

# ARBORNOTES

A Newsletter of the Arboretum Associates

December 2013

## *Wisescaping 101 (with a little help from the Arboretum)*

*Roses are red,  
Violets are blue,  
What plants are drought-tolerant?  
And deer-resistant too?*

If you're thinking of turning your water-guzzling lawn and/or flowerbeds into a beautiful, drought-tolerant, aesthetic, and lower-maintenance landscape, then establishing a Wisescape is the way to go. "Wisescape" is a term coined by the City of Moscow in reference to using practices to promote water-efficient landscaping (a Xeriscape) that includes landscape design, reduction of resource use, soil enhancement, and plant selection. Further details of these concepts can be found on the City of Moscow Water Department's website, as well as information about their yearly Wisescape awards to businesses and residences that set good examples of attractive, water-conserving use of outdoor space.

My husband, Don, and I decided in 2009 that turning our backyard "lawn" (I use the term loosely) into a Wisescape was the right thing to do. When we came up with our basic design plan, I remembered from various walks in the Arboretum that it contained a wonderful Xeriscape Demonstration Garden complete with name signs of all the plants. What a wonderful and helpful resource that was for us! And many of my plant starts I got from the annual Arboretum plant sale held the first Saturday in June (in 2014, it will be May 31). There is a section of tables that specifically contain Xeriscape perennials, grasses, and shrubs. Each year at the plant sale I find some special "newbies" to add to our Wisescape. The first year my special favorite was the Karl Foerster grass, and I now have five clumps throughout the Wisescape. It looks awesome every season; winter it is golden and does not get crushed or bent over



Regan backyard 2009. Photo by Maureen Regan



Wisescape July 2013 view looking south. Photo by Maureen Regan



PLEASE VISIT

OUR WEB SITE AT

[www.uidaho.edu/arboretum](http://www.uidaho.edu/arboretum)

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Come Grow With Us

# ArborNotes

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

Published by  
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**DECEMBER 2013**

by snow and wind. Last year it was penstemon. This year it was prairie smoke. You'll know how it got that name when you see the blooms. I stroll around our Wisescape and can point out all the plants I got from the Arboretum sales over the years.

So, in late summer 2009 Don rented a bulldozer for the day and peeled off our "lawn" and piled it up into one big sod heap (by the next spring it turned into beautiful compost which we used on our garden and Wisescape). We made an irregular oval design for the Wisescape surrounded by a river rock path. Don and I shoveled many pick-up truck loads of river rocks to make the path; what an opportunity for spousal bonding! Six strategically located boulders were placed in the oval as focal points and each is surrounded by spring bulbs, perennials, grasses, and shrubs all specifically grouped to provide color and texture throughout the spring and summer; the dead/dormant stuff even looks good in fall and winter. Did you know the Arboretum has many beautiful displays utilizing rocks and boulders? Again, I got some great rock ideas from visiting the Arboretum.

To our amazement, our first-year Wisescape in 2010 turned out quite nicely. We got one of the City of Moscow's Wisescape awards that year for new residential. And my "go to" resource, the Arboretum, earned a Wisescape award for providing a valuable public service with their Xeriscape Demonstration Garden.



Don Regan works on installing framing for upper path.  
Photo by Maureen Regan

Our fourth year of Wisescape was 2013. By now we have figured out some things:

- Bark mulch is a Wisescaper's best friend! We added it Spring 2013; wish we did it sooner! It ROCKS (no pun intended) for water retention, weed control, and makes the plant colors and textures pop.
- Choose plants to maintain color and texture throughout the year; also, choose for drought tolerance and hardiness. If something doesn't work or takes over, yank it out or move it somewhere else. Try a new plant or two every year for fun.



Maureen Taylor Regan receives the Wisescape 2013 All-star Award from Nichole Baker and Mayor Nancy Chaney.

