

# WISCONSIN DAYLILY SOCIETY

[www.wisconsindaylilyociety.org](http://www.wisconsindaylilyociety.org)

A not for profit organization promoting the enjoyment, awareness, and propagation of the genus *Hemerocallis*

## President's Minute

*by Steven King*

Happy Summer, fellow WDS gardeners! We've been experiencing "mid-summer-like temperatures" in this first part of June and our water bills are going to sadly reflect just how much we're missing mother nature's frequent and gentle rains. June is my favorite month in Wisconsin because generally, most of our plants are lush, green and vibrant due to the cooler mid 70 degree temperatures and rain.

We have an exciting June, July and August coming up with many fun activities. The first JUNE event is our WDS picnic at the Healing Garden located on the grounds of the Edgerton Hospital and Health Services. We plan to have a day of beautiful weather, great food, plant talk fellowship in addition to showcasing our own WDS hybridizers with a 50/50 auction. Mark Dwyer, the Healing Garden Manager does such an excellent job in procuring and maintaining the huge diversity of plants in these gardens. Following the WDS picnic, many of us will be preparing to attend the annual ADS National Convention (June 14th - 17th), being held this year in Nashville, TN. Back by popular demand will be the Hat Contest... which is always great fun to see and experience people's unique creativity and expression of the Daylily Convention theme. JULY will feature the Region 1 Summer Meeting in Muscatine, IA (July 14th - 16th), that some of our members will attend and also OUR Region 2 Summer Meeting being held in Lansing, MI (July 21st - 23rd). Which ever Summer Meeting that you choose to attend, I'm sure that you'll be wowed by the generous regional hospitality, plants and display gardens being offered. AUGUST rolls around and brings us our annual WDS Adoption-Auction (August 5th), being held at 12 noon at the Glacier Creek Middle School, 2800 Military Rd, Cross Plains, WI. Be mindful that we are having our meetings both on the west and east sides of Madison for the convenience of all of our members. Our final August Grand Daddy and Fund raising event of the year, The WDS Plant Sale will be held on August 19th (10-4), and 20th (10-3), at Olbrich Park on Lake Monona. THANK YOU in advance to ALL of the WDS members from WI and nearby States who graciously volunteer their time and efforts with the necessary plant sale preparations. We couldn't do this without YOU! Let's hope that we are able to sell out of ALL of our product early... like we did in 2022.

We have such a vibrant, productive and exciting WDS club! It's an honor and privilege for me to be serving you along with our dedicated and hard working WDS board. For your consideration, we will be having board openings later this year at our Annual Meeting (October 28th), and will be asking for you to serve within this wonderful organization, if you feel inclined and inspired to do so. In the mean time, enjoy your Summer, stay healthy, active and involved... we need you!

Reach into the Soil... and feel at Home!  
Steven

# UPCOMING WDS EVENTS

**June 10th** - The WDS Summer Picnic will take place at the Edgerton Hospital and Health Services Healing garden (11101 North Sherman Road, Edgerton). The picnic starts at noon.

**June 14th - 17th** - The American Daylily Society 2023 National Convention, "Grand Ole Daylilys", in Nashville! Registration is now full, but there is a waiting list. Go to <https://ahs2023national.com/shop> for details. Thanks to WDS, youth registrations are FREE!

**July 21st -23rd** - The Region 2 Summer Meeting, "In the Middle of the Mitten" will be held in Lansing MI. For more details visit: <https://adsregion2.org/about/region-2-summer-meeting>.

**August 5th** - The WDS Adoption Auction starts at noon at Glacier Creek Middle School in Cross Plains.

**August 19th -20th** - The annual WDS plant sale will be held in Olbrich Park. If you are a photo contest winner and received a gift certificate for a free plant, you MUST present your certificate at the sale to receive your daylily!

**October 28th** - The WDS Annual Meeting will Feature Tom Smoulder of Smoulder's Daylily Garden <https://smouldersdaylilygarden.com>. The meeting will be held at the Doubletree in Madison at 4402 E Washington Ave. and starts at noon.



## Favorite Daylilies

My favorite daylily! I love the twisted petals and the unusual color on Bonibrae the Freak. It doesn't look like any other plant in my garden.

- Emily Strandwitz

'Bonibrae the Freak'  
Matthie, 2011

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Favorite Daylily?

Let everyone know about your favorite daylily by sharing it in the newsletter! Email a photo, description and what makes it special to you to Shannon at [solcottster@gmail.com](mailto:solcottster@gmail.com). Your favorites will be shared in future newsletters for all to enjoy and add to their wishlists. For the hybridizers, shameless self-promotion is encouraged!

