

Twinflower

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Newsletter of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum



**New Director of Linnaeus Arboretum,
Cindy Johnson-Groh.**




New Assistant to the Director, Britt Forsberg.

New Faces at the Arb

Cindy Johnson-Groh, our new Linnaeus Arboretum director, needs no introduction, for she has been part of the Gustavus biology department for well over a decade and has been a member of the Friends board for several of those years.


This fall Cindy is not only wearing her new director's hat but has also become part of the triumvirate deanship and meanwhile continues with some of her usual teaching assignments. That is all quite an agenda-full—but Cindy is one of those people who seem able to put 36-hour days into 24-hour slots. She has been working closely with Jim Gilbert, who is now retired as executive director and campus naturalist but is assisting and teaching until February.

There is also another new face in the Arb: Britt Forsberg. Britt is a 2005 Gustavus grad who for this school year will be assisting in the general tasks of the Interpretive Center and also working on some of those projects for which there never seem to be quite enough time. You'll notice her article on the pine cone display in this issue; she will be continuing the census of campus trees, and she hopes to do some work on the huge tree trunk slab which will eventually connect growth rings and Gustavus dates of import. Britt is also involved in some assignments within the biology department, particularly in connection with the department greenhouse.

We welcome these two people to their new positions and rejoice that our Linnaeus Arboretum continues to be in good hands! 

Cheers for a job well done

A round of applause and a warm appreciative nod of the head to Ann Basset who, for the past two years, has been the elected president of the Linnaeus Friends. With pleasant and agreeable dignity she has presided at board meetings and kept members on track. Even more importantly she has ably represented the Friends at a number of dreaming and scheming sessions as College officials considered the current and future state of the Arb. Ann has been a board member for many years and she and her husband, Gene, have gifted the Arb with a number of the fruit trees adjoining the Borgeson cabin. The Bassets now live in the Pine Pointe community, almost in the shadow of the Arb.

Thanks Ann for many things, but especially for your leadership during the past two years. 

In this issue ...

2005 Arb Highlights **2**

Happenings **3**

Learning about Pine Cones **4**

Tremendous Legacy **5**

Mormor Clara's Garden **6**

Arb's Tree Program **6**

Urban Garden Tour Recap **7**



Linnaeus Arboretum:

Some 2005 Summer and Fall Highlights

by Jim Gilbert



Jim Gilbert

The Rev. Herb Chilstrom installed two buckets of waterlilies in the pool of the Dave and Delores Johnson Waterfalls Garden, and as I write this on October 14 they are still blooming. A couple of years ago Herb saw to it that martin houses were put up in the Arboretum. His persistence paid off and we had purple martins singing here this summer for the first time. One pair nested and three young fledged on August 22. We hope many more purple martin pairs come to nest next summer.

Once again volunteer gardeners, Bob and Onie Isenberg and Bob and Ranae Peterson, helped make sure

that Autumn Joy sedum (first blooming August 19), Russian sage (bloom peak August 4), Stella de Oro daylily (first flower opened June 3), and other plants did well in the Evelyn Young Perennial Garden. Evelyn was always pleased to hear that people were enjoying the flowers.

We have a new paved path in the Arboretum that runs from the Melva Lind Interpretive Center to the west and southwest toward Arbor View Apartments (student housing). The students like it and this walkway makes for safer foot travel. This summer gardener Bill Larson and groundsperson Dennis Witte began converting the garden rose area into a Scandinavian garden. Yes, we saved the hardy roses, but now and into the future the garden will have more diversity.

July was a dry month, but by mid-August adequate rains returned and continued well into October so the landscape has been green and plants should be in good shape going into dormancy. Our first frost was October 7. It was a light scattered one that touched the coleus, plus zinnias, cannas, and other very tender plants.

Interim Dean of Faculty Cindy Johnson-Groh was to begin serving as Linnaeus Arboretum Director on September 1, but her new duties as one of a "Tri-Dean" system, plus teaching part-time in the biology department, delayed this time. She has been active in Arboretum planning but I have been doing the day-to-day things this fall. Cindy will take over November 1. She will be great. Students and others know her as a talented botanist and educator. So I am serving as interim Linnaeus Arboretum director until


Highlights continued on page 3



This newsletter is published two times during the academic year by the Office of Public Relations, Gustavus Adolphus College, under the supervision of Dean Wahlund, director of special events and executive secretary of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum, and Don Gustafson, newsletter editor. For further information about Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum membership and activities, contact Dean Wahlund (phone: 507/933-7520; e-mail: publicrelations@gustavus.edu). Unless credited otherwise, all photos in this issue were taken by Friends' photographer Goldie Johnson.