## 2014 Arboretum Associates Speaker Program Series

In January, 2014, Arboretum Associates plan to launch a new annual speaker series designed to give members of the Associates and the community the opportunity to learn more about activities related to the continued development of the Arboretum and topics of interest related but not limited to plant, forest and rangeland science.

The series will begin January 16th in the Fiske Room of the 1912 Center at 7:00 PM, where Paul Warnick, University of Idaho Arboretum Horticulturist, will provide highlights of his educational tour of the Czech Republic sponsored by the International Dendrology Society. Dendrology is a branch of botany studying woody trees and shrubs.



Kromeriz Castle Flower Garden, Czech Republic 9-12-13.  
Photo by Paul Warnick

The International Dendrology Society, based in Great Britain, strives to sponsor tours to various places all over the world to observe trees and shrubs in both their native habitats and cultivated gardens. Paul found the Czech Republic to be a horticultural treasure with an incredible number of public gardens, ranging from relatively recent botanic gardens to castle gardens dating back to the 1500s. His description of the 'behind the scenes' tour of many gardens and a private estate will hopefully convince any plant lover that the Czech republic would be a worthy destination.



Anthony Davis exams a Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*) seedling being grown in a polybag in a nursery in Bcharre, Lebanon.

On February 13th in the Fiske Room of the 1912 Center at 7:00 PM, Anthony S. Davis from the Department of Forest, Rangeland, and Fire Sciences in the College of Natural Resources will present a program entitled "Native Plant Production and Reforestation Efforts in Hawaii, Haiti, and Lebanon." Attendees will have the opportunity to learn how the University of Idaho Center for Forest Nursery and Seedling Research contributes to the reforestation of some of the world's most degraded forest land.

To conclude the series for 2014, the 37th Annual Meeting of the Arboretum Associates will be held April 10 in the Great Room of the 1912 Center. The event begins with a social at 6:00 p.m. featuring catered hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar. At 6:30 a brief Arboretum Associates business meeting will convene followed by Paul Warnick's annual summary of developmental progress and events for the past year in the Arboretum.

by Jan Leander

## Report from the Horticulturist

It has been a productive year in the Arboretum. We have added lots of new plants, continued to work towards fully automating the irrigation system, restored a historic grove in the Shattuck Arboretum, along with our continual efforts to improve the maintenance and appearance of the sites.

The biggest single project was the restoration of the historic World War I Memorial Grove in the Shattuck Arboretum. In 1919 the University planted 10 Red Oaks and 22



WWI grove memorial rock 7-22-13. Photo by Paul Warnick



WWI grove with new bench 8-8-13. Photo by Paul Warnick



WWI grove new entry 7-2-13. Photo by Paul Warnick

Spruce trees at the east end of the Shattuck Arboretum, south of Administration Building. The trees were planted to memorialize the 32 University of Idaho students killed in World War I. The Oaks are readily identifiable; unfortunately, we have not been able to identify the specific Spruce trees, but there are several likely candidates grouped around the Oaks. There has been no formal recognition of the grove, and that end of the Shattuck Arboretum has always been difficult to access—so, we set out to remedy both of those situations. The Arboretum Associates Board approved spending the proceeds from this year's annual plant sale to fund the project.

We started by cutting a new opening into the Arboretum through an existing overgrown Honeysuckle hedge and then cut and graded a new trail into the Arboretum connecting with an existing asphalt path connecting the Administration building and “new Greek row” on Nez Perce Drive. There is an existing unsightly concrete pad on the edge of the grove that we wanted to screen from view, so we planted yews and rhododendrons to accomplish that. They require irrigation, so we had to install irrigation to those plants, and while we were doing that, to make the entry much more welcoming, we decided to go ahead and install irrigation on the turf area outside the Shattuck. The actual recognition consists of a large basalt boulder engraved with the words “World War I Memorial Grove” with an aluminum plaque explaining the history of the site. Then we installed three benches scattered across the site to complete the project.