### Articles for Upcoming Newsletters

Do you have ideas for articles you would like to see in an upcoming newsletter? Would you be willing to write an article for the newsletter? Do you have a photo of a daylily with a fall name that you'd like to see included? If you can answer yes to any of these questions, please email Shannon Meyer at [solcottster@gmail.com](mailto:solcottster@gmail.com)

### Welcome to our new members!

Julie Bigler  
Jean Deuster  
Susan Hanley Grady  
Mark Lowry  
Rod Lysne at Northern Grown  
Perennials  
Katherine Ritchie Rheume  
Donna Vanden Heuvel  
Mark and Kathy Wegner  
Brock Wojtalewicz

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3028 W Main St, Sun Prairie, WI 53590  
847-502-1370, [mljohnson19@yahoo.com](mailto:mljohnson19@yahoo.com)



## **YOUTH SEEDLING CONTEST**

### **2025 ADS National Convention**

### **Hosted by Puget Sound Daylily Club, Seattle, WA**

1. Must be an ADS member at the time of entrance of the contest through the time of the 2025 Convention.
2. Must be 18 and under when entering the contest.
3. SUBMISSION DEADLINE EXTENDED!!!!
4. Limit 3 Seedlings.
5. If you want your seedling returned you must pay for the postage.
6. You do not need to attend to win.
7. Must have complete contact information, for winners to receive their prize.

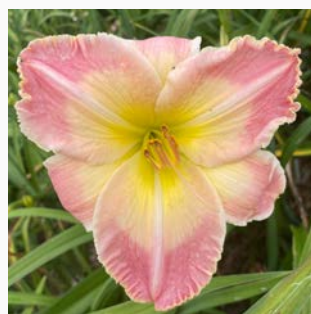
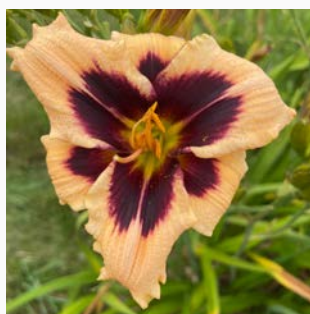
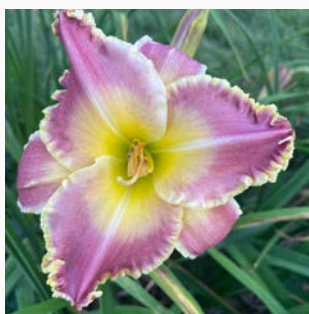
There will be first, second and third place prizes:

1. Registration fee paid to ADS 2026 National Convention
2. \$250.00 gift certificate to Browns Ferry gardens
3. \$100.00 gift certificate to Browns Ferry gardens

Tip: convention will be in mid July, so mid-late and late season seedlings will be most likely to bloom during convention.

Please contact Leigh Ann Hines for more information on entering and where to send entries:

Leigh Ann Hines  
21510 NE 133rd St  
Woodinville, WA 98077  
Leighann.hines@gmail.com  
(919)824-4505





# You're Invited to the WDS Summer Picnic !

**Saturday, June 10 at the Edgerton Hospital and Health Services Healing Garden**

After a lapse of several years, WDS will host a summer picnic once again on Saturday, June 10 at 12PM! This year the location is the Edgerton Hospital and Health Services Healing Garden, the recipient of proceeds from the 2021 WDS sale. Located about 20 minutes from the southeast side of Madison, the healing garden is at 11101 North Sherman Road, Edgerton, just west of I39/90 on HWY 59. Designed and currently managed by Mark Dwyer, it features a large pond and waterfall, beautiful plantings, wooded trails, a labyrinth, a kitchen garden, and more. Mark himself will lead us on a tour to deepen our appreciation of what a healing garden is and what this one in particular has to offer.

Please bring a dish to pass and the club will provide sandwiches and bottled water.

The picnic will be held rain or shine in the pavilion at the south side of the pond. We'll have picnic tables and some chairs but feel free to bring one if you can. Check the map for where to park at the facility. Either side of the building is convenient, and the pavilion is accessible by sidewalk from both. Please no parking on the grass — sprinkler system, you know!



*The EHHS healing garden is free and open to the public to facilitate community wellness. It is a serene and lovely retreat where patients, visitors, employees and the whole community can revitalize the mind, body and spirit – a place for healing in all its manifestations. Through the beauty of the plants, the smell of the flowers, the sound of the waterfall, and the meditative qualities of the garden, we know that you will benefit from the healing properties of nature found in our Healing Garden. Research shows that healing gardens provide many benefits, including shorter hospital stays, reduced post-surgical complications and pain meds, and improved morale for both patient and staff.*

# Spring: The Art of Daylily Planting, Fertilizing and Mulching

*by Linda Shields*

Every daylily gardener, after possibly ten years of serious intent, develops a gardening system similar in many respects to other daylily gardeners. Ubiquitous gardening practices arise as articles about best practices are published in newsletters, as 'daylily experts' travel the country giving speeches and even as Facebook instructs like a classroom. Basically, we all want to find ways to become better gardeners raising healthier plants each year. This article contains not only what I hope will be new insights for you on daylily gardening but also some new routes to websites, interesting articles and inspiring stories.

