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UI Arboretum
Associates
Facebook Page



ARBORNOTES

A Newsletter of the University of Idaho Arboretum Associates

December 2025

Message from the President

It is my pleasure to report about key events for the *University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden* during the past year.

First and foremost, Paul Warnick retired at the end of November after serving 25 years as Horticulturalist and 22 years as Arboretum Superintendent. This change is bittersweet. We are very happy for Paul but are sad that he will no longer guide and direct the Arboretum.

Second, we were delighted to welcome Ian MacConnel as our new Arboretum Horticulturalist in April 2025. (You can learn more about Ian in this issue of Arbor Notes.) The *UI Arboretum Associates Board* looks forward to working with Ian as he leads the Arboretum into the future. Ian has big shoes to fill but we're confident that his experience, education, and passion for the Arboretum will help him succeed.

Each year, the Arboretum Associates Board hosts three important events: our Annual Meeting, our Plant Sale, and the Summer Concert. (You will find brief articles about each event in this newsletter.) We were happy to turn this year's Annual Meeting into an early celebration of Paul's retirement. At the meeting, we welcomed three new Board members: Kali Armitage, Madyson Cessnun, and Becky Phillips. We also bid farewell to three valued Board members: Kat Clancy, Frank Clarke, and Julie Miller. Special thanks to Kat who served as Board President for four years including during the Covid-19 pandemic.

It was the Board's pleasure to support a project to honor UI Professor Dan Bukvich from the *UI Lionel Hampton School of Music*. Dan has organized the annual Summer Concert in the Arboretum since 2000. Paul designed the *Bukvich Arboretum Concert Site*, an installation of basalt columns and pathways that greatly enhanced the hillside setting for the concert.

You've likely heard the phrase "It takes a village." It's a proverb about the need for collective effort to achieve a complex goal. The Arboretum is the product of the efforts of innumerable people. For example, Paul and Ian are assisted each year by seasonal workers who work during the growing season. This year's seasonal crew included Sahithi Thota, Ian McCall, David Salim, and Rachel Becker. I'd also like to recognize Lucy Falcu who served as Paul's assistant from 2021 to 2025. Lucy made countless important contributions to the Arboretum and to the Board during her tenure.

Volunteers also provide vital support to the Arboretum. A large team of volunteers assists with our Plant Sale — many of them have helped for years. Dozens of musicians and performers from the Lionel Hampton School of Music and the local community donate their time and talent every July to our Summer Concert.

Our wonderful donors provide significant financial support for maintaining and enhancing the Arboretum.

Thank you. We could not succeed without you.

Erik Anderson

President, UI Arboretum Associates

Come Grow With Us

ArborNotes

A Newsletter of
the Arboretum Associates
University of Idaho
Arboretum and Botanical Garden

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DECEMBER 2025

Calendar of Events 2026

APRIL 8, 2026

47th UI Arboretum Associates Annual Meeting

Join us for a light snack followed by a brief business meeting and presentation.

Time: 6:30 to 8:30 pm

Location: 1912 Center Great Room, 412 E. 3rd Street, Moscow, ID

MAY 9, 2026

UI Arboretum Associates Annual Plant Sale

We will have nearly 200 varieties of annuals, hardy perennials, grasses, and woody plants available, many for the first time. All proceeds go to the further development of the arboretum and botanical garden.

Time: 10:00 am to noon

Location: UI Facilities Greenhouse - 875 Perimeter Drive, Moscow, ID

JULY 13, 2026

26th Annual “Summer Breezes and Sweet Sounds” Concert

A free concert – bring you blankets and lawn chairs.

Time: 7:00 pm

Location: UI Arboretum and Botanical Garden

46th Annual Arboretum Associates Meeting

On Wednesday, April 9th, 2025, the 46th Annual Arboretum Associates Meeting was held in the Great Room at the 1912 Center, with an estimated attendance of 105 people. This year's annual meeting was a celebration for Arboretum Horticulturalist and Superintendent Paul Warnick, who retired at the end of November 2025.

The event began at 7:00 p.m. with a warm welcome from President Erik Anderson, who expressed gratitude to all the special guests, volunteers, and donors in attendance.

Erik introduced several key figures, including Rusty Vineyard, Director of the University of Idaho Facilities Department, and Craig Carson, Director of Grounds. He acknowledged the contributions of former board members, volunteers, and seasonal workers, and expressed appreciation for the outstanding work of Paul Warnick and Lucy Falcy, Horticultural Assistant.