We also started a collection of Quaking Aspen in the ‘new’ Arboretum in memory of Ray Boyd, who worked for the US Forest Service at their lab here in Moscow. He was interested in the variability he saw in different groves of Aspen; we are trying to find some selections that will show



Ray Boyd memorial grove 4-26-13. Photo by Paul Warnick

that variability. The best outcome from this would be if we found a selection that has consistently bright red fall color, didn't suffer from foliar diseases, and didn't sucker! We have planted 15 trees so far and hope to find others with noteworthy characteristics to add in the next few years. We now have some from three different sources in the far northern part of Idaho, one from central Idaho and two from the very south eastern corner of the state, along with two commercially available clones.

Another fairly major planting project was to plant the steep slope below the Asian Pergola. We planted a selection of different Cotoneasters, both upright and shrubby forms and several spreading groundcovers. That eliminated mowing a nasty steep slope, and will demonstrate a variety of Cotoneasters, some evergreen, others deciduous, most of which will have showy berries in the fall and winter. Along with that project we also planted five other areas with different groundcover plants, using them as a substitute for bark mulch which continues to rise in cost every year. We also added more plants to the Hosta Garden, the Xeriscape Garden, and the Daylily Garden. The addition to the Daylily Garden is the newly introduced cultivar named 'Vandal Flame' by Kathi Dwelle, a member of the donor's family.

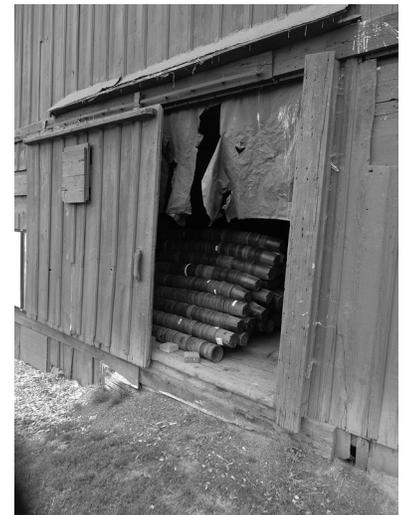
With funding from Arboretum Associates paying for the materials, my crew was able to install three more phases of automatic irrigation this summer. That completed the entire east side of the Arboretum, leaving somewhere around 20% of the site that we are still watering by dragging hoses and sprinklers.

One small community service we provide is a bin, located in the Arboretum parking lot on Palouse River Drive, for

reusing and recycling used nursery pots. In early spring, when people are gearing up for a new gardening season the public takes pots from the bins; the rest of the year, far more pots are deposited than taken. We use most of the smaller pots for the annual plant sale (it would be interesting to tag some of the pots and see how many times they show up in the bin!), but we can't use all of the one gallon and larger nursery pots. We have been accumulating those pots for several years now, and this summer I was able to find a wholesale nursery grower that could use those pots. So we kept a large load--more than 4,000 one gallon pots!--from ending up in the landfill this summer.

Any of the new additions to the Arboretum have to be funded with donations. Support from private individuals is critical to the ongoing development, and we all sincerely appreciate all the donor support we receive.

*Paul Warnick*



Recycled nursery pots saved from the landfill 10-11-13. Photo by Paul Warnick



Winter damage 11-19-13. Photo by Paul Warnick



Beth Bowler Hosta walk 6-25-13. Photo by Paul Warnick

## *Aroretum Associates Donor Roll*

Thank you to the many generous donors who supported the University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden from July 1, 2012, to June 30, 2013. Your support makes a difference.