Over twenty years ago, before I knew anything about daylilies much less clubs, conventions or societies, I bought my first daylily plants from an online company which sold only single fans. I didn't know about soaking them for several hours before planting. I didn't know about dormant, semi-evergreen or evergreen. I had gardened for decades but not with daylilies.

And when 70% of my hand-selected evergreen daylilies didn't come back in my 5a garden the next Spring, I thought, "Well, here's another finicky perennial". Until one winter night when I chanced upon a website of gorgeous daylilies by a businesswoman called Karol Emmerich of Springwood Gardens in Minnesota.

She had a speech on her website from a previous speaking engagement which opened up my eyes. That night began my fascination with this delicately beautiful flower with so many bewitching faces which multiplied magically and was Winter hardy beyond belief. I began to study and gather more daylilies at local sales, looking for further information as Karol had suggested, both online and in books. And I found articles Karol wrote like this interesting one in the Winter 2015 AHS 'Daylily Journal' called: 'Don't Give Up! (Etc.)'. with some erudite daylily thoughts. Here's Karol's Springwood Garden URL (please, take some time to visit her):

[springwoodgardens.com/daylilies.html](http://springwoodgardens.com/daylilies.html)

I now own twelve separate gardens in all with my husband, Dan Hernday, each with its own name and approximately a thousand daylilies on our acreage which we named Bending Hill Farm. All but two gardens, the Tea Garden and the Forrest (both shady) are filled with my collections of daylilies, peonies, irises, dahlias, orienpet lilies, hostas, alliums, tulips, heucheras, roses, unusual bulbs, clematis, astilbes, ferns and our many hardy Wisconsin perennials. You need to become knowledgeable on many subjects to be a successful Midwestern gardener when tending such a variety of plants, although this article focuses specifically on the Spring planting, fertilizing and mulching of daylilies.



# Fertilizing continued



This picture was taken around Bending Hill Farm's Tea House which is a shady environment. The perennials here include hostas, astilbes, heucheras, cimifugas, iris, alliums, brunneras, barrenwort, dicentra, lamium, lungwort and Japanese painted ferns with an occasional shade loving annual.

So right at the start I would like to direct you to two specific website URLs which are rich in daylily information. If you are an AHS member, you will find reading back issues of the AHS 'Daylily Journal' most enlightening and enjoyable. Login to the AHS website using your personal name and password. After this go to the 'Members Portal' which is in the top menu bar and click in. On the next page, look for the word 'Journal' on the left of center, top bar, and click in. Under 'Archived Journal'(drop down menu) you will find every single 'Daylily Journal' by date. I find it amazing the amount of information in these magazines which is completely relevant, readable and reliable today.

<https://www.daylilynnetwork.org/default.aspx>

The next site is on Facebook, where there is a new daylily informational website which my group, the AHS Educational Outreach Committee, built and now administers. It's called 'Discovering Daylilies' and anyone is welcome to use it after answering a few questions. My good friends, Karol Emmerich and Jason Halonen are the administrators of this amazingly structured online daylily classroom which covers a plethora of topics, basically teaching you everything you SHOULD know about and do with daylilies in an easygoing manner and medium. Here is the URL to take you directly there:

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/364353112266898/?ref=share>

# Fertilizing continued

I read an article by Bill Maryott from the 2013 AHS 'Daylily Journal' where he said daylilies needed only three things to grow successfully. First, they needed no less than "four hours of sunshine a day throughout the entire season." Secondly, they were not "drought-tolerant plants." They needed adequate consistent moisture. And last, they "require a deep rich soil with good nutrients." Bill thought daylilies were the "most adaptable, easiest perennials to be found in the garden."

After your daylily plants arrive, Bill advised you must find a plant location in full sun and then dig a plant hole size "as big as a three-gallon bucket" because daylily roots can extend 15 to 20 inches in the soil as they grow. Your stems on top should have the foliage cut back evenly to eight inches and the roots six to ten inches but remember that each stem must have roots to grow. Both the foliage and the roots will immediately grow back with the roots forming new feeder roots. These new feeders are essential if one lives in a cold climate to help stop heaving in Winter and to provide adequate nourishment to the new plant."

