



The Mid-South Hydrangea Society In Bloom!

Volume 2, Issue 1

February 2006

From the President:

What a great year it has been for us hydrangea enthusiasts! And your hardworking board members have been busy and have an even more exciting year in the works! Great speakers, a wonderful garden tour in June, exciting Fall speaker, and more. We have some wonderful things to tell you about so don't miss our February 13 meeting.

We had a great turnout for our October speaker, Tara Dillard, President of the American Hydrangea Society. Rough count indicates there were about 130 in attendance. Our event was a success because of the help of many vendors and members. Thanks to Joel Stout of Cricket Hill Farms who came all the way from Conway, AR with some great deals on hydrangeas, plus books and garden bowls. Cricket Hill Farms, Dabney Nursery, Dan West Garden Center, Stringer Garden Center, Gardens OyVey, and Kristin VanHoose from Hydrangeas Plus, Aurora, Oregon (hydrangeasplus.com) provided us with wonderful raffle and door prize items. We hope you will show these vendors your appreciation for their support. And thank you to members who brought raffle and plant sale items. The many members who volunteered to handle refreshments (enough for an army of hungry gardeners!), ran the booths, sold tickets, memberships, and raffle tickets, and in general helped where needed. Special appreciation to Debbie Peyton, Roxanne Baldauf, Jill Wadsworth, Kennon and Molly Hampton, plus Linda Orton, Caroline Brown, Anne Riordan, Michelle Rogers, and Cindy Tobin. I know there were more of you and I apologize for not being able to list everyone. We were overwhelmed with your contributions and looking forward to an even bigger and better event for Michael Dirr's visit in March.

I'd also like to recognize Caroline Forster, who has donated many (and I mean many) volunteer hours at the MBG to offset our meeting rental! Thank you, Caroline.

Upcoming Meetings & Events:

February 13: We all know that the Summer hydrangea garden can be a breathtaking time, but the dead of winter can be rather ho-hum. So what does a hydrangea enthusiast want to hear about in February? This is the best time to evaluate and plan just the right spots to add some wonderful evergreen structure to make your garden attractive year round. We have so many choices such as evergreen ferns, hellebores, boxwoods, camellias, azalea, daphne, Japanese plum yew, variegated English ivy, and others. Our February 13 speaker, **Chris Spindel**, will talk to us about the many varieties of Evergreen



Ferns for the Hydrangea Garden. Christmas ferns, Japanese painted fern, cinnamon fern, and more. We are hoping to have an evergreen fern vendor with some varieties available for sale at this meeting, so cross your fingers.

April 10: We are thrilled to have **Dr. Michael Dirr**, the guru of American Hydrangeas, lecture at our April 10 meeting. Dr. Dirr is professor of horticulture at the University of Georgia and the author of eleven books,



FEBRUARY 2006 MEETING

Evergreen Ferns and . . .

Our own local expert on ferns, Chris Spindel, will be the main presenter at our February 13, 2006, meeting.

She will provide us with a brief overview of ferns and then focus on the varieties of evergreen ferns available. During the winter months our beautiful hydrangeas are naked! Maybe a skirt of evergreen ferns will provide them a modicum of modesty? Chris is a founding member and 10 year president of Memphis Fern Society. She was a founding member of the Horticultural Society and was the 1995 recipient of the Horticultural Excellence Award. In our last newsletter Linda Lanier did a pictorial overview of a number of evergreen ferns. Chris will expand on that information. Depending on how the weather treats Susan Lawhon's stock, we hope to bring you a selection of evergreen ferns from Shady Lace Nursery.



. . . a Little Lagniappe

Though Chris Spindel's presentation on evergreen ferns will be our main program, we thought we would throw in a little lagniappe for you and give a brief pictorial review of the 2005 Memphis Hydrangea Garden Tour and the Birmingham Hydrangea Garden. We wanted to give those of you who could not make the tours a peek at what many of us got to enjoy this summer. As you will see, these gardens are just like yours, many of them of the "do-it-yourself" variety. We want to encourage you to consider opening your garden for future garden tours. Talk with others that have opened their gardens and get their feed back. It does take a lot of work to get it ready for "company", but it is rewarding to share it with others.

Linda Orton



February 13 Meeting
7:00pm— Memphis Botanic Garden

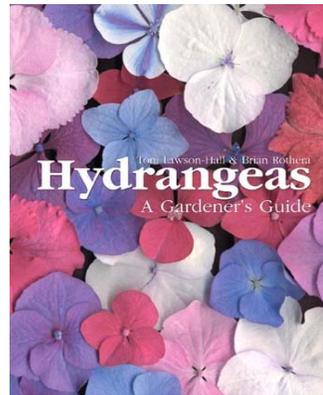
Mid-South Hydrangea Society 2nd Annual Garden Tour Booked

Imagine strolling through a large estate sized property designed by nationally acclaimed garden architect Ben Page. Hundreds of hydrangea bloom for your approval. Strolling through the sun dappled lawn you cross a small bridge and find yourself enchanted by a smaller garden that encircles a French stucco home. Are you dreaming? No, you are at the Mid-South Hydrangea Society 2nd Annual Garden Tour. Mark your calendar for Saturday, June 17, 2006. This is the day the dream comes true. Don't miss it. Open to members and their guests only.