The business meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. The current board members were introduced: Yvonne Barkley, Vice President; Nancy Sprague, Secretary; Frank Clarke, Treasurer; Kat Clancy, Past President; Harriett Hughes, Julie Miller, Kris Roby, and Nancy Zabriskie – Members at Large. Special thanks were given to the three members leaving the board: Kat Clancy, Julie Miller, and Frank Clarke.

The minutes from the Arboretum Associates 45th Annual Meeting were approved, and Erik provided a President's Report, highlighting the transitions within the UI Arboretum. Paul Warnick announced his plan to retire, and Ian MacConnel was welcomed as the new UI Arboretum Horticulturist. Erik also described the Bukvich Arboretum Concert Site project, which honors Professor Dan Bukvich and includes a memorial for his wife, Gae. Professor Bukvich has led the UI Arboretum's Annual Summer Concert since its start in 2000. The dedication ceremony of the site was held on May 6, 2025.

Treasurer Frank Clarke presented the financial report, noting major expenditures and revenue sources, and thanked members for their generous support. Net revenue for the past year was \$120,006 and total expenditure was \$54,263. The ending balance for the Arboretum Associates fund was \$296,758.

Elections were held, and the slate of candidates for Officer and Director Positions was unanimously approved. New Members-at-Large included Kali Armitage, Madyson Cessnun, and Rebecca Phillips. Kris Roby was re-elected as a Member-at-Large. Nancy Zabriskie was selected to be incoming Treasurer. The business meeting adjourned at 7:22 p.m.

The meeting concluded with a presentation by Paul Warnick, who shared photos and stories from his 25-year career at the Arboretum. Paul began working at the Arboretum under the direction of the former Horticulturist and Director, Professor R.J. Naskali, in the year 2000 and is finishing up his 25-year career in December 2025. Under the UI's Phased Retirement Program, Paul worked half-time this past year, which allowed him to help train and assist the new Horticulturist, Ian MacConnel. Paul provided a fascinating history of some of the major projects and challenges in the Arboretum over the past 25 years. Countless donors, seasonal workers, and volunteers have helped develop the Arboretum into the gem it is today. His presentation concluded with a standing ovation.

Erik announced the Board was planning a project in the Arboretum to honor Paul. Those interested in honoring Paul also may consider contributing to the Paul Warnick Scholarship Endowment through the University of Idaho Foundation.

Nancy Sprague, Secretary, Erik Anderson, President, and Kali Armitage, Member-at-Large, UI Arboretum Associates.

Capturing a snapshot of the ever-changing Arboretum

For over 40 years, the *University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden* has provided the local community with a place to learn, exercise, or simply relax. With the *UI Shattuck Arboretum* included, the time expands to over a century. As a new Moscow resident, I am enjoying it, too. You can always count on the Arboretum to have flowers to look at, trees to sit under, and a cute family of moose to watch.

Perhaps due to the tranquil nature of the place, it can be difficult to recognize how the staff working at the Arboretum continually make dynamic changes while managing to make it appear unchanged. The lawn is mowed to keep the grass in check, branches are pruned to keep the paths open, and new plants are added all the time.

Sometimes, new plants are added to expand the Arboretum's collection, but more often, new plants are being planted to replace the plants that did not survive for various reasons. Did you know that there used to be, not one, but three giant sequoia trees in the Shattuck Arboretum? Two of them died during the severe winter of 1968 and had to be removed. Do you remember a time when the upper pond had water lilies? Wild geese pulled them all out, according to Paul Warnick, outgoing UI Arboretum Horticulturist. And how do I know what the Arboretum used to look like when I only moved to Moscow in 2024?

The University of Idaho has a preserved counterpart of the UI Arboretum, the *UI Stillingher Herbarium*, that houses hundreds of thousands of plant specimens. One of



Water lilies carefully preserved from the *UI Arboretum and Botanical Garden* ponds. | Courtesy of Kai Battenberg.