We began regular fertilizing in the Spring and Fall nine years ago after reading an article by the Master, David Kirchhoff, in the Winter 2014 'Daylily Journal' on fertilizing and have been pleased with the results. Just like everything I do, I spent time researching exactly what, how much, and when to fertilize. But the very first thing we did beforehand was have our soil

tested at our County's lab just as David recommended. The report measures the N-P-K (Nitrogen- Potassium-Potash) of the soil sample you submitted. And as David's article points out, different sections of your yard can have different N-P-Ks although it's rare to have strikingly dissimilar results from different patches in a small yard.

At Bending Hill Farm, we once started a garden on what had been our burn pile after what we thought was a reasonable length of time. Usually, fires add fertility to the soil by adding nitrogen, sulfur and potassium back in small amounts. But we found the many years of burning had produced excess nitrogen and potassium which showed up on our soil report because we had submitted ten soil samples, each from a different locus. More on how we fixed this garden later.

If most of your soil sample's pH levels fall within the beneficial soil pH range for daylilies (both David Kirchhoff and Karol Emmerich agree that a good soil pH for healthy daylilies is slightly acidic 6.0-6.5) and with no reason to amend, then daylilies can be fertilized in the Spring and Fall with a 1-1-1 either organic or chemical fertilizer. Many Master Gardeners in Wisconsin and elsewhere use Milorganite for this very property.



# Fertilizing continued



In all our gardens we put down starting in Spring a three inch dressing of Environ mulch, being careful to leave breathing room around each plant's stem. Weeds will occasionally break through; but for the most part, mulch keeps the soil moist and cool, weedless and free from debris, enriched and uniform.

Dan and I use a specific fertilizer at BHF which we mix ourselves. The formula came from my good friends, Kathy and Bruce Fowler, whom I sat with at the Daylily National Convention in Asheville last year. I had ordered healthy and heavenly daylilies from Kathy's business for many years before I had the pleasure of interviewing Bruce and Kathy together for work as Chair of the Educational Outreach Committee. Here is their original formula:

1/4 cup Nutricote  
1/4 cup Milorganite  
1/4 cup Alfalfa Pellets  
1/4 cup Top Dressing

Obviously, we multiply it up so we have it in large batches and keep it in an open container in the shed because it's smelly.

Then, we put it around each daylily in the Spring on a day when it's not raining. Either Dan or I measure out 1/3 of a cup for each plant which we spread in a wide circle away from the meristem of the plant. You don't want it to touch any part of the daylily as it might burn it if it sits there for a couple of days in the hot sun. This blend feeds each daylily for up to four months by targeting the roots. The Nutricote and Milorganite are activated by temperature changes, so your daylilies will receive more nutrients during the summer months when they are the most vigorous. Kathy updated me today as they have switched from Nutricote to Graco which is chemically the same but less expensive. And, if you do fertilize in Summer, the Fowlers do not use alfalfa pellets as with the weather's higher temperatures, it causes the soil to overheat.

# Fertilizing continued

Decades ago, when we first started gardening, we didn't have the money or the networking skills to know the value of mulching. We spent the entire summer mumbling under our breaths about endless weeds, scraped fingers and aching backs. Now we know mulching is the only sane way to garden for both plant and gardener. Our first course on the benefits of mulching came after we received the County's soil report from the garden with the burn pile. The nitrogen and potassium content were both above the higher normal range. The first remedial suggestion was: MULCH. I had to really search to find the reasoning behind this, after all I didn't want any mulch to reduce the nitrogen delivery to my daylilies. My friend and associate at the American Daylily Society, Sue Bergeron, of the Science Committee, wrote this article in the 2015 Spring Daylily Journal, called: "Much Ado About Mulches".

Sue writes about nitrogen: "...is the only plant nutrient that doesn't naturally occur from soil mineral particles. Instead, it is captured as a gas from the atmosphere by soil microorganisms and converted into forms of nitrogen that plants can use like ammonium and nitrate." She allayed all my fears by concluding, "... in general, surface woody mulching does not affect nitrogen delivery to plants...unless the root system is a shallow one."

And thus, our first 20-yard truckload of organic mulch arrived. In Fall, we mulch three inches to protect our live

investments over the winter and in Spring, we are almost weed free and loving it. We add more mulch anywhere it's needed. We buy the same dark brown organic mulch from a special nursery in Mukwonago. They enrich their wood chips with a composted tea. This breaks down slightly faster than regular mulch but adds to our overall nutritious garden soil.

