moves in its locomotive fury, I have come in search of this peace.

It is cold and dark, and I am wet when I finally get home. The children are sleeping, and my husband has made a fire. "Come sit with me," he says, and so I do. He takes my hand and blows warm air on my fingers. "Did you find what you were looking for?" He asks, and I tell him I didn't find the bench. Still, there is something in our touching hands, in the orange flame dancing nearby. Outside, snow is falling on the last leaves of our maple. Time marches silent, navigating its own way through the dark, yet for this moment it has slowed to stone weight, and I am content to sit and simply listen as the fire beside us sings.

~Brittney Carman

## Summer Breezes and Sweet Sounds

**C**hamber Music in the Grove attracted over 200 music lovers to the Arboretum Monday evening, July 14, 2008 for our annual concert sponsored by the Lionel Hampton School of Music and the Arboretum



Professor Dan Bukvich. R.J. Naskali photo

Associates. The clear and balmy evening added to the ambience of the evening of acoustic instrumental and choral music in a program of eclectic music again arranged by Professor Daniel Bukvich. Dan's infectious leadership and composition skills have added much to the 'livability quotient' and "Heart of the Arts" moniker for Moscow, Idaho U.S.A. since he joined the University of Idaho faculty in 1978.

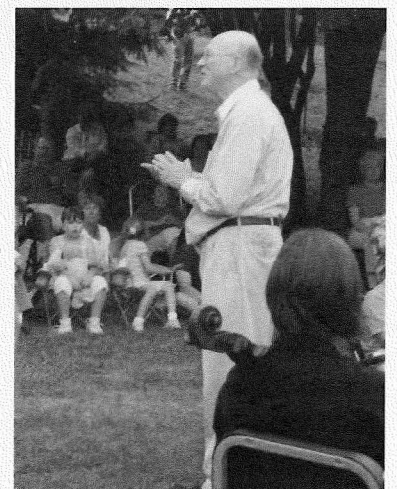
Over three centuries of music compositions ranging from those of J.S. Bach to Dan Bukvich, from string solos and duos, to brass, wind, and percussion ensembles, earned the rave approval of our diverse audience of children, college students and faculty, and local residents. Music School faculty and students, together with some local private musicians, provided the entertainment; audience members



A few of the musicians who charmed the crowd. Bill Bowler photo

provided their blankets and lounge chairs, and the Arboretum provided the green grass and the fragrance of maturing Littleleaf Lindens flowering overhead. Watch for these free concerts in future summers!

~Richard Naskali



Bill Wharton introduces the Paradise Creek Orchestra. Bill Bowler photo



## University of Idaho Provost Approves Restructuring of Arboreta Academic Support

Provost Doug Baker approved a restructuring of the academic support for the University of Idaho Arboreta, as requested by the Arboretum Advisory Board (AAB). Three faculty members were appointed to the newly formed Arboreta Executive Committee (AEC).

The mission of the new AEC is to:

- increase the direct academic use and other educational opportunities within the arboreta;
- make timely decisions on future development of the arboreta;
- provide a venue for members of the campus community and the public to bring forward suggestions for development and usage of the arboreta; and
- expand the vision of the arboreta for the future.

The three faculty members are Bob Tripepi (College of Agriculture and Life Sciences), George Newcombe (College of Natural Resources), and Stephen Drown (College of Art and Architecture). Unique about this new committee is that each faculty member has a five percent academic appointment to the arboretum, something we have not had since Arboretum Director Richard Naskali retired.

Over the next year, the new Arboreta Executive Committee is expected to replace the current Arboretum Advisory Board, and work closely with facilities staff, and Arboretum Associates.

I feel this is a great step by the University, to increase its commitment to academic involvement in the arboreta. The new AEC should be a great help to facilities staff in managing the arboreta. I would like to thank the Provost and the AAB members for their time and effort to make this happen.

~Hans Kok  
Chair, Arboretum Advisory Board

### Arboretum E-mail Update

Every month I send out an e-mail Arboretum update. I include a brief description of what has happened in the Arboretum during the month, a listing of any upcoming events, and a 'plant of the month', where I try to describe a plant that is particularly interesting at that time of the year. I usually try to pick plants that might be somewhat unusual, or a newer introduction.

If you would like to be included on this e-mail, please send your e-mail address to me, at [pwarnick@uidaho.edu](mailto:pwarnick@uidaho.edu). I blind copy everyone on that list, and I will not share your address with anyone else. I send the update as a PDF file that is usually around 5-600KB, so it shouldn't bog down most servers. I also occasionally send out some pictures if there is something especially striking to see in the Arboretum.

~ Paul Warnick



# University of Idaho

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Please mail your tax deductible contributions to: Arboretum Associates, University of Idaho, P.O. Box 443147, Moscow, ID 83844-3147. Thank you.