

IN THE

Garden

Quarterly – Winter 2021



Tulsa Garden Center
at Woodward Park



The Ties That Bind

Laura Chalus, CEO, Tulsa Garden Center at Woodward Park

On this cold and foggy country morning, leading up to the most bizarre Thanksgiving ever, I find myself reflecting on more than just the age-old cranberry sauce dilemma (whole berries - hands down). At this time of year when we are bombarded with reminders to practice thankfulness each day, isn't it family which tops our collective lists? But what to do if you can't be with family right now?

Admittedly, over the past months I have found much reassurance and kindness with those people with whom I have a set of shared beliefs, even if the only interactions I have with these kindred spirits may be on social media. I believe most all of us right now feel like we've been through a battle, and we're so war weary that there are days when it just seems to be too much. So how do we find meaningful connections with others when we can't be face-to-face?

For me, I have found social media to be a great comfort lately, especially so for the gardening-related pages I visit which spotlight horticultural education and sharing. Some of the more active and interesting Facebook sites I gobble up each day include the [Oklahoma Wild Mushroom Enthusiasts](#) with 5,600 followers, [Oklahoma Wildcrafting](#) with 4,600 followers, and the [Oklahoma Native Plant Society](#) with 10,000 followers. Although once in a blue moon you might run into one of those ever-so-helpful know-it-all's whose comments make you frown, for the most part the members are fun and engaging, especially for newbies.

In fact, one of the more fascinating things I've learned this year is the



existence of frost flowers. Also called frost ribbons, ice flowers, and rabbit ice, these belong to the domain of the early mornings during late fall and early winter. These flowers are fanciful ribbons of delicate white ice crystals that grow from the base of

plants on cold nights when the sky is clear and the air cold. Oftentimes these ribbons of ice occupy the basal 6 to 8 inches of the stem but occasionally they will form 18 to 24 inches up the stem.

Usually frost flowers are most abundant in low-lying sunny areas along streams or roadside ditches. Abundant soil moisture seems to be necessary for their formation. These ephemeral beauties vanish with the first warming rays of the sun. If conditions are right the flowers may reappear on the same plant stems on other days, but the display gets shorter and closer to the ground as the number of freezing cycles increases (University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service website, Plant of the Week).

I encourage everyone to use social media as a tool to learn and grow... and also to watch videos of adorable baby animals of course! Whether you're interested in knitting, woodworking, or basket weaving, you can seek out great people who love what they do and who are willing to share their knowledge and passion with others. And although I don't currently have time to learn these particular three skill sets (yet), I do very much enjoy seeing my friends on social media who are doing just that to spectacular results. You go, Friends! Good for you!

So take a deep breath, turn off the news, and cling to a steaming mug of your favorite winter beverage while you search for a learning experience which will keep your mind moving in a positive direction instead of ruminating on all that is bad in the



world. "But if there's love, dear... those are the ties that bind, and you'll have a family in your heart, forever. All my love to you, poppet, you're going to be all right...bye-bye." - Robin Williams (from Mrs. Doubtfire)

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Winter Newsletter – December 2020, January, February 2021

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Memorial *Seibert & Rice* terracotta pots in the historic *Tulsa Rose Garden*



For many years, Tulsans have purchased memorials in Woodward Park, particularly within the Tulsa Rose Garden. Not only do these memorials honor loved ones present and past, but they also add to the beautification of one of Tulsa's most beloved parks.

Now those interested in memorializing have the opportunity to purchase a Seibert & Rice terracotta pot, with an inscription of their choosing, that will be planted and placed within the historic Tulsa Rose Garden.

The Seibert & Rice Artisan Rolled Rim pots are made completely freehand, without the assistance of molds, by a workshop in Impruneta, Italy, that dates back to the 1600s. The large pots are built using the "coil method." That is, the potter rolls out a coil of clay and, walking around in a circle, carefully and skillfully builds up the walls of the pot. The result is a distinctively handmade-looking planter that is truly a piece of sculpture.

For more information, please contact Stephani Freeman, at SFreeman@tulsagardencenter.org

Cost for Memorial

Seibert & Rice
32" Rolled Rim
terracotta pot
with inscription:

\$2,500

Includes
pedestal feet,
planting
material, and
installation.