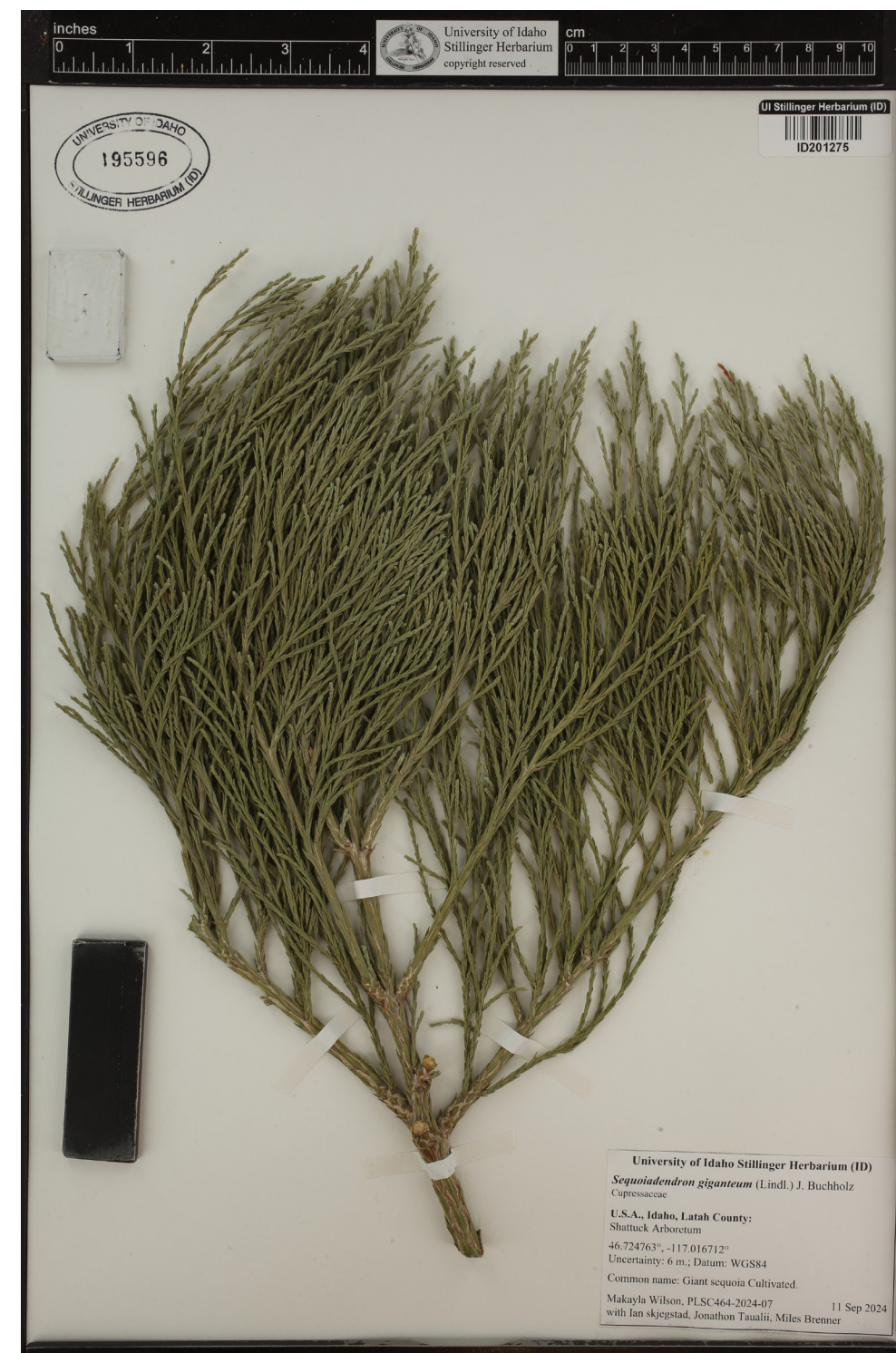
which is a waterlily collected from the upper pond of the Arboretum in 2007. Like a photograph from an album, an herbarium specimen is a small snapshot that can be looked

at now to remember the past. When enough specimens are combined, a detailed picture can be painted.

Last year, the Stillingher Herbarium, in collaboration with Dr. Sara Mahdavi and her students, collected 25 specimens from the *UI Shattuck Arboretum* to record the plants that are there now. It is my hope to add more specimens from both sections of the Arboretum over time. Hopefully, there will come a time when these specimens become a resource for Moscow residents to see how different, yet just as beautiful, the Arboretum used to be.

All specimens from the Arboretum can be found digitally at the [Consortium of Pacific Northwest Herbarium](#), or physically at [Stillingher Herbarium](#) (116/117A Mines Building).