Anne Riordan

Aldridge Gardens Hosts Toni Lawson-Hall

As you may be aware, there are only 4 or 5 outstanding books available for hydrangea enthusiasts, one being *Hydrangeas: A Gardener's Guide* by Toni Lawson-Hall of England. Ms. Lawson-Hall is



a hydrangea aficionado who, with Brian Rothera, built up the National Hydrangea Collection in England. Ms. Lawson-Hall will be speaking at Aldridge Gardens in Birmingham on February 15, 11:00am. Only 3½ hours away, you can

make this a day trip or a more leisurely overnight one. Seating is limited, so make your plans now and purchase your ticket by contacting Aldridge Gardens (<http://www.aldrigegardens.com/lectures.htm>)



SPRING FEVER

Our local Master Gardeners are hosting their Spring Fever event on Saturday, March 11, 2006, at the Red Barn on the Agricenter International grounds.

Last year we rented a table at the event and had a lot of fun meeting other hydrangea enthusiasts and promoting our society. For those not familiar with this event, the Memphis Area Master Gardeners host a free day long mini home and garden show open to the public. Vendors are there selling plants and garden related items along with Master Gardeners answering gardening questions and speakers providing some basic gardening advice. This year Linda Lanier and Caroline Brown are going to give a Powerpoint presentation to the public entitled, "Hydrangeas – Not Just Your Grandmother's Mopheads". In addition, we would like to have a table again so a couple volunteers are needed to answer questions on hydrangeas and provide membership and speaker information on our society. The time slots that need to be filled are from 8 a.m. to 12 noon and in the afternoon from 12 noon until 4 p.m. If you can help out please contact me. Linda Orton 356-0830 cell or home 383-4433 ortonlm@bellsouth.net

DR. MICHAEL DIRR

Hydrangeas for American Gardens

Nationally known horticulturist, researcher, author, and lecturer, Dr. Michael Dirr, is bringing his lifelong passion for horticulture to the Memphis Botanic Garden, 750 Cherry Rd, Memphis, Tn. on Monday evening April 10, 2006. The event is sponsored by the Memphis Botanic Garden and the Mid-South Hydrangea Society. The doors open at 5:30 p.m.

Dr. Dirr and his wife, Bonnie, water colorist and illustrator, will be on hand to sign a selection of his books, which will be offered for sale. Our vendors: Cricket Hill Farms, Dabney Nursery, Dan West Garden Centers, Gardens OyVey, Randolph's Greenhouses, and Stringer's Garden Centers will be offering a selection of Dr. Dirr's top 20 hydrangea picks along with other plants and shrubs prior to and following the program (checks and cash only). Dr. Dirr's lecture will begin at 7:00 p.m. in Hardin Hall featuring his discriminating opinion, humor and vision on hydrangeas and their future in American gardens. This is the very first time that Dr. Dirr has come to Memphis. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to be inspired by someone who *The Chronicle of Higher Education* calls "one of the biggest names in horticulture...who is considered by many to be the most influential and respected expert on ornamental trees and shrubs in this country." Tickets are \$25.00 (MSHS members or non-members) prior to the event and \$30.00 at the door. Free food/refreshments will be offered with a cash wine/beer bar and door prizes.



More info at www.memphisbotanicgarden.com

Yes, I want to attend Dr. Michael Dirr's presentation, Hydrangeas for American Gardens

Cost \$25.00 (MSHS members or non-members) in advance, \$30.00 at the door

Checks Only ~ Payable to the Mid-South Hydrangea Society

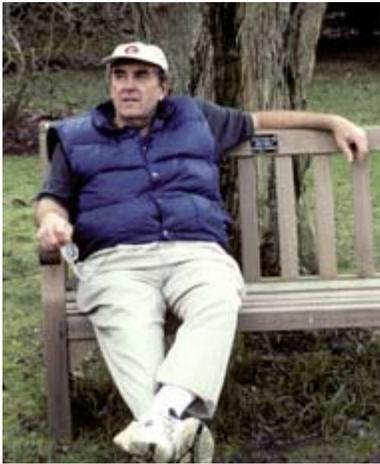
Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Number of Tickets: _____ x \$25.00 each

Mail to: Mid-South Hydrangea Society • Linda Lanier • 635 West Dr. • Memphis, TN 38112