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## *University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden is a Bird Watchers Hotspot*

I have been walking the University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden for many years and bird watching (birding) in the arboretum for over 14 years. Some of us who bird watch report the species we encounter via a listserv. Years ago, eBird (eBird.org) was established so people could report their sightings to a citizen science database that could be freely accessed by any interested individual. I have been archiving my sightings on eBird for quite some time. Within eBird, birdwatchers can also highlight specific areas of interest to other birders, which are referred to as birding hotspots. Many birding hotspots have been identified throughout the world, as eBird acquires data from birders around the globe. Interested individuals can visit <http://ebird.org/content/ebird/> to see what is happening in the birding world. Once there, by navigating to “Hotspot Explorer” under the “Explore Data” menu, birding hotspots can be located either by name (e.g., “University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden”) or by geographic area (e.g., “Moscow, ID, USA”). For example, by typing “Moscow, ID, USA” in the location bar, a number of birding

hotspots appear, each with associated birding information and directions. At the time this article was written, there were 143 bird species recorded for the University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden!

Idaho’s Bird Records Committee has a total of 409 species officially accepted in the state of Idaho. On average, I personally find between 210 and 220 species during the course of a year birding Latah County. Of the three most visited birding hotspots in Latah County, the University of Idaho Arboretum and Botanical Garden is the most frequently visited with the highest number of checklists submitted. Many birders I’ve spoken with over the years are thrilled to be able to visit such a beautiful location and always thank me for telling them about the Arboretum because it is such a great place to visit and to bird watch!

*Terry Gray, Past President, Palouse Audubon Society,*



*Wisescaping continued from page 2*

- Rocks are a wonderful addition in a Wisescape. They can provide a single focal emphasis or attractive groupings to complement plant placement. No watering, no weeding, no pruning.....ever!
- Water efficiently – we hand water everything with a hose and only directly in the plant basins; as the Wisescape matures, it needs less water. We also got a drip hose this year that can be moved where needed. It is very efficient and thorough so plants don't need to be watered as often.
- We did it all ourselves (other than moving in the big boulders). Have a basic plan, but don't be afraid to "punt" when needed. Enjoy what you have accomplished! Don't feel like you have to get it all done at once; it is an ongoing work in progress and will evolve.

This year the City of Moscow featured some Wisescape "All-Stars" in the Latah County Fair to show how Wisescapes established in prior years are faring. We were one of four Wisescapes featured. Then the Mayor awarded a business and a residential "All-Star" award this year. Our Wisescape was chosen for the residential award. We are in Wisescape heaven.

So, if you're thinking of Wisescaping, go for it! And don't forget the Arboretum is your best friend when it comes to being a fabulous resource to help you along the way. You've got all winter to make plans, visit the Arboretum in the spring for ideas, then hit the plant sale on May 31st. I already have an awesome "newbie" picked out for this year that I saw in the Arboretum Xeriscape Demonstration Garden this summer---sulphur-flower buckwheat. Happy Wisescaping!

*by Maureen Taylor Regan*



Spring UIIRA tour 5-16-13. Photo by Maureen Taylor Regan



## *Calendar of Upcoming Events*

### **Arboretum Speaker Series**

#### **January 16, 2104**

Czech Republic Dendrology Tour Highlights –  
Speaker Paul Warnick

**7 p.m. 1912 Center, 412 E. Third Street, Moscow**

#### **February 13, 2014**

Native Plant Production and Reforestation Efforts in  
Hawaii, Haiti, and Lebanon –

Speaker Anthony Davis

**7 p.m. 1912 Center, 412 E. Third Street, Moscow**

#### **April 10, 2014**

Arboretum Associates Annual Meeting

**7 p.m. 1912 Center, 412 E. Third Street, Moscow**

#### **May 31, 2014**

Arboretum Associates Annual Plant Sale

**9 a.m. to noon Ice Rink Latah County Fairgrounds**



Thanks to Dan Bukvich and the Lionel Hampton School of Music for another wonderful Arboretum Concert 7-8-13. Photo by Tyler Jones

## *The Arboretum Serves as an Outdoor Classroom for Forest and Plant Pathology Students*

For the past ten years I have had students in FOR468 (Forest and Plant Pathology) do a survey for sunburst lichen in the UI Arboretum in early March. The rationale was that the survey was just like a disease survey with one important difference. In place of a pathogen, observations were of a fairly obvious lichen that is more common in the UI Arboretum than any one pathogen. I was also curious to see whether each year's class would come to the same conclusions, and that would in turn allow me to discuss scientific repeatability with students.