In finishing, here's a twister for you. I have ... much to my children's horror and grandchildren's delight...also added worms to certain gardens when I felt there wasn't enough movement. Our acreage was a farmer's corn field full of rocks deposited when two glaciers collided at the top of the state (the Laurentide and Lake Michigan Glaciers). As these combined glaciers ripped down the middle of my state, they heaved the land up and down, but left great pits of gravel behind. The latter back eighth of my land is a worm-less gravel pit. I and Dan's aunt believe you need worms in your garden for it to be a healthy one.

Loretta Hernday, was known as the "worm lady" in our local area and was made famous as such in the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. She took her Amazon-like garden's summertime worms down into her Butler basement, storing them in trash-bag lined gargantuan containers during the long Wisconsin winters. She felt certain worms were the key to fertile gardens and many even international gardeners believed she was onto something. She fed these worms her and Uncle Bud's vegan leftovers; and as the worms ate their way through this green



# Fertilizing continued

feast, the waste they left behind was a “gold” fertilizer. Her flowers won blue ribbons in all categories every year at the Wisconsin State Fair while many paper and magazines interviewed her and her cadre of worms come Spring. Each interviewer leaning heavily on the humorous while Aunt Loretta pushed scientific barriers with abandon.



You can order worms many places if you don't want to go digging on rainy nights in nearby verdant neighborhoods. First, call or run down to your local bait and tackle shop. Finding gardening worms at fishing shops is more common than you think. Ask for: 'Eisenia fetida' also known as red or tiger worms. I mix these with blue worms whenever I can get them there, which isn't often. Here are three Wisconsin Stores you can also try:

**Carney's Crawlers**  
1008 Randolph Drive  
Appleton, WI  
920-843-8558

**Wisconsin Redworms**  
2155 Redwood Drive  
Richland Center, WI  
608-647-2008

**Curbside Composter**  
4113 Sunnyside Crescent Drive  
Madison, WI  
608-338-4798

You can also try googling  
**Uncle Jim's Worm Farm.**

This is how I procure my crawlers. It's a red worm mixture mailed fresh to your door. Here's the URL direct to his site:

<https://unclejimswormfarm.com/order-stuff/composting-worms/>

The phone number is 800-373-0555.



# Spectacular Spring Speakers

*by Shannon Meyer*

WDS has been lucky to have three fantastic speakers to kick off 2023. In case you missed any of the action, here are the summaries and some images from their presentations. I heard lots of comments from WDS members who were grateful to be able to hear from these hybridizers and happy to be in a club where we get such special opportunities. Thanks WDS for bringing us such quality speakers!

## Wolff's Daylilies

The first speaker of the year, Don Wolff, braved the notoriously unpredictable Wisconsin March weather all the way from Louisville, Kentucky. His program focuses on oranges and doubles, much to the delight of several WDS members! Although Don lives on an average sized residential lot, he has managed to fill the space with more than just an abundance of daylilies. He also grows peonies, calla lilies, iris and roses. When his yard space was getting too limited, he removed his deck to make room for new beds. As we all know, sometimes you have to make sacrifices to squeeze in one more plant.

One of the challenges Don faces in his yard is fending off the seemingly ever-present enemy of so many gardeners: deer. From fencing to fishing line, Don has many methods to protect his plantings. Despite being in a residential neighborhood, he has had to get creative to ward the creatures off. In addition to physical and liquid fencing, as well as strategically placed fishing line, he has four motion activated sprinklers that start spraying water when movement is detected. Don says that he isn't sure if it is the water or the sprinkler noise that scares them off, but they work and that's all that matters.



'Gretchen's Surprise'

Don started hybridizing in 1996 and registered his first daylily, Gretchen's Surprise, in 2004. One of only two tetraploids that Don has registered and named for one of his dogs, Gretchen's Surprise is cream with a purple eye and yellow throat. Other Wolff flowers with canine namesakes include Mia's Love (a double pink rose blend) and Kera's Doctor David (a plum colored double UF Crispate).



'Kera's Doctor David'

## Spring Speakers continued

Another favorite theme Don uses in his daylily names is something his home state is famous for: bourbon. One of his first plants to bloom in spring is Bourbon on Ice, which starts flowering in mid-May and is a yellow blend double with pronounced midribs. Sippin Bourbon is also a double yellow blend but also sports a light plum band and diamond dusting. Don is proud to say that Sippin Bourbon also won a Best in Show title at a daylily show.



'Sippin Bourbon'

The WDS audience especially loved Double Sanibel Sunrise (a rose bitone with yellow midribs and heavy veining) and Ginseng Man (an eight inch double golden yellow with diamond dusting). The audience also enjoyed the creatively named Nickel Plated Nincompoop (a double dark salmon/rose blend with a plum band and diamond dusting) and Little Pixie from Dixie (a 2.5 inch dark violet bitone double).



