

NewsLeaf Friends of the Arboretum Newsletter

Building positive relationships between people and the land through support of the UW–Madison Arboretum

Summer 2022

Volume XXXVII No. 3

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Garden Tour, Poem
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Halleran, Grass-to-Garden
Initiative

Native Plant Sale

2022 Friends of the Arboretum Native Plant Sale by the Numbers

700+ customers attending tent sale

400+ volunteer hours

17,829 forbs, grasses, sedges sold

213 woody species

1/4 acre native plant pollinator
garden mixes

rain garden sets to cover **1,500**
square feet of home gardens

\$99,000 Income

– **\$64,000** Expenses

= **\$35,000** Net income

This income will be used to support
UW–Madison Arboretum’s facilities
and programs!



Arboretum Archives Photo Collection

Precious water from Lake Wingra in barrels and buckets was trucked to the prairie planting area in around-the-clock shifts.

FOA Celebrates Sixty Years

Phase 2: Ted Sperry Arrives at Camp Madison, Work on the Prairie Commences

By Frank Court, author of *Pioneers of Ecological Restoration*

This is part 2 of a 3-part series

As the newly hired prairie ecologist, Dr. Theodore “Ted” Sperry, recounted in a 1983 issue of *Arboretum News*, the time was mid-February 1936 when the train that carried him north from Southern Illinois arrived in Madison. The snow had reached a depth of one-and-a-half to two feet. Temperatures were near zero. Luckily, he found a cab driver who drove him to a location “as far as...open roads would permit.” He was one quarter of a mile from Camp Madison. He followed “a footpath...to a cluster of buildings buried in snow...in an open field.” The old Nelson farmhouse, serving as headquarters for the National Park Service was closed and shuttered, but a “low barracks with an Army headquarters sign...was manned for business.” He was assigned a bunk in a barracks for National Park Service personnel, yet, as he observed, it was clear that his Army hosts “were at sea as to whom I was and why I was there.” But he had arrived safely. He would live in National Park Service barracks for the remainder of his six year tenure at Camp Madison. His wife, Gladys C. Galligar, a botany Ph.D., teaching at Millikin University in Decatur, would remain in Illinois.

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In late April 1936, work began on the creation of an Arboretum tall grass prairie. As Sperry explained, in spring of '36 he was given a crew of CCC workers, a truck, and some long-handled shovels, and was told by Aldo Leopold, Director of Arboretum Research, to "go make a prairie." The project, designated as "research," was unprecedented. Sperry and his crew began by transplanting native prairie sods taken from a terminal moraine on the east side of the Wisconsin River near Prairie du Sac and from unbroken parcels of land around Black Earth. But the summers of '36 and '37 would not be kind, especially to transplanted prairie sods minus their normally deep, moisture retaining, soil roots. A record temperature of 107 degrees was registered on 13 July 1936. For twenty-seven days during the severe drought temperatures reached daily highs above 90 degrees. Water in barrels and buckets was truck-transported from Lake Wingra for three weeks in around-the-clock shifts. Sperry estimated that only 3 percent of transplants survived that summer. Summer of '37 was hardly any better. He eventually developed a planting system that involved both sodding and seeding. He also set up a prairie nursery on the west end of the Arboretum near the edge of the Nakoma golf course. He planted blue stem grasses, brown-eyed Susan, prairie dock, compass plants, rattlesnake master, and by summer 1938 purple coneflowers were beginning to bloom. It was also in '38 that Sperry began to experiment with small controlled burns, the first recorded in Arboretum history.

Sperry's early work on the prairie was followed closely by concerned faculty and prominent local citizens who as early as October 1932, within six months of the 26 April Arboretum founding, had been appointed as "Advisory Committee" members on the Arboretum Council, the official Arboretum governing body in 1932. Among the locals was Colonel Joseph W. "Bud" Jackson, Executive Director of the Madison & Wisconsin Foundation, who would be a heralding voice among other public figures advocating an imperative need to protect the nascent prairie and the rest of Arboretum land from imposing outside threats. The upshot of the effort was an early driving force behind the eventual creation of Friends of the Arboretum in 1962.

Arboretum Archives Photo Collection



Ted Sperry and his CCC helpers collected prairie sod transplants from a terminal moraine on the east bank of the Wisconsin River near Prairie du Sac and from unbroken areas of land around Black Earth, Wisconsin.