Mushrooms for more than food

By Joel Myers, Oklahoma Mycological Society

When selling mushrooms at market or teaching about them at schools, it's common to hear things like "I don't like mushrooms" or "mushrooms are gross". Usually, what people are referring to are the little button mushrooms you get from the grocery store. They've often never tried any other varieties. I like to tell them that they just haven't found "their" mushroom yet. For those brave enough to experiment with a few different kinds, they will often come across one that they find quite enjoyable. But even when they don't, I remind them why there is so much more to mushrooms than the role they play on our dinner plates.

It is fungi who are responsible for creating soil, as they break down and consume fallen branches, trees, and other organic material. Of all the life we've found on this planet, only fungi are capable of decomposing lignin and cellulose rich wood. Another no less impressive skill they possess is the ability to produce strong organic acids, enabling them to break down and release nutrients from rocks into the soil web. Epilithic, endolithic, and cryptoendolithic are the terms used for those found on the surface, in cracks or fissures, and even deep inside of rocks.

There are also the mycorrhizal fungi which act as communication networks for forests, linking plants and allowing them to funnel nutrients to those plants most in need. These will wrap themselves around plant root tips and enter the cellular structure, allowing an exchange of sugars for nutrients as the fungal mycelium acts as an extended root network, reaching much further and faster through the earth than the plants roots have the ability to alone. Over 90% of the world's plants form this symbiotic relationship.

Fungi can help us clean up environmental pollutants in a process we call "mycoremediation". They hyperaccumulate heavy metals into the fruitbody, giving us the chance to harvest and relocate them. They can also degrade a large number of chemicals, disassembling some toxins at the molecular level, leaving behind much less harmful byproducts.

Entomopathogenic fungi are those that feed on insects. They are being used to create pesticides that affect only specific species, offering an alternative to the collateral damage done to our beneficial insects with the use of many of the most common insecticides.



Amanita muscaria AKA Fly Agaric

Mushrooms also have medicinal properties and have been used as anti-bacterials, antivirals, and antimicrobials. They've been shown to regulate blood sugar levels and increase immune system response. Some of the medications in use today are here because of our fungal friends. The antibiotic penicillin, cholesterol lowering lovastatin, and cyclosporin, used in organ transplants to prevent rejection, are all from kingdom fungi.

As you can hopefully see now, mushrooms are more than just dinner and have the ability to be some of our closest and strongest allies in the care and stewardship of both our individual health, and the health of our planet and ecosystems. So the next time you hear someone say that they don't like mushrooms, give them a few reasons to change their mind.

(McCoy, 2016) Radical Mycology
(Rogers, 2011) The Fungal Pharmacy
(Stamets, 2005) Mycelium Running
www.okfungi.com

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Arboretum Dreams Part 1

By Meredith Jones, Education and Training Manager, Tulsa Garden Center

Tucked into the southeast corner of Woodward Park is a modest arboretum with a big heart. In 1962, a committee tasked with bringing an arboretum to life was formed by the Tulsa Garden Center. By February of 1964, the City of Tulsa had approved the use of land, and in December of that same year the Tulsa Arboretum Project was dedicated to the citizens of Tulsa.

Though it was the non-profit organization which had spearheaded the effort with support from the City and local horticultural experts, it was ultimately the citizens of Tulsa, and their interest in beautifying the City they love, which brought the trees into the three acre space.