Kai Battenberg, University of Idaho, Stillingher Herbarium, Collections Manager, and UI Arboretum Associates Member-at-Large



Preserved piece of the Giant sequoia 'Idaho Endurance' from the *UI Shattuck Arboretum*, one of which still survives. | Courtesy of Kai Battenberg.

Among the trees, a silver anniversary: Concert marks milestones for Warnick, Bukvich

Music met memories on a warm July evening as hundreds of concert goers embraced a tradition that dates back a quarter-century.

This was the 25th anniversary of the first UI Arboretum concert organized by Professor Dan Bukvich, though not the 25th concert. One year's concert was rained out, and another, during the Covid pandemic, was canceled. It also was the final concert of Paul Warnick's 25-year tenure as horticulturalist for the *University of Idaho's Arboretum and Botanical Garden*.

Dr. R.J. Naskali, Kris Roby (UI Arboretum Associates Member-at-Large), Dr. Dan Bukvich, and Paul Warnick joined forces in 2000 to produce this seasonal blend of sights and sounds. It's now an annual celebration for fans of flowers and fanfares on the second Monday of July.

Bukvich composed "*Fanfare for Paul Warnick*," a musical translation of the letters of his first name. It honors Warnick's retirement from full-time employment at the University, though he continued in a part-time role through the end of November this year. This short and rousing tribute, played by three trumpets and a row of

percussionists, opened the 65-minute concert.

The program was a familiar mix of traditional and new music, reflecting classical, jazz, folk, and world genres. The audience delighted in old favorites like "*Rock Music*," a geological primer made popular by Bukvich's jazz choir during the academic year. Several pieces combined instruments not usually heard together, such as marimba and double bass, or accordion, guitar, and tabla.

As the shadows grew longer and the temperatures dipped into the 70s, the choir surrounded the horns, strings, and percussion instruments to lead "*Arboretum Samba*," a sing-along with the audience. The song echoed across the ponds and up the hillside to the newly dedicated *Bukvich Arboretum Concert Site*, an installation of basalt rocks on the west slope installed in memory of Gae Bukvich, who loved the UI Arboretum and music, and in honor of Dan.

Gerri Saylor and Kenton Bird

Kenton Bird is an emeritus professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Media. Gerri Saylor is an installation artist with a background in journalism and marketing. Both are avid concert goers. They've missed only two arboretum concerts in their 24-year marriage.



Each year the concert ends with the chorus and audience singing the "*Arboretum Samba*." Dancing is encouraged, but optional. | Y. Barkley | July 2025

UI Arboretum Associates Plant Sale

The 2025 *UI Arboretum Associates Plant Sale* was held Saturday, May 17, at the UI Facilities Greenhouse south parking lot located at 875 Perimeter Drive. Early in the morning on sale day the experienced volunteer staff set up tables and efficiently moved and organized plants from the greenhouse. Once again, we had a sunny albeit breezy day and a long line of eager shoppers waiting for the gates to open at 10:00 AM. As always, the event was festive and very successful grossing \$10,144.11. A huge thank you goes out to the loyal shoppers, many of whom come out every year to support the Arboretum.

This sale, a significant fundraising event, could not happen without the work of many people. Paul Warnick, Lucy Falcy, and the rest of the staff collected the plants and cared for them in the greenhouse in preparation for the sale. The Arboretum Associates board spent many hours potting, labeling, and taking care of advertising to heighten community awareness. Finally, kudos to the wonderful volunteer staff who run the show on sale day. It definitely is a combined effort for a very good cause.

Looking forward to seeing you at next year's sale Saturday, May 9, 2026.

Jan Leander, Volunteer and UI Arboretum and Botanical Garden Plant Sale Coordinator

Thank You!

**TRI-STATE
OUTFITTERS**

for electronically advertising
the UI Arboretum Associates
2024 Plant Sale on your sign

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Latah CREDIT UNION

for electronically advertising
the UI Arboretum Associates
2024 Plant Sale on your sign



Dan Bukvich rocking the wood block | Y. Barkley | July 2025



An unusual combination of instruments, such as this tabla, accordion, and guitar, is a common component of our yearly concerts. | Y. Barkley | July 2025

UI Arboretum Associates Donor Roll

A special thanks to the many donors who support the *University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden* during Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025). Donations were received from a combination of membership gifts, gifts for endowments that support the UI Arboretum, and gifts that support special projects.

Your support makes a difference.

