

light with some direct sun. Temperatures between 55-85 degrees Fahrenheit promote a good growing environment but avoid prolonged temperatures below 50 degrees Fahrenheit as it could damage the plant. The soil should be loose and well-drained. Watering should be done when the soil is dry and, in the winter, monthly watering is all that is needed. Note that too much water will be detrimental to the plant and kill it. Fertilizing with mild cactus fertilizer during the growing season is all that is needed. There are not too many pest problems but mealybugs and spider mites can occur. 🍷

Plantasia Info from Outreach Committee Chair, Linda Mayer

The Plantasia schedule has been filled and thank you all for participating.

I will send schedule and information to everyone the 1st week in March. We will be in Artisan Hall booth 172.

OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN

The ongoing MG Project at Buffalo Niagara Heritage Village will display the basic botany of Sugar Maple Trees as part of Maple Sugar Weekend, Saturday and Sunday March 30 and 31st., 10-4. (A pancake breakfast will also be served).

Tree Selection for Any Condition with Dr. Nina Bassuk April 4, Draves Arboretum, 1 pm, \$45. Call 585 -547- 9442 or email dravesarboretum@rochester.rr.com

Buffalo-Style Gardens, Create a Quirky, One-of-a-Kind Private Garden with Eye-Catching Designs by Sally Cunningham and Jim Charlier. This book features offbeat garden designs and showcases the wildly inventive gardens and gardeners of Buffalo. It offers readers ideas to use in their own small space gardens.

Pollinator House Competition and Benefit Auction Entrants are asked to deliver a functional, contemporary pollinator house to be auctioned off to support Garden Walk Buffalo and Buffalo Foundation programs. Size should be within one foot by one foot by one foot. A brief design narrative (250 words or less) is requested with the entry. There is no fee for entering. Deadline is May 15. Visit BuffaloArchitecture.org OR Gardens-BuffaloNiagara.com

DID THE POLAR VORTEX KILL MY HYDRANGEAS? by Cheryl Krajna



January's blizzard and polar vortex prompted some people to question whether climate change and global warming truly exist. "They say the earth is getting hotter, so how can it be so cold?" The truth is quite the opposite.

Climate considers a region's entire range of weather conditions, often by using 30-year averages of temperature, snowfall, rainfall, etc. The burning of fossil fuels releases an enormous amount of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. This traps heat leading to an increase in the surface temperature of the Earth. Polar ice is melting due to global warming. Humans are rapidly changing the earth.

A polar vortex "an upper level low pressure region, located about 60,000 feet above the Earth's poles." which strengthens and weak-

ens from year to year. When the stratosphere warms up, the polar vortex can break into separate vortices and cause the arctic-like weather we experienced in January.

We are eagerly awaiting the start of the 2019 gardening season. How can we as Master Gardeners adopt climate-friendly practices, and encourage our friends and neighbors to do likewise? Learn the facts from reliable sources such as Cornell and other scientific and research institutions. Small actions make a big difference. Gardeners should consider:

- *Green lawn reduction – thus reducing the need for fossil fuel to run our lawnmowers and power tools, and increasing the amount of environmentally friendly plants*
- *Reduction of water consumption*
- *Protection of pollinators*

Improving education, climate literacy and public understanding of the local dimensions of climate change are vital for public engagement and support for climate action. 🍷