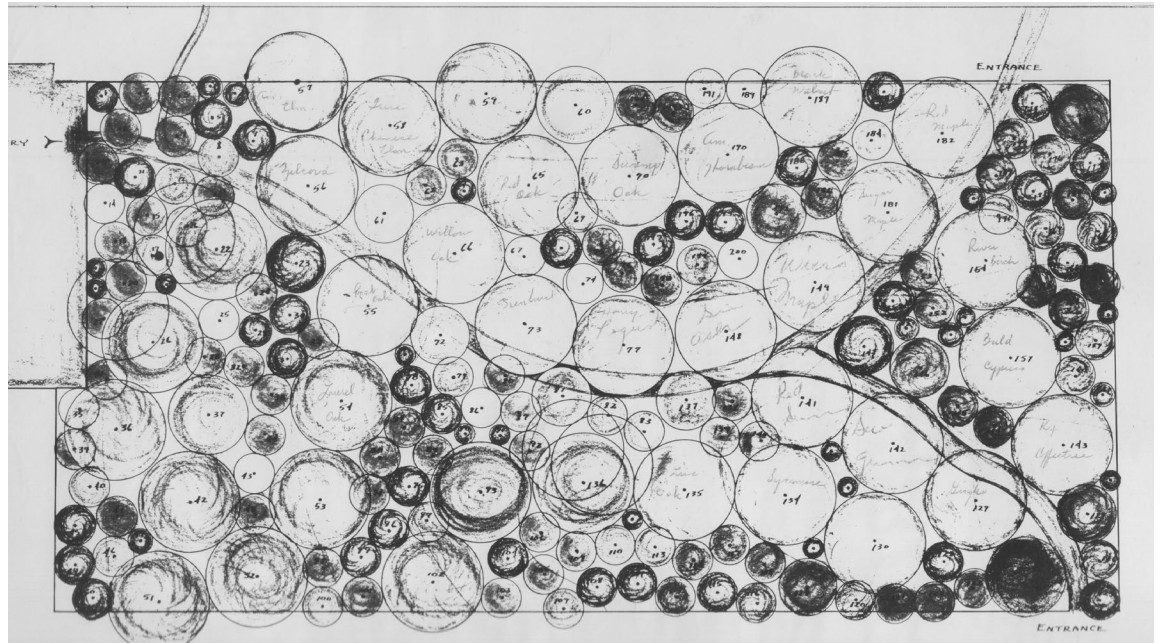
Memorial gifts to Arboretum
The lovely Moraine Locust has been given by Mrs. H. H. Poarch in memory of Mr. H. H. Poarch. Bud 'N Bloom has given a shrub, to be selected in memory of Mrs W. H. Holloway. Mrs. A. Ray Wiley has chosen the Red Stanford Quince as a memorial for Dr. A. Ray Wiley.

March, 1966
Memorial Trees and Shrubs Given to Arboretum
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Hulings have given the Pink Viburnum Tomentosum in memory of Mr. J. R. Buckley. The Fleur de Lis Garden Club has given a magnolia in memory of Jewel Marple and a Deciduous Holly was given by Mrs. Ray Collins in memory of her husband.

At the time, the corner chosen had otherwise been neglected; it was the site of a crumbling concrete rock garden with a fish pond and overgrown vegetation which took nearly a year to clean up. The resolution put forth by then Tulsa mayor, James L. Maxwell, stated why the work which went into cleaning the area would be worthwhile: "Whereas, such an arboretum would be of inestimable value to the City not only because it will be a substantial improvement to the beauty of the city, but because it will be of great educational value." (continued)



Beautification and education were the cornerstone ideas upon which the Arboretum was built, and the trees were selected to demonstrate which species grow well in Tulsa.



Paul Mitchell, the Tulsa County OSU Extension agent at the time, helped with site planning and tree recommendations. Once a proposed tree list was made, Tulsa residents were given the opportunity to purchase

memorial trees from a list of possibilities. The original planting plan included 40 large trees, 100 small flowering trees, 50 evergreens, and 100 evergreen shrubs.



Since its dedication in December of 1964, Tulsa's love for the Arboretum in Woodward Park has grown steady, right alongside the trees.

Bequest made through your estate either by will or trust can provide important benefits to both you and the Tulsa Garden Center at Woodward Park.

- Reduce or eliminate estate taxes
- Change beneficiaries at any time
- Designate any amount

We would love to discuss ways to make a gift through your estate plan with you or your estate planning professional.

Please contact Laura Chalus, CEO
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Our mission is to provide a variety of horticulture and environmental education opportunities for the community and to serve as horticultural headquarters for the Tulsa area.



Do you love Woodward Park as much as PIXEL "The Toy Aussie"? If so, please consider a year-end donation to support historic preservation and educational programming, or upgrade your membership today.

tulsagardencenter.org/join or
tulsagardencenter.org/donate

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