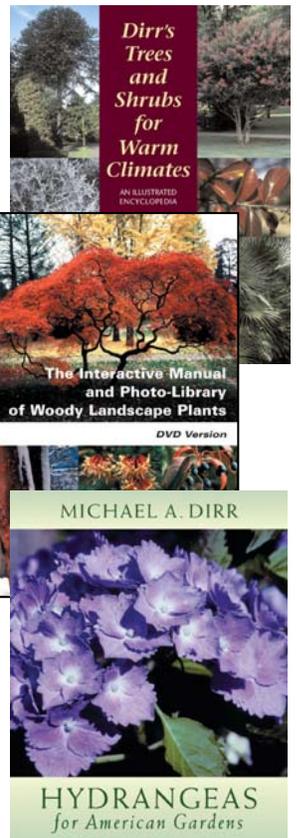
Questions? E-mail hydrangea@midsouthrr.com



About Michael Dirr . . .

Dr. Michael A. Dirr, professor of horticulture at the University of Georgia (now retired from the classroom), is the author of eleven books, including *Hydrangeas for American Gardens* and *Dirr's Hardy Trees and Shrubs: An Illustrated Encyclopedia*, and he has published more than 300 scientific and popular papers and articles. His *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants* is one of the most widely adopted teaching and reference texts in the country. His teaching, lectures, seminars, garden study tours, and plant introduction programs have contributed enormously to greater horticultural awareness. In Horticulture magazine's August 2004 profile of Dr. Dirr, he was credited with doing "more to influence the contents of our landscapes than anyone else in recent American horticulture. Through his Georgia Plant Introduction Program. . . he has brought into the nursery trade at least 64 superior selections of trees and shrubs."

He has received the highest teaching and gardening awards from the University of Georgia, American Society of Horticultural Science, American Horticultural Society, American Nursery & Landscape Association, Massachusetts Horticultural Society, Southern Nursery Association, and Garden Club of America.



Call for Volunteer Help

Dr. Michael Dirr Event

Our spring event featuring Dr. Michael Dirr is scheduled for Monday, April 10, 2006. In our continuing effort to bring new speakers to the Memphis area we are requesting your help and support. This is a weekday evening program and set-up will begin in the late afternoon at the Memphis Botanic Garden. Please take this into account when you volunteer. Our October educational event was a success due to your support. Please help make this event even bigger.

Help is needed in the following areas:

- ✿ Chairperson to coordinate and a crew to set-up/take down food tables
- ✿ Food donations - finger food please
- ✿ Assistance at the registration and membership tables
- ✿ Donation of plants or garden items for our MSHS booth
- ✿ Assistance with the MSHS booth or vendor sales

I look forward to hearing from you. Please contact me to volunteer or ask questions. If you should need to call me on the night before or the actual day of the event, please call me on my cell. It gets hectic on the last day and I may not check my home messages timely. Linda Orton, at 766-3302 work, 383-4433 home, 356-0830 cell. ortonlm@bellsouth.net or ks_meadowlark@yahoo.com

Growing *Hydrangea Quercifolia* (Oak Leaf & Others) from Seed

Notes prepared by Eddie Aldridge

Collect seeds in November-December-January-maybe February. Take seed (flower particle) and shake into a white envelope. This will be approximately 1000 seeds from one particle. Plant seeds in early April.

Use salt shaker mixed with 4 packets of artificial sweetener with this one envelope. Use open flat with artificial mix such as Miracle Grow Soil Mix.

Sow seeds in rows. Keep moist and cover flat with plastic, glass, or fiberglass. Keep moist. Seeds should germinate in 15 to 21 days. Remove cover.

After seeds have germinated, feed with 1/2 strength liquid feed such as Peters or Miracle Grow.

They should be transplanted about one month after germination into 4" pots. Top feed with Osmocote (a pinch) for each pot. Keep watered in June and July.

Plants can be pinched (remove the tips) about August 1st. This gives the plants time to flush a new growth that will actually set buds and flower the following year.



2006 Spring Plant Sale

The Mid-South Hydrangea Society will be participating in the 2006 Memphis Botanic Garden Spring Plant Sale. The dates this year are **April 21 through April 23** (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) with the pre-view party on Thursday evening April 20. Check the garden section of your Commercial Appeal for the exact times as the date draws closer. We plan on having for sale some hydrangeas, hypertufa, Dr. Dirr's autographed book, "Hydrangeas for American Gardens", and other hydrangea/garden themed items. We will also have information on our society. Tell your friends and neighbors to stop by and see us.