October 31. Working here at Gustavus has been a dream-come-true. I'm very pleased to have had the opportunity to be the director of Linnaeus Arboretum and campus naturalist for 7 years and 5 months. Come November 1, I plan to stay home much more, travel with Sandy, and work on a book-writing project. I also plan to return part-time to teach environmental studies classes for J-Term and spring semester 2006.

There are so many people I want to thank for making my time as director of Linnaeus Arboretum productive and enjoyable. To the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum, I truly appreciate your support. Axel Steuer believed in me. Loreli Steuer guided the wetlands development. Evelyn Young was at all times the encourager. Dean Wahlund is upbeat, knows how to get things done, and was my guide. Thanks to Bill Larson and Tracy Glass who plant, dig, and mow; the Arboretum is always inviting and growing. Warren Wunderlich, director of Physical Plant, is wonderfully skilled at planning and development, and using money wisely; thanks to him the Arboretum made a great comeback after the 1998 tornado and has continued to flourish. Shirley Mellema, our dedicated, effective, and understanding secretary, makes coming to work each day a good experience.

Finally, thanks to hundreds of people, many unknown to me, Gustavus does have the Linnaeus Arboretum, a very special outdoor classroom serving our students, the St. Peter community, and beyond. 

November & December Happenings

by Jim Gilbert

November is the month of transition from the warm season to the cold season. The month usually starts out like autumn, but ends up being wintery. There is plenty of natural food for wild animals, bare deciduous trees are silhouetted against the blue skies, dried grasses and herbs stand tall, winter birds are colorful, beautiful sunsets enchant us, and new ice appears.

December is known as the month of gentle snows. Sunshine is at a minimum for the year, and the coldest part of the month is usually the last week.

Listed below are a few observations from a year ago in the Linnaeus Arboretum area, and beyond when indicated. These events can be used to anticipate upcoming November and December happenings and will help to compare this year with last.

November 2004

- 1 Winged euonymus shrubs still showing rose-red foliage. Regent apple trees have lost their foliage but still are holding great-tasting fruit.
- 2 Juncos are the most numerous of the birdfeeder birds. Some mums, alyssum, snapdragons, and flowering kale still showy in gardens. Corn combining continues in southern Minnesota.
- 10 Some gardeners still picking ripe raspberries.
- 12 European larch trees at fall color peak, showing mostly smoky gold needles. Heavy frost. Low of 20 degrees F. marks the end of the growing season.
- 21 Ice-covered small ponds this morning. Flocks of cedar waxwings feed on crabapples and other fruit.
- 25 First snow flurries.

December 2004

- 1 Freeze-up date for Lake Martha in Wright County and Lower Spunk Lake near Avon in Stearns County.
- 3 Lake Jennie near Dassel and Jessie Lake in Itasca County near Talmoon frozen over. Remember, it takes four inches of new solid ice in contact with stationary freshwater for safe skating and ice fishing.
- 4 With a high temperature of 45 degrees F., some dandelion flowers opened in the sunshine on very short stems.
- 10 About 250 tundra swans seen at Wilkie Lake near Shakopee. No snow on St. Peter and Twin Cities landscapes. Close to seven inches of snow fell at Nisswa, and in extreme northeast Minnesota about 8 to 12 inches of snow covers the ground.



Currently at the Interpretive Center

by Britt Forsberg

You may not get academic credit, but you're likely to learn something by stepping into the small alcove at the Center. Here you will find cones from almost all of the 36 pine trees native to the United States. Come by and see if you can identify the cones which come from the three pine trees native to Minnesota (red pine, jack pine, and eastern white pine).

Cindy Johnson-Groh has been collecting pine cones on her travels and is graciously lending them to the Interpretive Center for this display. Some of the more uncommon cones, like sand pine (*Pinus clausa*), that Cindy does not have, are being requested from other institutions across the United States. Eventually all 36 American pines will be represented in this collection.

So why pine cones? Pines are conifers, which are unique among trees because of their reduced leaves (which we call needles), lack of seed coat, and ability to survive in dry or cold habitats. They are often called "evergreens" along with firs, spruces, and cypresses, but this is sometimes a misnomer, as some such as tamarack (*Larix laricina*) shed their needles in the fall. Cones are the fruit of a conifer; they hold the seeds. Some cones open from the top of the tree and allow the seeds to be carried by the wind to a new habitat and some rely on animals or birds to move the seeds by eating them.

