

Fall 7-1-2013

Arbor Day Celebration 2013

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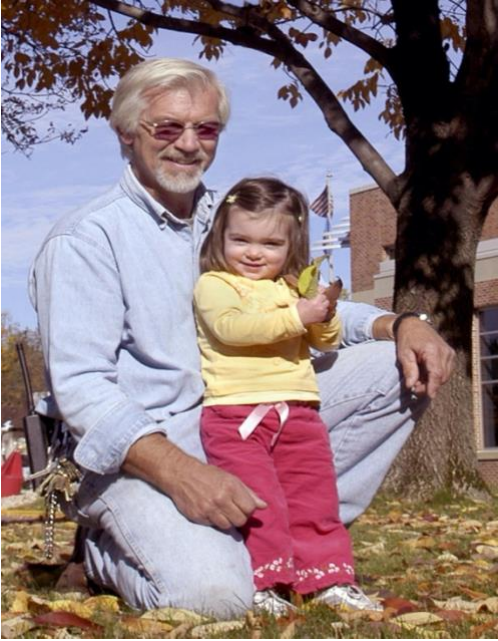
Recommended Citation

Meyer, Bill, "Arbor Day Celebration 2013" (2013). *Stories from the Arboretum*. 12.
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Arbor Day Celebration 2013

By Bill Meyer, WSU Senior Groundskeeper (Retired)



I hope you had a chance to stop by the campus April 26 to experience some of the WSU Arbor Day Events. That morning we celebrated Arbor Day by staging a number of events starting with the planting of a tree in the plaza in front of WSU's Krueger Library. Shortly before the ceremonial tree planting, Provost and Vice President Nancy Jannik and Dr. Bruno Borsari from the Biology Department commented on recent efforts to use the outdoor campus as a "living laboratory" for learning purposes. With the help of nearby elementary school students and WSU sustainability and environmental groups, a young Magnolia tree was planted. Copies of our popular tree book, "Campus of Trees, Winona State University", were made available by representatives of the WSU Bookstore.

After the planting, Nancy Reynolds and I led two separate tree tours from the new Magnolia tree through the courtyard and then circling around the Performing Arts Center, eventually ending up on the south side of the Integrated Wellness Complex (IWC). There, John Yearous from the IT Department demonstrated how the new tree identification sign QR codes work. These tree identification signs are prototypes of the new signs that may start appearing this summer. At this time the QR codes appear on 30 prototype tree signs that have been placed near various trees on the campus grounds. If you have a smartphone, try accessing the tree information on each tree with a QR code. It's quite amazing!

Finally, Kaitlyn O'Connor (Sr. Biology student) gave a demonstration of her IWC Native Prairie Garden project. This project will include a series of small gardens displaying native plant materials. Some of the gardens include a medicinal plant garden, an edible plant garden, and an assortment of native grasses. Due to the late spring, construction on this garden has been delayed. This native garden will add a great deal of beauty and interest to the south side of IWC. A number of guest speakers wrapped up the Arbor Day celebration. Hopefully this Arbor Day celebration will become an annual event where we can showcase WSU's trees to the greater Winona community and the students and staff of WSU.