2025 Life Associates

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Graham * Terry & Christine Gray * C. Scott & Gabriella Green * Alma & David Hanson * Donna Hanson * Harvey Family * Foundation * Michelle Harvey * Walter Hesford & Elinor Michel * Loyal Hower & Elisabeth Ridgway * Patricia Jordan * John & Mary Ann Judge * Jean & Roger Korus * Alison Lawhead * Bonita Lawhead * Tina Lawhead * Jan & Dick Leander * Louise Luce * Makiia & Chris Lucier * Jayne Mahle * Judith Marineau * Joy Fisher Matthews * Luz & Albert Merkel * Julie Miller \ Joyce Parr * Moscow Rotary Club * Marcia & Robb Parish * Bruce & Kathryn Pitman * Raven Trust Fund * Teita & Tom Reveley * Beverly Rhoades * Kristine Roby & Rodney Frey * Melissa Rockwood * Nancy & Garth Sasser * Dorothy Scott * Jean’ne Shreeve * Craig & Jane Spencer * Marguerite Smiley * Robert N. Steele * Jeanne Steinhoff * William Stellmon * Robert & Margaret Stovicek * Michael & Tami Stubbs * Ellen Thiem * Donna Vincenti * Lauren Wenny * Doris Williams \ Gerald Wright * Jaki Wright & Bill Bowler

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Active

Paul Conditt * Tessa Hester * Michael Katzman * David & Jan Rauk * Tracy Rauk & Jonathan Bareford * Marina Savenkova * Jerry Schutz

Special Projects FY 2025 The UI Arboretum and Botanical Garden Bukvich Concert Site

Erik Anderson & Janice Fletcher * Jonathan & Tina Anderson * Anonymous * William & Cheryl Ardrey * Kenton Bird & Gerri Sayler * Constance Brumm & Thomas Newhof * Daniel Bukvich * Donald & Karen Burnett * Navin Chettri * Mary Clancy * Jill & Raymond Dacey * Mary DuPree & Mark Hume * John Fellman & Harriet Hughes \ James & Lucinda Fisher

* Leonard Garrison * Jeri & Andrew Hudak * Mary Ann & John Judge * Marc & Anne Klowden * Jeanne Leffingwell & James Reid * Joy Fisher Matthews * Kristen McMullin * Joy Passanante & Gary Williams * John & Catherine Porter * Joyce & Nels Reese * Shirley Rencken * Kristine Roby & Rodney Frey * Jean’ne Shreeve * Vern & Vanessa Sielert * Nancy Sprague & William Phillips * Maureen Taylor Regan & Donald Regan * Margrit von Braun & Ian von Lindern * William Voxman & Joanne Reece \ Judith Wallins * Carol & Michael Wilson * George & Gleanne Wray * Gregory & Ann Yasinitsky

UI Arboretum and Botanical Garden Bukvich Concert Site

The original idea for the annual summer concert in the *UI Arboretum and Botanical Garden* was from Kris Roby, a *UI Arboretum Associates* Member-At-Large, and Dr. Richard Naskali, the then Director of the Arboretum, back in the summer of 2000. After overcoming some initial reluctance on the part of Dr. Dan Bukvich, Professor, *UI Lionel Hampton School of Music*, (I think the quote was something along the lines of “Why would anyone want to go down there?”), a program involving students and faculty from the School of Music along with musicians from Moscow and surrounding communities was developed.

One of the main challenges of the UI Arboretum site was that there is no electrical power available, hence no way to amplify sound. Another challenge was that there was really no developed event space. The first few concerts were held in different spots in the Arboretum until everyone settled on the current site at the north end of the upper pond.

The musicians set up on the grass above the pond, and the audience brings blankets or chairs and sits on the open area and slope above the musicians. The site is shaded by linden trees, and the sun goes behind the west slope as the concert starts, making it pleasantly shady and cool (and often chilly) by the end of the program.

This site has worked well for 25 years minus two - one cancellation due to thunderstorms and another because of COVID. During the first years, most people parked at the north end of the Arboretum along Nez Perce Drive and walked down to the site, and even if you didn't know where you were going you could just follow

the crowd. As the concert became more popular there was no longer enough parking available along Nez Perce Drive and many people started parking at the south end of the Arboretum and walking up to the ponds. A treacherous steep bank awaited these folks, who had to negotiate the slope to get to the grassy area below. Over the years little ‘goat trails’ were cut into the slope and covered with bark to give people some traction as they negotiated the area. This was helpful but hardly accommodating.

