

Core Arboretum Newsletter

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Big ideas for the Arboretum!

WVU Landscape Architecture students, under the direction of faculty members Vaike Haas and Anna Withrow, recently worked to develop potential design elements of a future Arboretum master plan. These students collaborated with the Arboretum director, Arboretum users, and landscape architecture professional alumni to come up with and develop some great ideas for how the Arboretum could grow to reach its full potential! Some of the design elements that they worked on included: a dock at the Arboretum for people using the river to park and explore the Arboretum; a nature education center/building with restrooms and class/lab/conference space; a 5% grade connector trail to the rail trail to improve Arboretum access for all and function as a campus connector; rehabilitation of the “lagoon” area as a demonstration and education wetland with boardwalk, open water, etc.; rebuilding the Brewer Hill Trail and reconnecting to the northern portion of the Arboretum; expansion into campus and better connections across Monongahela Blvd; etc. As we work to develop an official Arboretum Master Plan, we hope to see some of these ideas developed even more, and we hope to have some projects ready for fundraising in the near future.

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.

Arboretum Volunteering

Volunteers help keep the Arboretum beautiful! We engage volunteers at our weekly Work Day Wednesday events, annual invasive species removal events, annual clean up events, and through direct contact with groups and individuals who wish to schedule volunteer events. Last year, over the course of 53 volunteer events, 523 volunteer sign-ins worked for a total of 1381 volunteer hours for the Arboretum! These volunteers participated in all sorts of Arboretum maintenance and outreach event tasks. Our partnership with WVU Center for Service and Learning and the iServe website and service learning courses have been a valuable component of our volunteer efforts. Check out the calendar section of our website for information about upcoming volunteer events. Thank you to all of our volunteers!

Arboretum Programming

We have hosted many free educational programs for the public since our last newsletter. Last year, we had over 30 events and more than 1120 sign-ins at these events. We are on track to more than double these numbers this year! Popular events include WVU Department of Biology spring ephemeral wildflower walks, Mountaineer Audubon spring bird walks, WVU Core Arboretum Nature Connection Series weekly lectures during the summer, our annual Moth Night event, and our delicious tradition of fall Pawpaw Parties. A new tradition was started this spring, with the first annual WVU Core Arboretum Spring Flower Festival, and we hope to have the first annual WVU Core Arboretum Pawpaw Festival this fall! Our website has more information about our events and a regularly updated calendar of events!

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. We would like to see WVU Core Arboretum become the local/regional hub for citizen scientists and the professional scientists who access the potential of these citizen scientists.

Our main 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. In addition to the Phenology Walk, we have engaged citizen scientists in research involving garlic mustard invasive plant species, banded bird observations, pawpaw data collection, moth censuses, beetle censuses, etc. If you would like to volunteer to join one of our programs, or if you have any questions, please email Zach Fowler, WVU Core Arboretum Director, at zfowler@mail.wvu.edu.