Exploring the UW Arboretum Longenecker Gardens

Wednesday, August 3, 9:00 a.m. to noon
\$20.00, Limited to 20 people

Join David Stevens, living collections curator of the Longenecker Horticultural Gardens, for an exclusive tour of Wisconsin's premiere collection of woody plants. The Gardens, often referred to as a tree museum, were first established in 1935 and contain Wisconsin's largest collection of woody plants with approximately 4,000 specimens representing over 2,600 taxa spread over 38 acres. David, the collection's third curator since its inception, will lead us on a one-of-a-kind tour interweaving garden history, stories behind iconic specimens along with seasonal plant highlights. Meet on the steps of the Arboretum Visitor Center at 9:00. **Please see registration details at foamadison.org**



Photo: Bryce Richter

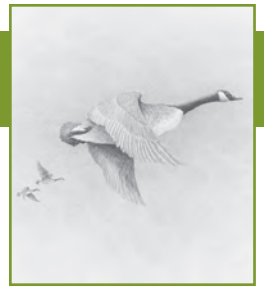
Back At The Spring

Back at the spring
On a warm summer day
Just about noon
On warmed rocks I lay
I gaze all around me
I see many trees
I watch the spring's water
Trickle past me
Sometimes I just sit there
And all I can hear
Are little birds chirping
And flying quite near
And once in a while
I just might see
A cute little gopher
Running from me
But now I must leave
Leave all these things
Hoping to return
Back to the spring

— Tom Drye

Written by Tom Drye in 1988 when he was just 10 years old. The poem was chosen for submission to the Yahara River Writers Anthology for students grade 5 to 8.

Luncheon-Lectures September 2022 – June 2023



Luncheon-Lectures are held from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the Arboretum Visitor Center Auditorium. Lunch is followed by an educational presentation. This popular series fills up quickly, so register as soon as you can. A registration confirmation will be sent to you by email or postcard. If a program you request is full, you will be contacted promptly. Reservations are transferable. If you give away your reservation, please call us at 608-890-2555 and let us know the name of the attendee. Vegetarian meal requests can be accommodated with at least 2 weeks advance notice. You also may cancel a

reservation and request a refund at least 2 weeks ahead of the event

Important Note: We are proceeding cautiously with registration at this time so please register for the first 3 lectures ONLY—either online at foamadison.org or by check payable to FOA and sent to Friends of the Arboretum, 1207 Seminole Hwy., Madison, WI 53711. The cost of each of the first three lectures is \$35.00.

Thursday, September 15, 2022: **Impacts of Past and Present Climate Change on Alpine Insects in Western North America** – Sean Schoville, Associate Professor of Entomology, and the current Director of the Center for Ecology and the Environment, UW–Madison

Montane ecosystems of western North America provide a wonderful system to test a wide range of evolutionary and ecological processes, as environmental gradients across elevation and isolation among mountains provides opportunities to repeatedly study the relationship between climate variation and species distributional ranges. My research focuses on groups of insects that vary in habitat preference and dispersal ability, with the goal of understanding how past environmental change has shaped their biodiversity and how ongoing change impacts their conservation.

Monday, October 10, 2022: **Deer Impacts on Forests, Wildlife, and Us** – Don Waller, retired J.T. Curtis Professor of Botany and Environmental Studies, UW–Madison

Deer are a species that many love to see and feed. Others like to shoot and eat deer. Others consider deer to be a scourge to their crops, gardens, ornamentals, and tree seedlings while posing health risks to themselves, other wildlife, and us (think Chronic Wasting and Lyme Disease). In this talk, Dr. Waller will ask: How did deer become so abundant? What limits their abundance? What impacts are they having? Are we monitoring those? Who manages deer? Is Wisconsin deer management broken? If so, can we fix it?

Thursday, November 10, 2021: **Climate Change and Wisconsin's Lakes** – Hilary Dugan, Assistant Professor, Center for Limnology, UW–Madison

A look at how climate change is affecting freshwaters in Wisconsin. How, why, and where lakes are changing, and what we can do to curtail current trends.

Wednesday, January 18, 2023: **The Arboretum's Grady Tract: 200 Acres of History, Restoration, and Research**– Michael Hansen, Land Care Manager, UW–Madison Arboretum

Michael will provide an introduction to the Grady Tract, the Arboretum's 200-acre parcel located south of the Beltline Highway. He will discuss the site's history and unique features, early Arboretum restoration projects such as Greene Prairie and current projects being undertaken by the land care crew. He will also highlight some ongoing research projects.

