

Woodcrest Villa Nature Trail & Arboretum

<http://rhodyman.net/WCV>

May 2025 Newsletter

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Woodcrest Villa Arboretum is Dedicated To Those Recognized with Trees & Benches

Spring, When Trees Are Beautiful And Pollen Can Be A Problem



Left photo: A Prairiefire Crabapple is blooming in the arboretum with a Kwanzan Cherry starting to bloom in the foreground and in the inset picture. Right photo: A redbud tree is blooming and to its left, a Canada red cherry is starting to bloom.

The wonders of nature are beautiful when the trees start blooming in April. What is not so great is the pollen they produce. Our cars look like they were in a dust storm and for some of us, our eyes itch and our noses run.

Pollen allergies, also known as allergic rhinitis or hay fever, are a common seasonal allergy triggered by airborne pollen. Symptoms like sneezing, runny nose, and itchy eyes are usually caused by an overreaction of the immune system to pollen. Pollen is a fine powder produced by trees, grasses, flowers, and weeds as part of their reproduction cycle. For most people, pollen is harmless, but for allergy sufferers, the body mistakes pollen as an invader and releases chemicals like histamines, which cause the symptoms.

The symptoms are often sneezing, a runny or stuffy nose, itchy eyes, an itchy throat or nose, and watery, red, or swollen eyes. Doctors call this allergic conjunctivitis. Some people also feel mild facial pressure or even mild asthma symptoms if they have both allergies and asthma.

The causes are seasonal and depend on which plants are producing pollen. In the spring, trees start first with cedar, birch, maple, oak, ash, poplar, pine and then hickory producing the most pollen. In late spring and early summer, grasses such as Bermuda, Timothy, and Kentucky bluegrass produce pollen when they are allowed to grow tall enough to produce seed. In the late summer and early fall, weed pollen is prevalent, especially from ragweed and pigweed, reaching a peak in August.

During times of the year when one is bothered, it is best to try to prevent pollen allergies. Avoid going outside when pollen is worst in the early morning between 5 AM and 10 AM and on dry windy days. Rain temporarily washes pollen out of the air, so rainy days are often better for allergy sufferers. When you need to go outside, a COVID-style mask will help considerably. When indoors, keep windows closed, especially at night, and use a HEPA air filter, either on your furnace or in a portable air cleaner.

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Trees and Pollen - continued.

Treating the symptoms of pollen allergies with over-the-counter medications is relatively effective for most people. For itchy and tearing eyes, allergy eye drops are often effective. For sneezing and a runny nose, allergy nasal sprays are often effective. Usually, these don't have noticeable side effects. Antihistamine tablets are effective, but may have serious side effects.

People being treated for asthma should seek their doctor's advice. An allergist can help identify specific allergens and recommend the best treatment plan.

"Hay fever" got its name because symptoms were common during hay harvesting season — but there's **no** fever involved!

The Navajo say, 'Oh, beauty before me, beauty behind me, beauty to the right of me, beauty to the left of me, beauty above me, beauty below me, I'm on the pollen path.'



Mayapples are coming up. Mayapples spread underground by rhizomes, forming huge carpets of identical plants — all clones of one another. A single, delicate white flower blooms underneath the leaves around May. You usually have to lift the leaves to see it. Only plants with two leaves produce a flower and fruit. Single-leaf plants are vegetative — they just photosynthesize.



Campus Bench



Arboretum or
Trail Bench

Honor & Memory Benches Available

Now, both the original arboretum and the expansion area are filled with honor and memory trees. A new opportunity to honor or remember a loved one is with a bench, either a campus bench or an arboretum/nature trail bench. Each bench includes a plaque where you can place your message. For more information contact Steve Henning at acer103@earthlink.net or call 7116.

IN MEMOR OR HONOR OF SOMEONE

Message Here (up to 55 characters & spaces per line)
...remembrance, dedication, sponsorship, inspiration...

Thanks for Donations

Thanks to those who donated for the Trail Crew to buy supplies for the Nature Trail & Arboretum such as saw blades for trimming, mulch for the trail, and service for the tractor.

Make donations out to:

Tandem Living

with the note:

WCV Nature Trail & Arboretum

Send all donations to:

Bruce Metzler, Treasurer
WCV Nature Trail & Arboretum
2001 Harrisburg Pike, PH 305
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