

# Core Arboretum Newsletter

Number 22 (2017)

Zach Fowler, WVU Core Arboretum Director, Editor

phone: (304) 293-0387

WVU Department of Biology PO Box 6057, Morgantown, WV 26506 <http://arboretum.wvu.edu> email: [zfowler@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:zfowler@mail.wvu.edu)

## No Bridge over the Arboretum!

The Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization (MMMPO) has released the final report of its I-79 Access Study. The recommended alternative for a new bridge over the Monongahela River does not include a bridge over the Arboretum! This is great news for the Arboretum, because two of the alternatives under consideration included an extension of Patteson Drive and a bridge over the Arboretum and the river to connect to the new University Town Center Exit on I-79. The decision not to recommend a bridge over the Arboretum was helped by over 300 letters written to the MMMPO against building a bridge over the Arboretum! These letters included a wonderful letter from the administration at WVU, which strongly supports the Arboretum and opposed any bridge project that would impact the Arboretum. The final report of the I-79 Access Study project, including details about all of the alternatives, is available at the I-79 Access Study website: <http://www.i79accessstudywv.com>.

## Arboretum Online

Check out the Arboretum online at <http://arboretum.wvu.edu>. We can also be found on Facebook as WVU Core Arboretum, and on Twitter and Instagram as [wvuarboretum](#).

## Support the Arboretum

The Arboretum website makes it easy to give online! Support from our donors is fundamentally important to our future growth and development, as we work to fulfill our mission at the Arboretum.

## Arboretum Volunteering

The Arboretum has a new weekly volunteer program called Work Day Wednesday. Volunteers show up every Wednesday from 4-7 pm (1-4 during winter) to help with general Arboretum maintenance. During these Work Day Wednesday events and other service events, 224+ volunteers worked a combined total of over 672 hours for the Arboretum last year! These volunteers participated in all sorts of Arboretum maintenance tasks. Our partnership with WVU Center for Service and Learning and the iServe website have been a valuable component of our volunteer efforts. Other partner organizations in volunteer events have been the Monongahela Master Naturalists, the WVU Tri-Beta biology honor society, and the WVU Sierra Student Coalition. Thanks to all of our volunteers!

## Arboretum Programming

Local and regional experts on a variety of nature-related subjects will give public talks at the Arboretum as part of the new WVU Core Arboretum Nature Connection Series. These talks will happen every Tuesday evening at 6:00 at the Arboretum Amphitheater, starting in early June. Our website has more information and a calendar of speakers and talk titles! We are also starting a new collaboration this summer with The Shack Neighborhood House Festival of Fun youth summer camp. A group of kids from The Shack will visit the Arboretum every week for nature-based educational programming. We will continue our long-standing tradition of WVU Department of Biology spring ephemeral wildflower walks and Mountaineer Audubon spring bird walks and our more recent and delicious tradition of fall Pawpaw Parties!

## Citizen Science at the Arboretum

Citizen science is a branch of science that harnesses the data collecting abilities of members of the general public and engages anyone with science. Our new citizen science program here at the Arboretum, the WVU Core Arboretum Phenology Walk, involves phenology and monitoring the phenophases of individual plants. Phenology refers to the timing of key seasonal changes in plants and animals that happen each year. In plants, phenology involves events or phenophases such as budbreak, expanding leaves, blooming flowers, leaf fall, etc. A phenology walk is a mapped trail with a series of marked plants that citizen scientists observe regularly to record the phenophase. We are interested in how the annual phenology of our trees changes over time due to climate change and other factors. We use the Nature's Notebook website, which is administered by the USA National Phenology Network, as the web interface for our phenology walk. Nature's Notebook is a website that anyone can join and record observations of phenology. Ultimately, we would like to have a kiosk at the Arboretum where anyone who visits can learn about phenology, how to monitor it, and how to join the citizen science program. At this time, however, we are in the "soft opening" phase of the project. We have the trees selected and tagged and a map of the phenology walk made, and we have trained participants on how to observe phenophases and enter the data. There will be more training sessions in late winter or early spring. If you would like to volunteer to join the program, or if you have any questions, please email Zach Fowler, WVU Core Arboretum Director, at [zfowler@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:zfowler@mail.wvu.edu).