Tuesday, February 14, 2023: **Conservation in the 21st Century: Lessons from the Driftless Area to the World** – Curt Meine, Senior Fellow, Aldo Leopold Foundation/Center for Human and Nature; Adjunct Associate Professor, UW–Madison

The Driftless Area of the Upper Midwest is distinguished by its unique natural and cultural history. The region's rugged landscape of ridges and valleys has presented special environmental challenges. The region has also fostered important innovations to meet those challenges. From the lifeways of the Native peoples of the Driftless, to early efforts in community-based conservation, to advancing organic agriculture, to enhancing climate resilience, these efforts hold important lessons for the wider world in addressing the critical environmental needs of the 21st century.

Tuesday, March 14, 2023: **The Wisconsin Native Plant Garden: Reflections and Resilience** – Susan Carpenter, native plant garden curator, UW–Madison Arboretum

As spring approaches, our dormant garden comes to life. This garden's growth and development provides lessons for creating resilient gardens at our homes and in community spaces. Discover practices and inspiration for starting or enhancing your native plant garden.

Tuesday, April 11, 2023: **The Nature Conservancy in Wisconsin: Saving What We Love Together** – Elizabeth Koehler, State Director, Nature Conservancy of Wisconsin

From Wisconsin's Northwoods to Door County and the grasslands of southern Wisconsin, The Nature Conservancy has been protecting the lands and water we depend on and cherish for almost 63 years. Wisconsin State Director Elizabeth Koehler will share some conservation highlights from the past year, including TNC's work to protect and manage a resilient network of lands and waters, address climate change, support farmers in improving soil health and protecting clean water, help create more stable and resilient Great Lakes fisheries, and collaborate with communities in Milwaukee to address water quality and flooding issues and increase the quality and quantity of urban green space. She'll also share a little about what's coming up next and how you can get involved.

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Friends of the Arboretum
1207 Seminole Highway
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Leslie Ladd *NewsLeaf* editor
Donna Halleran *The LEAF* editor
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Meet Donna Halleran

Photo: Scott Halleran



Donna Halleran has been hired as our new business manager. In that role, she works with the FOA treasurer on financial issues, handles registration and support for luncheon-lectures and FOA day trips, and compiles the monthly e-newsletter *The LEAF*. You can phone the office

608-890-2555 or email her at staff@foamadison.org.

Donna is a UW–Madison alum, with a BA in Economics and a Master’s in Business. Until her retirement in 2020, she worked at UW–Madison for 36 years. Her most recent position was Director of Auxiliary Operations Analysis. She and her husband, Scott, spend their free time hiking, canoeing, and following Badger sports. They are also on a mission to visit all of Wisconsin’s state parks. They have two grown children and a one-year-old granddaughter.

Luncheon-Lectures continued from page 3

Tuesday, May 16, 2023: May T. Watts, the Morton Arboretum, and the Origins of the Illinois Prairie Path – William Barnett, Professor of History at North Central College in Naperville, Illinois

May Theilgaard Watts was a beloved naturalist at Chicago’s Morton Arboretum and her grassroots campaign established the Illinois Prairie Path in three years. She represented a distinctly Midwestern set of ideas, linking earlier conservationists and 1960s environmentalism with a strong focus on nature study and a deep concern about suburban sprawl and the loss of farms and prairies.

Thursday, June 8, 2023: Everyone Is Listening for Something – Douglas Hill, Emeritus Professor of Music, UW–Madison

Douglas Hill will present and discuss excerpts from four of his original compositions, inspired by the wilderness writings of Leopold, Olson, Derleth or Thoreau...the setting of word rhythms and subtle inferences from the selected language, the application of vocal qualities and instrumental tone colors to suggest images and specific elements of the wilderness, and, ultimately, how these choices work together to celebrate the wonders of the natural world through music.

Grass-To-Gardens — FOA Sponsored Initiative

This year, FOA tried something new! As a way to continue the mission of the WATER grant that we received from the Arboretum, we piloted a new initiative called Grass-To-Gardens. In this first year, the FOA board

approved donating three rain gardens, which were offered up via an application process that was open to the public earlier this spring. When all was said and done,

we donated three rain gardens to local families and organizations—two rain gardens went to families in Deforest and Fort Atkinson, and one garden went to an elementary school in Madison. These gardens will ultimately turn approximately 235 square feet of lawn into a rain garden—increasing pollinator habitat and water absorption which in turn helps with flooding and erosion issues. Each rain garden recipient also received a packet of informational material about planting and caring for a rain garden. Digital copies of these packets will be available on our website sometime soon. Your support for Friends of the Arboretum helps us make a lasting impact with initiatives like this. Thank you for being a Friend!



Photo: Chavez Elementary PTO

– Alli Wenman, Outreach Specialist,
UW–Madison Arboretum