Fast forward some 20 years and, unfortunately, Dan's wife, Gae, was diagnosed with a particularly nasty form of cancer. Having attended every year, Gae was able to attend her last Arboretum concert in 2023. With great sadness, she passed away on January 31, 2024. Shortly thereafter, a potential donor contacted the *UI Development Office* wondering if they could donate a granite bench in memory of Gae. Soon after I assumed the lead role as the UI Arboretum Horticulturist, I decided (for a number of reasons) that we were not going to do any more granite benches. Since then, I probably average a request a month about donating a bench. I thought long and hard about making an exception for Gae, but ultimately decided I couldn't do it, given the other people I have turned down over the years.



Tribute to Gae Bukvich in Dan's handwriting with her name annotated in musical notes. | P. Warnick | September 2025

However, the idea of honoring Dan and Gae and giving the concert site some recognition seemed like a good idea. So, I contacted Dan and asked if he would be okay with us soliciting donations for a project to do that. He humbly asked that it not be widely publicized, and his main request was that whatever we did would not significantly alter the character of the concert site. It is important to him that the concert maintains the informal, natural form that it has developed over the years, and he was emphatic that he did not want it to be turned into some kind of formal event space.

With that in mind, I worked with *Rock Placing Company* in Spokane to develop a plan that would make access to the site easier, while still maintaining a natural look. Because of the steepness of the slope the plan had to include some short

steps. We included some large flat surface ‘sitting rocks’ into the slope as well. Dan approved the concept, and the *UI Arboretum Associates* accomplished their first ever targeted fund raising effort for a project in the Arboretum. The response was very gratifying from a diverse range of people, and we were able to raise enough money to complete the project in early December of 2024.

The plan included two horizontal basalt columns. They serve the dual purpose of seating as well as a space to engrave text identifying the site and honoring Gae. One column is engraved “*Bukvich Arboretum Site*” with an aluminum interpretive sign mounted on a rock next to it explaining the history of the concert. The text for the other column was left up to Dan, and he said he had just the thing. When going through Gas's things he discovered a collection of



Bukvich Arboretum Concert Site looking up the slope from the bottom. | P. Warnick | September 2025

random quotes that she had stuck in various places. He particularly liked a quote that was attributed to Dr. Seuss, “*Today I shall behave as if this is the day I will be remembered*”. Before we had that ‘set in stone’ I met with Dan and some Board members to inspect the site and discuss the engravings. Dan said he wanted to go with the quote but was unable to confirm that it was Dr. Seuss. He also had something else he wanted to add. In addition to these ideas, one of the Board members asked if it was possible for the engraver to do the text in Dan’s handwriting. The result is a beautiful remembrance of Gae, in Dan’s handwriting, with Gae’s name annotated in musical notes.

The engraver arrived when I was out of town, so I had Ian send me a photo, which I emailed to Dan. When I got back to work on Monday morning, I had received this:

Dear Paul,

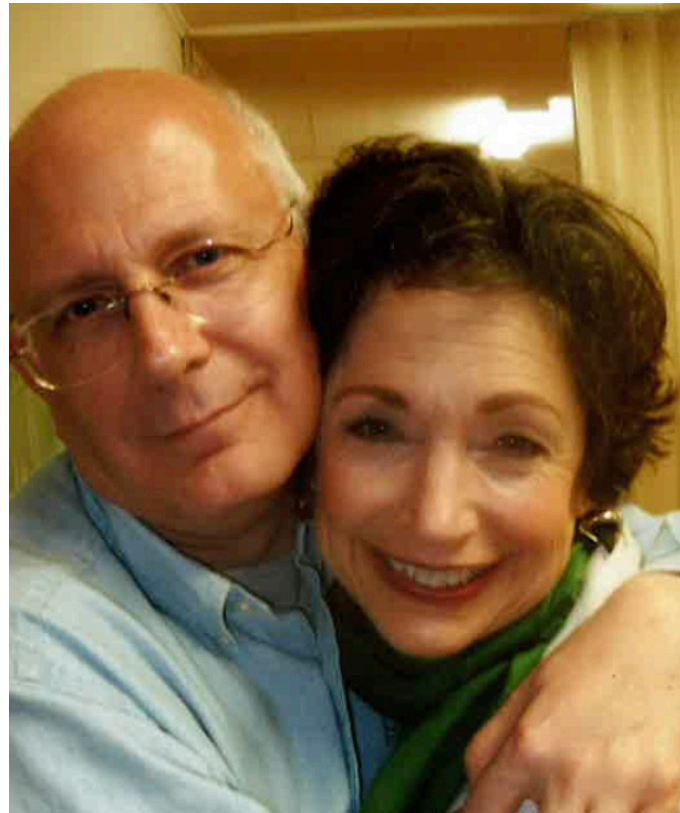
Last Sunday (December 27, 2024) I was in the Arboretum taking photos to send to Gae’s sister Diane. I know you sent me photos, but I wanted to see and experience the site first-hand. Anyway, I was east of the pond, looking across the water to the concert location when a family with three little children came down the gravel road. The kids immediately headed down the pathway to the concert site. One little boy said, “Look mom, there’s music on this rock.” Mom, Dad, and the other two children came over to sit on Gae’s bench and trace the music with their hands. Mom must have known some music because she said, “Look, it’s the name G-A-E in music... it’s her name!” Nothing could have made Gae happier than this...