Lichens are fascinating symbioses of a fungus (a mycobiont) and a photosynthetic partner - either a green alga or a cyanobacterium - (a photobiont). There are currently more than 17,000 different species of lichens recognized, which inhabit a broad array of substrates and can take a variety of growth forms. Some lichens grow as flattened bodies with distinguishable upper and lower surfaces – like leaves – and are known as foliose lichens, while others, known as fruticose lichens, are pendant or erect like miniature shrubs. Crustose lichens grow tightly appressed to their substrates and are often brightly colored. Finally, some species, known as squamulose lichens, grow as scale-like lobes. Sunburst lichens (*Xanthoria* species) are small-to medium-sized, orange or red, foliose lichens that comprise 13 different species in North America (please refer to accompanying photograph). They may be found on rock, bark, twigs, wood, or soil, often in locations exposed to sunlight.

Each spring each student would select 25 woody plants and make a record of the genus, age (i.e., the number of years since planting), habit (i.e., evergreen or deciduous), and the presence (+) or absence (-) of the sunburst lichen. Looking for sunburst lichen required one minute of 'census time' at each tree. Students would email their data to me in an Excel file and I would compile and analyze the data for the whole class. Each year the results were the same: the sunburst lichen distribution is affected by the age of trees and by habit. The longer the trees have been exposed to the slow-growing lichen the more likely they were to be colonized. Deciduous trees were more likely to be colonized than evergreens. Repeatable, observer-independent results for an easily diagnosed organism provided a bridge to the discussion of surveys for pathogens that are frequently not so easily diagnosed in the field.

*By Dr. George Newcombe, Professor in the Department of Forest, Rangeland, and Fire Sciences, College of Natural Resources*



Lichen with abundant apothecia growing on a crabapple tree that was planted in the Arboretum in 1995. Photos by Amy Ross-Davis

## *Malcolm and Carol Renfrew Arboretum Shelter*

Malcolm Renfrew retired as head of the Chemistry Department at the University of Idaho in 1976, and in 1985 the Physical Sciences Building was re-named Renfrew Hall to honor his years of service to the University. Malcolm and his wife, Carol, were amazing campus and community supporters, attending and supporting all kinds of events and activities.

In October 2012, I was honored to take Malcolm and some of his relatives, who were visiting for his 102nd birthday celebration on a tour of the Arboretum to see the fall colors. We were fortunate enough to pick a gorgeous day to see the site, and Malcolm was able to enjoy the trip. He frequently commented how nice it was and how much it had changed since he had seen it. Perhaps his best quote from the tour was when he mused, "I bet Boise State doesn't have anything this nice!"

When we passed the information kiosk at the top of the Arboretum, which is dedicated to his friend and colleague,

Leonard Halland, Malcolm talked about wanting to do something similar for the Arboretum.

After some discussion with the Architectural and Engineering Services department on campus it was decided that rather than duplicating the existing kiosk, we should build a more 'multi-purpose' structure for the south end. There was already a project in the works to build three shelters around campus to house informational signs and campus maps. We decided to add another structure to the bid package, but rather than a large campus map under the shelter we are planning to install two benches. The end panels of the structure will have informational signs and a map more permanent than the existing paper maps we have been using.

Unfortunately, we were not able to complete the project before Malcolm passed away on his 103rd birthday. But I think the shelter will provide a valuable function for the Arboretum and make a fitting memorial for Malcolm and Carol Renfrew.

*Paul Warnick*



Malcolm and Carol Renfrew Arboretum Shelter  
Photo by Paul Warnick

# University of Idaho

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<b>Sustaining</b>	<b>\$50 - \$99</b>
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<b>Patron</b>	<b>\$250 - \$499</b>
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<b>Life Associate</b>	<b>\$1,000 and above</b>

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