Cones are helpful in identifying conifers. Each species has its specific size, color, and shape. The cones on display range from a few inches to over a foot in length and have interesting features such as spines and asymmetrical shapes that set them apart from other cones. They make a most intriguing display. 🌿

The Minnesota Department of Transportation recently added Linnaeus Arboretum to its Highway #22 and Highway #169 signs (below) bringing greater visibility to the Arboretum as thousands of vehicles pass through the city of St. Peter each day.



Bird Feeder of Recycled Materials

With winter approaching it's time to think about your winter bird feeding stations. Be sure to supply your traveling and over-wintering birds with a healthy, energizing snack.

First tie a sturdy string or twine to a large pine cone. Spread peanut butter inside the openings all around the center and bottom of the pine cone and fill up the spaces. Spread bird seed of your choice on a piece of wax paper. Take the pine cone and roll it in the bird seed so that the seeds stick to the peanut butter all around the outside. You may also want to sprinkle seeds inside any openings.

Measure your string to hang down from a branch of a tree or bush so that it is far enough from the branch to keep any squirrels from eating your feeder. Now, tie it to the tree branch. Watch and record who comes to visit your pine cone feeder.¹ 🌿

¹ Found on Nature Net, The Environmental Learning Network, a website of environmental learning activities for families and children at <http://www.naturenet.com/NatureNetNews/crafts.htm>

- 14 Lake Washington, near Kasota, frozen over. Flocks of American robins relish crabapples. Official freeze-up for Leech Lake at Walker, Green Lake at Spicer, and Lake Waconia in Carver County.
- 16 Common redpolls, pine grosbeaks, and great gray owls numerous in Finland, Minn., area where snow is knee-deep and perfect for snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. Still no snow at Gustavus.
- 19 Both Lake Calhoun and Lake Harriet in Minneapolis frozen over, as is Lake Minnetonka. Temperature lows included a minus 9 degrees at the Airport in the Twin Cities, minus 29 degrees at Ely, and minus 38 degrees at Embarrass.
- 25 Only a dusting of snow on the Twin Cities landscape. Red-tailed hawks commonly seen.
- 30 Record high of 50 degrees in the Twin Cities. Not a trace of snow left. Coatings of water seen on top of lake ice. Black-capped chickadees heard singing "fee-bee" spring songs over and over. Worthington and Redwood Falls both had a high of 57 degrees. 🍀

Evelyn Young: A Tremendous Legacy

by Dean Wahlund

We lost a *tremendous* friend last month. Evelyn Young, 93, a charter member of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum Board of Directors, passed away peacefully at her home on September 29, 2005.

Friends board meetings *just* won't be the same. Evelyn was the consummate cheerleader who radiated and inspired enthusiasm "for all things arboretum." In each of her fully active years we would hear her say, "I'll bake a few batches of sugar cookies for the July garden tour reception!" "You'll see me down on campus Sunday for the Parents Day plant sale!" "The Golden Oldies just met and we are sending *all* the proceeds from the salad luncheon next week to benefit the Borgeson Cabin pioneer garden!"



Evelyn rarely missed a board meeting, in fact, she usually hosted the winter meeting at her home...and did we all eat well...it was like celebrating Thanksgiving Day in January! She worked on membership, board development, fund-raising, and always said "yes" to being invited to serve on an arboretum task force or oversee the hospitality of an event.

It's been a dozen years since the "Evelyn Gardens" were dedicated at the Linnaeus Arboretum. It was July 25, 1993, her 81st birthday, when friends and family who had contributed to this beautiful garden gathered to honor this *beautiful* lady. Now we honor her memory and thank God for her life and the time we all had to share it with her. What a *tremendous* legacy. 🍀

Autumn Warmer features San Francisco: The City and Its Region with Bob Moline

Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum gathered on Sunday afternoon November 6 for a soup and corn bread buffet at the Melva Lind Interpretive Center. Guest speaker Bob Moline (standing), emeritus professor of geography and Friends board member, presented a most interesting talk with slides and map visuals on one of his favorite cityscapes, San Francisco. The annual meeting of the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum followed the presentation. Officers of the board for 2006 were elected and include David Johnson, president; Mary Rehwaltdt, vice-president; Bob Isenberg, secretary; and Harriet Mason, treasurer.



photo credit: Dean Wahlund



**Margie Nelsen, Master Gardener intern,
U of M Extension Service.**

St. Peter Herald file photo

Seeds of Thought

Mormor Clara's kitchen garden

by Margie Nelsen

Carl and Clara Borgeson lived in a small log cabin out by Norseland in the 1860s. This cabin is now located in the Gustavus Arboretum where it stands proudly amidst the natural flora of Minnesota.