My most heart-felt thanks to everyone involved in this project,

Dan

I responded to Dan saying that I generally don’t get choked up very often, but this one did it.

Paul Warnick, outgoing Horticulturist, UI Arboretum and Botanical Garden



Dan and Gae Bukvich. | Courtesy of Dan Bukvich



Bukvich Arboretum Concert Site with interpretative sign. | P. Warnick | September 2025

Introducing Ian MacConnel

I am very happy with the decision to hire Ian MacConnel as the next person to lead the *UI Arboretum and Botanical Garden*. He will be the third person to take charge over the 43-year history of the site. Dr. Richard Naskali was appointed Arboretum Director in 1987; I took over from him in 2003; and now Ian will be our successor.

Ian is an Idaho native, growing up and graduating from high school in Idaho Falls. He came to Moscow to attend the *University of Idaho*, earning a B.S. degree in Environmental Science in 2013. While going to school Ian worked for me in the Arboretum for three seasons. I mostly remember Ian as a valuable employee who willingly took on any task assigned and was motivated to learn as much as possible.

After graduation Ian was hired in the grounds department at *Washington State University* in Pullman. He worked there until this spring, most recently as their Grounds Supervisor and Campus Arborist. He supervised 13 full time employees and was responsible for any major pruning on campus. He has been a certified Arborist with the *International Society of Arboriculture* since 2015.

I started a phased retirement program in December 2024, with the agreement that I would work up to one year, half time, to train my successor. Ian was hired in April, and I have been grateful every day since then that we were able to hire someone with previous experience in the Arboretum. I try to imagine what it would have been like to try to train someone completely new and cannot really envision how it would have worked. Fortunately, Ian and I tend to see the world in the same way on most things. He would much rather be outside getting something done than sitting behind a computer, but he is also easily capable of the administrative tasks that are required.

After a summer in the Arboretum, he sees that the major challenges have not really changed in the twelve years he has been gone - irrigation and weeds still top the list. But, at least now, we have moved beyond watering with hoses and sprinklers and spraying weeds with a backpack sprayer. Ian also agrees with me that it is absolutely critical that we continue to do new things in the Arboretum and he has creative ideas to make that happen. I hope that everyone will give Ian the same support that I have enjoyed for the 25 years of my career.

Paul Warnick, outgoing UI Arboretum Horticulturist



Ian MacConnel | P. Warnick | April 2025



Landscape Architecture Plant Materials class touring the Arboretum. | P. Warnick | September 2025



Ian when he worked at the Arboretum during his undergraduate years. | P. Warnick | October 2013

Report from the Horticulturist

I must say how great it is to return to the *UI Arboretum and Botanical Garden*. It is difficult to express the peace and joy that is experienced in working in this wonderful place. Having worked here while attending school, there is certainly a sense of familiarity. But with the many changes that have happened since I worked here, I would consider myself new to this position.

At this point I have been in my role as the *UI Arboretum Horticulturist* for six months. It has been my opinion for a long time that a person who works in landscaping needs to experience at least one full season to have a grounded understanding of the workload and flow of things. Luckily for me, Paul Warnick was able to continue working this season while in a phased retirement. It would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to have such a smooth

transition without his help and guidance and for that I am extremely grateful.

