

WISCONSIN-ILLINOIS NARGS

THE NORTHERN OUTCROP

A Rock Garden Newsletter

January 2016

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We lost two valued club members in the past month, Sally Freckmann and Olive Thomson. Both were very active in our club, good friends and avid plantswomen with a wide variety of other interests that they shared with our club and their communities. Below are memoriams from Ed Glover

SALLY FRECKMANN

1944-2015

Sally Freckmann was a devoted member of the Wisconsin-Illinois Chapter, often making the trip from Stevens Point to attend meetings. She and her husband, Bob, have been members for about 30 years. She planned and hosted 3 weekend meetings in the Stevens Point area for the Chapter in 1988, 1996 and 2006. These meetings included well organized tours of gardens and nurseries, delicious meals, evening lectures and plant sales. One of the highlights of these meetings was Sunday morning breakfast at the Freckmann home with Sally's scrumptious egg casseroles and Bob grilling sausages in the driveway as we arrived.

The extensive gardens surrounding their home include: rock gardens, sandbeds, cacti, rose gardens, herb gardens, bogs, an arboretum with many unusual trees and a large vegetable garden. Sally made sure all of the plants were clearly labeled and she provided lists of all the plants represented. She was very interested in education and she provided programs on rock gardening to garden clubs, Master Gardeners and others.

In honor of their work in supporting rock gardening and botanical education Sally & Bob were presented the Don Havens Award by the Wisconsin-Illinois Chapter in 2006.

We have all benefitted from having Sally as a member of the Chapter and we will miss her.

OLIVE THOMSON

1915-2016



Olive joined the Wisconsin-Illinois Chapter in 1980 and almost immediately upon joining began contributing her botanical knowledge and enthusiasm to the group by hosting meetings, garden tours and workshops at their small farm south of Mount Horeb. She was an active leader, serving as Co-Chair of the Chapter in 1983 and Program Coordinator in 1984. She also served as a NARGS Board Member and attended many NARGS Annual Meetings.

In 1992 the Chapter hosted a regional rock garden meeting “Gems of the Driftless Area” and Olive co-chaired the very successful event which attracted over 100 rock gardeners

from surrounding states. She planned an evening program of botanically themed music which received rave reviews from the attendees.

Two of Olive’s favorite plants were ferns and primulas and she presented programs on them and sought out other experts to talk at Chapter meetings. To honor her work for the Chapter, Olive received the Don Havens Award in 1996 and, along with her husband John, the NARGS Chapter Service Award in 2008. In 2009 the John & Olive Thomson Distinguished Service Award was established in their honor to recognize individuals who have contributed outstanding service to the Chapter.

Her enthusiasm and encouragement have convinced many gardeners to join our group. Sharing plants, seeds and botanical information was one of the great joys of her life and we are all richer for it. Beyond her gardening expertise and botanical knowledge, there was an infectious curiosity and zest for life that brightened the days of all who knew her.

We were lucky she was in this world for over 100 years, but it wasn’t long enough.

A longtime member of our chapter will celebrate 106 years May 28. Virginia Umberger and her good friend Lou Emmons, still a member, opened their Illinois gardens for club tours. Virginia shared a rare green double form of *Trillium grandiflorum* with Lois and me. I'll never forget seeing that plant in her garden! Virginia and her late husband also were avid gourd growers/carvers. An article about Virginia and a 2014 exhibit of their collection can be found at <http://www.dailyherald.com/article/20140328/entlife/140328481/>

Upcoming meetings

As usual, we don't have a meeting in January. May you all have a quiet winter—no blizzards, no super cold temperatures, etc. Oh wait a minute, this is the upper Midwest.

The Garden Expo is February 12-14. A schedule of open shifts was sent by email. If you can assist and haven't signed up yet, please contact Ed Glover. Our booth, with the planters full of plants supplied by Flower Factory, is one of the most visited booths.



You don't need to be an expert rock gardener to sign up since visual aids, printed material and other members will also be there. The most common phrase needed is "No, the plants aren't for sale." This especially applies to anything blooming since we are all hungry for spring. And the troughs, many built and planted by Ed, are always an attraction and conversation piece.

In addition to the meeting schedule at the end of this newsletter, the Wisconsin Hardy Plant Society has invited us to their Mar 16 (Wed) 7 pm meeting. Karen Perkins of Garden Visions Nursery will talk about "Epimediums: Jewels of the Shade." This will be at Olbrich Botanic Gardens in Madison. From the WHPS newsletter: Known by many as a simple ground cover for dry woodland shade, Epimediums are finally getting the appreciation that they deserve. This "perfect shade perennial" possesses a delicate beauty that belies its surprisingly tough, long-lasting nature.