Hydrangea Walk Clean Up & Pruning Class

One of our goals as the Mid-South Hydrangea Society is to expand and enhance the current Hydrangea collection at the Memphis Botanic Garden. This is the beginning of our second year and we need to begin efforts in this area. Rick Pudwell has agreed to come in on his day off to show us how to prune hydrangeas. A workday has been scheduled for Saturday, March 18, 2006, from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. The work will include the pruning of hydrangeas (with Rick's guidance) and the cleaning of the beds. Those attending need to bring their own hand pruners and rakes. Please gather in the MBG lobby around 8:30 a.m. to fortify yourself with a light continental type breakfast and then we will get started. This does coincide with the Mid South Hosta Society Hosta Trail clean up and a MBG Rake, Shovel and Hoe. Please come and work with us to help improve the Hydrangea walk. Our plans are to have an expansion outline drawn up for the Hydrangea Walk sometime this year. Contact Linda Orton 356-0830 cell or 383-4433 home with questions. E-mail ortonlm@bellsouth.net

most recently *Hydrangeas for American Gardens*. The

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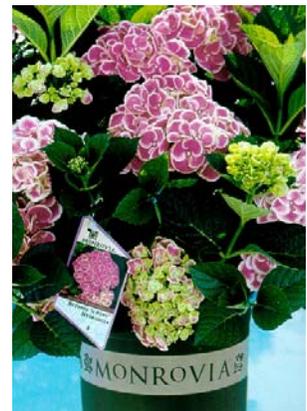
board made Dr. Dirr's acquaintance through the Center for Applied Nursery Research Hydrangea Conference and the American Hydrangea Society, and he has graciously agreed to come to Memphis for the first time to speak to our group. The Memphis Botanic Garden is co-sponsoring this exciting event and we are using Hardin Hall that evening as we expect a large crowd. We are planning quite an event and need your help. We will have more information at the February meeting.

April 21-23: We will have a Mid-South Hydrangea Society booth at the Memphis Botanic Garden Plant Sale. There will be plants for sale, plus other items and memberships. We can use some help, so please contact Linda Orton or Linda Lanier if you can work a shift during those days.

So bundle up and bring a friend to our February 13 meeting for Chris and to hear about the great year we have planned for you. Don't forget to bring something for our refreshment table and our raffle table. I can't wait to get this year started!

When is the best time to plant hydrangeas?

If you are in an area where the ground never freezes hard, as we in the south are, then fall through winter is really best. This allows your new plants to make root growth and become established before the vigor of the spring and summer growing season. We are blessed in the south with the opportunity to plant all through the winter as the weather allows. On the other hand, if you live where the ground freezes hard for winter, then spring is a better time for you to plant hydrangeas (zone 6 or colder we think).



Membership Update:

Welcome to our new Mid-South Hydrangea Society members. We look forward to seeing you February 13!

Pat Allen	Wanda Gatlin	Lidia Malogorski	Bill & Joyce Reinke
Alexandra Baird	JoAnn Geeslin	Laura McNeive	Zemuly Ruth Sanders
Richard & Adrien Barnes	Jeff Golladay	Ava Middleton	Deborah Sexton
Sherry Barwick	Kathy Grewe	Janie Miller	Delona Shockey
Ann Bechel	Nan Hackman	Judy Mills	Mary Singer
Marjorie Bradford	Joanne Hackman	Norma Montesi	Lois Stocker
Janice Butler	Kristine Harrington	Margaret Morley	Nancy Walker
Amanda Casey	Trisha Harrington	Tim Oliver	Joyce Watson
Ronnie Coleman	Shelda Herring	Fred & Judy Palmer	Joyce Wells
Karen Crenshaw	Sharron Holman	Peggy Peters	Rosa Woody
Rosemary Cunningham	Barbara Keathley	Frances Plunkett	
Nancy Davis	Corrinne Lane	Annie Rose Pomeroy	
Irma Fleischer	Blandy Lawrence	Dawn Redmond	

**THE MID-SOUTH HYDRANGEA
SOCIETY**

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2005 Officers:

President	Linda Lanier llanier1@midsouth.rr.com 452-4667
Vice-President/ Program Chair	Linda Orton ortonlm@bellsouth.net 383-4433
Treasurer	Michelle Rogers merogers@fedex.com 324-1083
Membership/ Newsletter	Caroline Brown ckbrown@fedex.com 683-9766
Annual Tour Chair	Anne Riordan mailmanann@bellsouth.net 683-7458



The Mid-South Hydrangea Society's 2006 Schedule of Programs & Events

- ✓ February 13: Mid-South Hydrangea Society Meeting with Chris Spindel
- ✓ March 11: Memphis Area Master Gardeners' Spring Fever event — MSHS Presentation & Booth
- ✓ March 18: MBG Hydrangea Walk Clean-up & Pruning Class
- ✓ April 10: Dr. Michael Dirr Event co-sponsored by MSHS and MBG
- ✓ April 21-23: Memphis Botanic Garden Spring Plant Sale — MSHS Booth
- ✓ June 17: MSHS 2nd Annual Garden Tour