'Double Sanibel Sunrise'



Wolff seedling 19-21-2

Don starts his seeds in his basement, moves the seedlings outside in mid-spring, and has them planted by May. With this schedule, some of Don's seedlings will bloom the first year, but most bloom in year two. As of the March meeting, Don had already started 250 seeds! With the variety of colors, forms and sizes, there was something for everyone to appreciate in Don's program. One of the ways Don has found to further enjoy his flowers is to bring the blooms into his home so he can see and smell them throughout their brief existence. This is a great way to bring a little extra beauty into your home and literally "stop and smell the flowers" as you go about your day. To see more about Don's program, visit his website at

<https://wolffsdaylilies.plantfans.com>



Don Wolff's presentation



# Heavy Petal Daylilies

Fellow Region 2 member David Robinson joined us from Bloomington, IL and shared his “cutting edge diploid forms and patterns”. His interest in daylilies started with a trip to a nursery where he saw a ruffled diploid from a local hybridizer. From there, he discovered the Lily Auction online and began winning auctions and getting seeds.



David was drawn to hybridizers like Marchant, Norris, Salter and Carpenter and had an affinity for toothy, bearded, patterned and flat-faced flowers. His first introduction, the 6.5” deep purple and yellow “Soundtrack to Your Escape” was from Marchant seeds. He has now been hybridizing for ten years and uses his expertise as a data analyst to guide his program.



'Soundtrack to Your Escape'  
Robinson-D., 2018

Data collected from his seedlings helps David to keep track of dominant and recessive traits and line breeding successes and failures. Line breeding allows David to use limited genetics to get better results. He compared line breeding to the game of Yahtzee, instead of rolling 5 dice over and over, you can set aside the dice you want to keep and use the remaining, smaller set of dice to increase your chances of getting a win. This has been useful for him because he has limited space for trial and error and breeding out bad traits and selecting for good ones increases his chances of getting a “Yahtzee” in a smaller pool of seeds. David says that 16% of his seedlings are as good as or better than their parents, which is an impressive number! His day job forces him to do his hybridizing early in the morning before he has to leave for work. As a result, he used flowers like Deep Impact for his crosses and through line breeding, now most of his daylilies are nocturnal.



## Spring Speakers continued



Robinson seedling

For David, hybridizing is creating your own personal expression from flowers you select. He emphasized the importance of using your own seedlings in your program. When you use others' plants, you will be about seven years behind what they are currently working on. By working with line breeding on his own seedlings, David has been able to focus on traits he wants, such as vibrant tropical colors, as well as bringing certain traits together like bearding, appliques and patterns.

One major change for David is the plot of land he purchased to expand his limited growing space. The historic lot once belonged to U.S. Senator David Davis and is in an area where many people will be able to see and enjoy what Heavy Petal Daylilies is working on. Some of David's projects include red patterns, dilutes and plants with red foliage. He wants to maintain the qualities of his plants that have tall scapes, big substance, can take the heat, and have a bud count of at least 15.

It's obvious that David is passionate about daylilies and gets a great deal of joy from hybridizing. He believes that it is important to hybridize for yourself, not others and says that no matter what life throws at you, good friends and daylilies will get you by. It will be exciting to see what he comes up with in his new space! For more information and daylily eye-candy, go to

<https://www.facebook.com/heavypetaldaylies/>



Taking inspiration from nature, patterns can take the daylily to new places!



### Colorful Chaos Daylilies

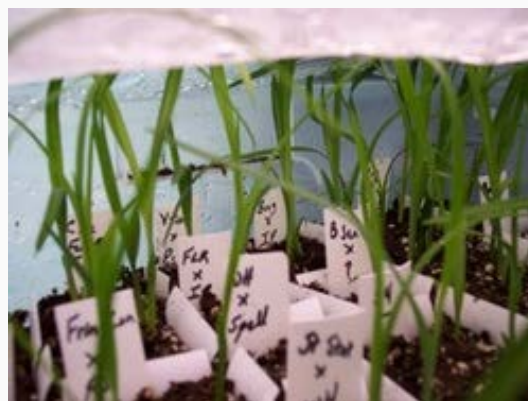
For our final spring speaker, WDS members were treated to a presentation by Chad Bush and a peek into his exciting and varied hybridizing program. Chad joined us from Alma, Michigan where he is a science teacher and self-proclaimed “science nerd”. His daylily journey began 20 years ago when he saw a catalogue for daylilies from B&D Lillies. The decent into daylily madness really kicked off with Chad’s discovery of the Lily Auction, which seems to be a common theme among daylily enthusiasts. Soon Colorful Chaos Daylilies was born. Named for the chaos of hybridizing while teaching full time, raising two boys and caring for critters, Chad’s program is just one of his unique interests.