In 2003, Herb Chilstrom, a Master Gardener who lives in St. Peter, envisioned and began planting a heritage garden behind the Borgeson cabin. He felt that this home would certainly have had a kitchen garden in its original location. *Mormor* is the Swedish name for grandmother and Herb believes that this is the perfect name for this garden. Herb buys all of the seeds that he plants in the garden from heritage supply houses. The origin of these seeds can be traced back to the 1800s and the plants produced from these heritage seeds create a garden that reflects the produce that the Borgeson's would have planted.

Dry beans are a mainstay of the garden and were favorites of the Sioux or Dakota Indians who lived in this area. The dry beans include Swedish brown beans and Hutterite soup beans. Other plants that are growing in the garden include: pole beans, Pontiac and Norland potatoes, squash, eggplant, cucumbers, broccoli, and carrots. Herb has tried to grow lettuce but the gophers eat it before the leaves can be harvested. He often tries new things and has started a bed of asparagus that should be ready for harvesting next year, and he has also planted Concord grapes.

Because there is no running water at the site of the Borgeson cabin Herb has to rely on a large barrel that the Gustavus staff keeps filled with water. This summer has been difficult because the weather has been so dry.

Herb and his wife enjoy the produce from the garden but he gives away a lot of vegetables to anyone who happens to be passing by when he is in the garden. He also finds many opportunities to teach visitors about the garden. He feels that the garden is a wonderful place to educate children and he often shows them the compost pile in the corner of the garden and encourages them to start one at home.

Herb also plants and tends two flower gardens that are by the entrance doors of the Interpretive Center. He changes the colors in these gardens from year to year and tries to make the beds as bright as possible to lure people over to take a look. He has also planted water lilies in the pond near the Center and the lilies are now in bloom and are beautiful. He encourages visitors to stop and admire the flowers.

Herb estimates that he spends three to four hours a week tending the vegetable and flower gardens and greatly enjoys this activity. He took the Master Gardening class in 1995 and he highly recommends becoming involved in gardening. Herb reports, with enthusiasm, that gardening is always interesting and is a wonderful activity for any age, but has particular allure for retirement. 🍃

Margie Nelsen of St. Peter is a Master Gardener intern through the University of Minnesota Extension Service. After completing 50 hours of volunteer service, Margie will be certified as a Master Gardener. Margie is regularly writing a "Seeds of Thought" column as partial fulfillment of the requirements to become a Master Gardener. The above article and photo appeared in the September 22, 2005 issue of the St. Peter Herald. Reprinted with permission from Ed Lee, Managing Editor, St. Peter Herald, and Margie Nelsen.

Arboretum Tree Program Just Keeps Growing

About twenty years ago, Gustavus parents were invited to purchase trees in Linnaeus Arboretum to honor the graduation of their students. Since that time, nearly 350 trees in Linnaeus Arboretum and across the campus have been set aside for dedication, and to preserve and care for the trees a Tree Endowment Fund was established.

Families and friends have found that this tree program serves as a wonderful way to honor/memorialize a loved one, celebrate a special wedding anniversary, or recognize a personal friend or a family occasion. With a gift of \$1,000 a healthy, existing tree of the donor's choice is selected with the help of College staff. A plaque bearing the name, genus, and species of the tree (i.e. Silver Maple – *Acer saccharinum*) along with a personal inscription is then placed at the base of the tree.

For more information, please contact Dean Wahlund, executive secretary to Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum, at 507/933-7520 or the Office of Institutional Advancement at 800/726-6192. 🍃

June 25: a perfect day for a

Summer Urban Garden Tour

Top: Scott Endres, co-owner of Tangletown Gardens, explains the art of container gardening...to start with, you need a "thriller (an eye-catching plant), a "filler" (a complementary planting), and a "spiller" (a plant that spreads beyond the pot)...then just go creative!

Center: Naturalist Jim Gilbert from Gustavus (left) and rosarian Tim Rosener (right) of the Lake Harriet Rose Garden give a few introductory comments about the rose garden. About 75 people joined in on the Friends of Linnaeus Arboretum Summer Urban Garden Tour on Saturday, June 25. The Rose Garden and Phelps Fountain was the first of three stops on the tour.

Bottom left: High tea was served late afternoon at the home of Byron Hanson in south Minneapolis. Bottom right: His urban landscape featured two water structures and stream, nearly 100 varieties of hosta, and an impressively large perennial garden.