Karen will illustrate the many and varied types now commercially available, including some of the exciting new evergreen species from China. Characteristics, growth habit, growing and propagation, pests and diseases, and combining Epimediums with other shade perennials in the garden will also be addressed. We will even get a glimpse into the collecting trips to China made by Darrell Probst. www.epimediums.com/

Rock Garden Ramblings

Happy New Year to all Chapter members, I hope you all enjoyed the Holidays and are now relaxing during the non-gardening season. It is a time to plan and dream about things to come as spring arrives and gardens burst into bloom. After our warm fall and early winter, the temps have returned to near normal and the lakes in Madison froze over this week. It will be interesting to see how the plants survive and perform after all that warm weather followed by frigid temps, at least we have some snow cover to protect them.

We had a great turnout for our Seed Packing Workshop and we finished packing all the seed in record time. Thanks to all who participated and a special Thank You goes to Dave Collura who has been our Seedex Coordinator for the past few years. I am now anxiously awaiting my allotment of seed and to start the gardening cycle all over again for 2016.

We lost 2 stalwart members of the Chapter recently, Sally Freckmann and Olive Thomson. They were both very generous in sharing their gardens, plants, botanical expertise and time. They will be very greatly missed and I'll think of them often when I'm working in the rock garden.

Our first activity for the year will be our booth at the Madison Garden Expo February 12-14. Members are now volunteering to spend time at the booth greeting visitors and sharing our interest in rock gardening. I always look forward to this as it is a chance to visit with other Chapter members along with meeting new gardeners.

We have a full schedule of programs, garden tours, plant sales and workshops organized for the coming year. I hope you will all participate and share in the experience.

Good Gardening,

Ed

Mar 19 (Sat) 1 pm - Steve Lesch "South Africa-Bio Hotspot" [West Madison Ag Research Station](#) 8502 Mineral Point Rd, Verona WI 53593 This is the program that was postponed due to extreme November weather.

Apr 9 (Sat) Noon - Early Shopping at the Flower Factory + "Conifer Companions" lecture by Gary Whittenbaugh. Bring a lunch and we will gather in David & Nancy's barn to share lunch and hear a program from conifer expert & rock garden officianado Gary Whittenbaugh. Following the lecture the nursery will be open for shopping. The nursery will officially open on Apr 16th.

May (Dates to be determined) We will have at least 2 opportunities in May.

1-A workday at the rock garden at Rotary Gardens in Janesville followed by lunch provided by the Chapter

2-A tour of Barb Wetzel's amazing garden in Barrington Hills, IL

June 18 (Sat) 9am-Workday at Allen Centennial Gardens on the UW Campus Madison, WI + Discount shopping at Steve Lesch's Landscape Design Nursery in McFarland We will work at ACG until about noon, bring a bag lunch and afterward we will visit Steve's nursery for a tour and shopping. Steve has an interesting selection of plants and he gives us a discount + a percentage of sales donated to the Chapter!

June 22-27 - NARGS Annual General Meeting in Steamboat Springs, CO

Jul - no meeting

Aug - no meeting

Sept 17 (Sat) 1 pm - Plant Sale at Jean Halverson's home and garden in Dodgeville, WI

Oct 15 (Sat) Hike in the Southern Kettle Moraine led by Damon Smith who grew up in the area and knows the plants well

Nov 19 (Sat) noon-Annual Chapter Meeting and Pot luck + "Travels With Steve" by Steve Lesch

Dec 3 (Sat) 9-4 Seed Packing Workshop for the NARGS Seedex



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Editor Jean Halverson

PO Box 101

Dodgeville WI 53533

Membership Renewal Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, ZIP: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____ **Amount Enclosed:** _____

Dues are \$10 per year. Please clip this form and send it along with your check (payable to WI-IL NARGS) to: Jean Halverson PO Box 101, Dodgeville WI 53533

2016 Chapter Officers

Chairperson	Ed Glover	503 Johns St, Mt Horeb, WI 53572 (608) 437-4578	glover@oncology.wisc.edu
Vice-Chairperson	Damon Smith	218 DuRose Terrace, Madison, WI 53705. (608) 335-0336,	damonsmith56@hotmail.com
Secretary	Lynn Groeschel	W12464 Boots Road, Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965 (608-497-3005)	lsgroeschel@yahoo.com
Treasurer	John Mather	6524 County Rd K Blue Mounds WI 53517 (608) 795-4636	jcmather@centurytel.net
Editor/Membership	Jean Halverson	1111 N. Johns St. PO Box 101 Dodgeville, WI 53533 (608) 935-3721,	jahalve123@gmail.com