Chad’s climate in Michigan is similar to ours here in WI. He says he lives in zone 5a/5b and although he has a greenhouse, it is unheated so he must start seeds indoors. He plants his seeds in Pro-mix and uses large plastic tubs with holes drilled in the bottom instead of planters. He labels his crosses using pieces of mini-blinds then covers the tubs with Saran wrap. Once the seedlings start pushing the Saran wrap up, it’s time to plant them outdoors. With such a busy life, Chad plants when he has time and gets seedlings in the ground between May and August.

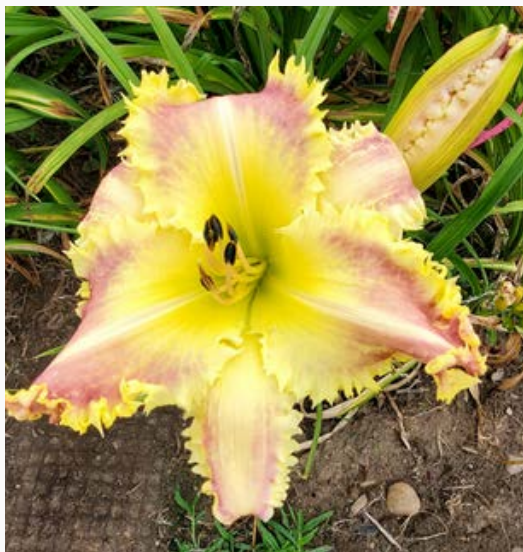


Chad also breeds miniature appaloosa horses, exotic pheasants and hybridizes hardy hibiscus, Siberian iris and daffodils. He shared pictures from all of his projects and his hard work and passion are producing beautiful (and adorable) results!





## Spring Speakers continued



'Swimming with Bull Sharks'  
Bush-C., 2023

So what is Colorful Chaos Daylilys focusing on? Chad says he is drawn to spots, stripes and teeth, which was easy to see in the pictures he shared. His flowers often combine several attributes: Andromeda Galaxy has stippling and teeth, Swimming with Bull Sharks (named after a vacation adventure) has teeth and is 40 inches tall, Isla Mujeres is a double with teeth and a 6 inch bloom! He prefers odd numbers to even so stays away from polys and prefers flowers with curves or twists instead of those with flat faces. Sloth Naptime Dreamin is a great example of the twisting curviness Chad favors. At 41 inches tall and a 9.5 inch bloom, the pink UF has pinched petals and twisted sepals and looks different every day.



'Isla Mujeres'  
Bush-C.,  
2021

Chad initially did not intend to venture into the world of Diploids, but changed his mind when he saw shades of blue and color changers and has now added dips to his projects. Chad says he was inspired by hybridizers like Nick Balash and Tom Polston but quickly realized that even with great genetics and the traits he was looking for, seedlings don't always turn out how you would expect. He noted that though he aims for patterns and teeth, sometimes his goals change year to year depending on what the flowers look like. Chad says that he lets the blooms lead him, rather than him leading them.



'Sloth Naptime Dreamin'  
Bush-C., 2022

One of the challenges Chad has faced is the inconsistency of some flowers. Sometimes a seedling does something amazing once, never to do it again. He has noticed that striped flowers vary a lot from day to day and can be unpredictable. He works with genetics from striped flowers such as Explosion in the Paint Factory, Undefinable and Wacky Wednesday and is aiming to get spotted or striped flowers with his beloved toothiness. Teeth were definitely a theme of Chads presentation!



## Spring Speakers continued

He works with some doubles, and wants to create doubles with teeth. He likes reds and purples, with white teeth. Chad also likes the fresh and clean look of yellow and white flowers, with teeth. That being said, Chad has learned over the years that variety is important to him. He says that some hybridizers get too locked into a few traits and it's important to take everything into account when evaluating your flowers. While he looks at things like bud count and branching, if a flower is good enough, he still registers it.

Chad was an art minor in college and enjoys the art of flowers. It was easy to see a uniquely artistic quality in his striped, stippled, color changing and toothy seedlings. He is currently working on bearded and cristate tets and it will be exciting to see the results! To see more of what Colorful Chaos Daylilys has to offer, go to:

<https://colorfulchaosdaylily.weebly.com/>

## Favorite Daylilies

There's never a doubt and it hasn't changed for the past five years now, 'Deliverer' (Emmerich, 2007) is one of my all time favorite daylilies. When I first began seriously collecting hybrid daylilies the second time, I did lots of research beforehand. Karol Emmerich's name was frequently mentioned with respect everywhere I looked and thus I began to listen or read every lecture, talk or conference where she was taped online.