While I would say we have had a successful season, it hasn't been without challenges. The main one this year has been staffing. For most of the summer, it was just Paul, a new student employee, and me working. I feel that overall, we have done a great job keeping the Arboretum looking good, but there hasn't been much new development. The lack of employees can be attributed to a number of things, but in the end, it is far better to have more people than fewer.

It felt like I hit the ground running this spring. There was a greenhouse full of plants to tend and water, annual beds to prep, and the grass was growing fast, all while keeping up with the routine maintenance of the season. Paul, Lucy Falcy, and I finished the planting of *UI Bukvich Arboretum Concert* site where we installed several ground covers, hydrangeas, and dogwoods. Although I was not part of the whole project, I must say that the site looks amazing compared to the grassy slope that it once was. It was around this point that we turned on the irrigation system as well, and since then I have been spending at least two hours every morning fixing various things that crop up. In spite of that, a fully automated system sure beats dragging hoses around.

Other notable events were the annual *UI Arboretum Associates* meeting, the plant sale, and summer concert. The annual meeting was great - there were so many people in attendance and the lecture Paul gave was wonderful. It was incredibly interesting to hear how the Arboretum has developed over the years and seeing the amount of donor support is truly heartwarming. The plant sale was also a lot of fun. Raising nearly ten thousand dollars in a morning seems quite a feat and seeing all those people getting excited over the various plants gives me hope for the future of horticulture. After not having attended the summer concert for several years I found it mesmerizing. Dan and his students were superb, and the musical arrangements were both exciting and calming. It was great to see that many people in the newly developed site and how well it worked as a venue.

As far as projects go, we have struggled to do any major ones. We have started adding new bark mulch to some sites, notably the *European Lilac* section, the *Centennial Oaks*



Button bush and bees. | I. MacConnel | Summer 2025

grove, and the *Joy Passanante and Gary Williams Peony Garden*. Currently we are planting daffodils along the path that heads west in what we call "Spruce Valley" just north of the hay field. With the help of several volunteers, we were able to install around 1,500 of them and hope it will be a striking display as they emerge in the spring.

Another notable event is the presence of wildlife this year. There has been a young bull moose, and a cow and her two calves that showed up mid-summer and seem to come back almost daily. While this has been wonderful to see, the young bull has inflicted quite a lot of damage on trees and plants by not only eating the leaves and stems of many established shrubs, but by rubbing his antlers on small trees and scraping off the bark.

All in all, it has been wonderful to come back to the *UI Arboretum and Botanical Garden*. I have never witnessed such an appreciation by the public for the work we do here. Everyone who visits looks so joyful and happy. In turn, this makes all the effort of what we do worth it.

I would like to express many thanks to the people who were involved in caring for the Arboretum this year. Especially Paul, whose work ethic and dedication are beyond admirable. He has been a great mentor to many, including myself, and it has been a pleasure working with him again. There weren't very many of us, but the hard work and dedication didn't go unnoticed. I look forward to continuing this journey, learning and developing myself along with this special place.

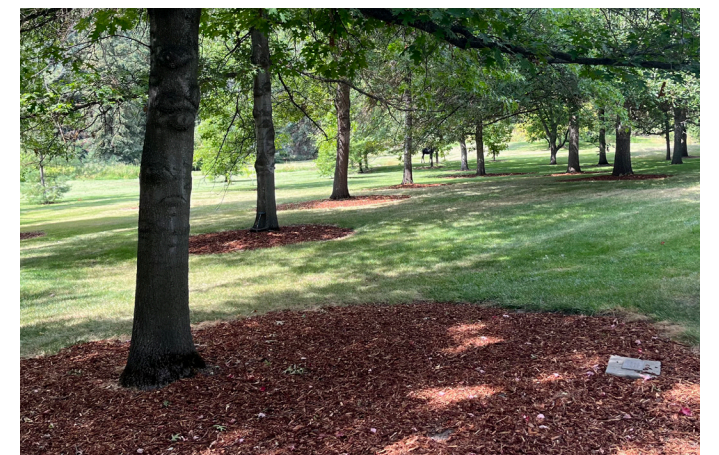
Ian MacConnel, UI Arboretum Horticulturist



The Joy Passanante and Gary Williams Peony Garden. | I. MacConnel | Summer 2025



A bull moose spent a considerable amount of time in the Arboretum this summer eating the shrubs and wading in the pond. | I. MacConnel | Summer 2025



The Centennial Oak Grove. | I. MacConnel | Summer 2025



The Lilac Grove. | I. MacConnel | Summer 2025



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