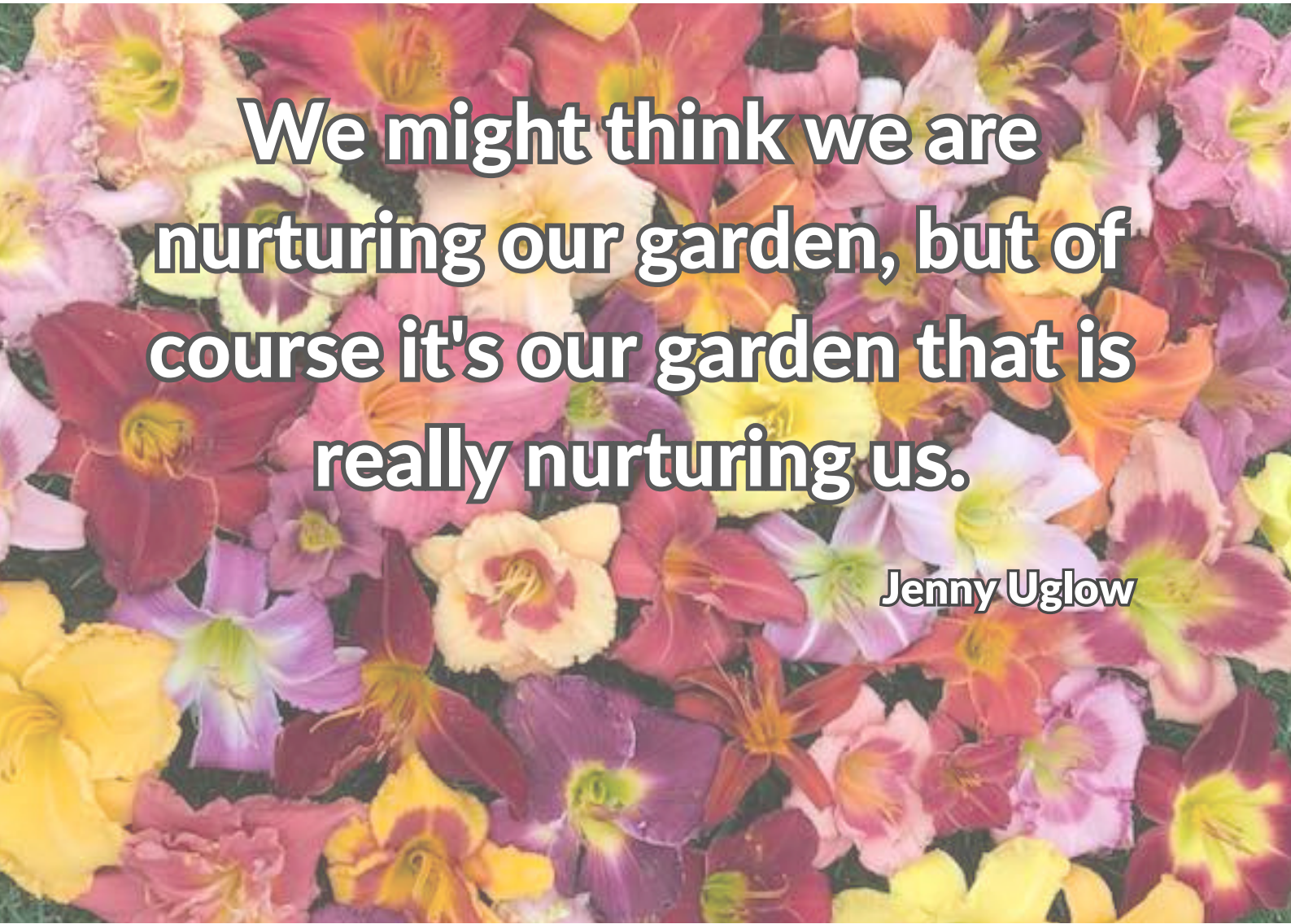
When I was ready to order daylilies for my program, I turned to Springwood Gardens. The thing I adore about this one particular daylily besides its unique standout coloring, seemingly endless blooming and lovely fragrance is it likes to open in pairs. With its high bud count and branching, I just do not have hardly one picture of it with just one blossom by itself as my picture shows. Without a doubt, this daylily delivers everything you could ever want from a flower. Thanks, Karol.

–Linda Shields



'Deliverer'  
Emmerich, 2007

Wisconsin Daylily Society Newsletter  
Shannon Meyer, co-editor  
13741 W State Road 59  
Evansville, WI 53536



**We might think we are  
nurturing our garden, but of  
course it's our garden that is  
really nurturing us.**

**Jenny Uglow**