



# The Mid-South Hydrangea Society In Bloom!

Volume 2, Issue 4

October 2006

## From the (Vice) President:

Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary to us! Our October meeting will celebrate the Mid-South Hydrangea Society's second year and, although young, we have been very busy. Our membership has swelled to 281 and the public continues to want information on hydrangeas. Chris Gang's Commercial Appeal newspaper article this summer referring to hydrangea pruning generated over 90 e-mail inquiries to our society.

Our roving President, Linda Lanier, is on the road again. She will be visiting Mal and Kay Condon with Nantucket Hydrangeas ([www.nantuckethydrangeas.com](http://www.nantuckethydrangeas.com)) the week of September 18, 2006, and then plans to attend the Center for Applied Nursery Research (CANR) in Dearing, GA during their annual open house on October 12, 2006. CANR will be announcing their latest news from the University of Georgia and Auburn University researchers which will include a first hand look at the new plants from Dr. Michael Dirr's plant improvement program. She will be getting the "scoop" for us on what we can expect to see in our nurseries in the next few years.

I want to remind you of the International Hydrangea Conference to be held in Belgium in mid-August 2007. The website ([www.hydrangea2007.be/en](http://www.hydrangea2007.be/en)) has information on the many lectures and workshops, pre- and post-conference excursions, along with the costs, dates and hotel recommendations. Registration opens in October 2006. The speaker list alone is an international "who's who" of the hydrangea world with all programs presented in English. An excursion will be offered to Shamrock, the hydrangea collection on the coast of Upper Normandy founded by Corinne and Robert Mallet. With more than 1,200 hydrangea species, subspecies and cultivars, it should be spectacular! Linda Lanier, Anne Riordan, Caroline Brown and I are planning to attend. We encourage you to seriously consider attending. For such a trip many things need to be addressed so start planning your schedule now. Handouts about the event will be available at our next meeting.



Mallet's Shamrock Hydrangea Collection

We hope you have enjoyed this past year with our society. We will continue to bring new speakers to the Mid-South and more opportunities for you to learn about hydrangeas. Thank you for your past support and we look forward to sharing an exciting 2007 with you.

Linda Orton, Vice President

# Hayes Jackson

## "Expanding the Palette of our Native Hydrangeas"

(...with a peek into a plant collector's adventures in Vietnam and Thailand)

Hayes Jackson will be our guest speaker at our next meeting, Monday, October 9, 2006, which will be held at the Memphis Botanic Garden. The program will begin at 7 p.m. Hayes Jackson is the urban agent with the Alabama Cooperative Extension System in Anniston, Alabama, where he works with local community-based programs concerning urban horticulture and environmental issues. Hayes will be speaking on native hydrangeas and will give us a peek into a plant collector's adventures in Viet Nam and Thailand.

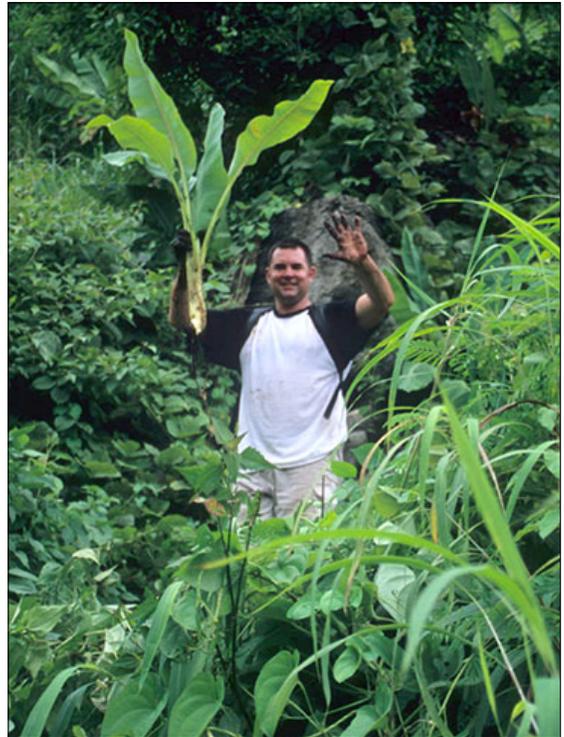
He graduated from Auburn University with a degree in Landscape Design and Ornamental Horticulture and after working in southern California with Armstrong Nurseries; he returned to Alabama and attained his masters in Environmental Biology at Jacksonville State University. Now, Hayes is currently seeking his PhD. back at Auburn University.

An avid horticulturist and true plant collector, Hayes has ventured to places like China, the Himalayas, Japan, Korea, and Guatemala to look for new plants for Southern landscapes. Hayes' latest plant venture took him to Vietnam and Thailand to explore the flora of the northern mountains of both countries. However, one of Hayes' best finds literally comes from his own backyard — *Hydrangea arborescens* 'Hayes' Starburst'.

Hayes has created a 7-acre garden at his home in Anniston, Alabama, where he experiments and trials many plants. His wildly eclectic garden has been featured in many publications including *Southern Living* and *Alabama Gardens Great and Small*. A fine example of botanical greed gone mad, the garden is mostly composed of beds packed with a multitude of plants and the grass can be cut in 13 minutes. He has developed large collections of palms, ginger lilies, bamboo, camellias, azaleas, conifers, hostas, natives, hydrangeas, cacti, succulents, trilliums, cannas, elephant ears, wildflowers, magnolias, amaryllis, daffodils, and hollies.

Several of our members had the pleasure of hearing Hayes speak at the 2005 CANR Hydrangea conference and found him to be an engaging speaker. Don't miss this opportunity to meet a self-proclaimed plant geek and hear an enthusiastic speaker.

Linda Orton



Plant collecting with Tony Avent in Thailand & Vietnam

## Mid-South Hydrangea Society Celebrating 2<sup>nd</sup> Anniversary with Raffle and Vendors

We will be celebrating our 2<sup>nd</sup> anniversary at our October meeting by having two unusual hydrangea varieties for sale and a special “you pick it” plant raffle.

During a June visit to Athens, GA, Dr. Michael Dirr donated a wide variety of plant offerings from his trial gardens for our plant raffle. These include: 2 *H. macrophylla* ‘Blushing Bride’, Dr. Dirr and Bailey’s Nursery’s most recent white remontant introduction which is not offered currently anywhere else in the Memphis market; 2 dwarf crepe myrtles (*lagerstroemia*); 2 Japanese maples (*Acer palmatum* red); 2 buckeye trees (*Aesculus flava*); 1 conifer (*Abies homolepis*); and a *H. serrata* ‘Preziosa’. These will not be small 4” seedlings, but are in 3 gallon containers. You don’t want to miss this opportunity to win!

In honor of our speaker Hayes Jackson, Gardens Oyvey of Arlington, TN will have for sale *H. arborescens* ‘Hayes Starburst’. Also, Joel Stout of Cricket Hill Farm of Conway, AR will be bringing for sale some 1 gallon *H. serrata x acuminate* ‘Painter’s Palette’. For those who attended Dr. Dirr’s presentation, you’ll remember his picture of ‘Painter’s Palette’ drew quite a response from the audience. Other hydrangeas, dwarf conifers and planters will be offered for sale. Our program begins at 7:00 p.m. so plan on arriving early to browse the selections offered. Bring your check book and some cash (sorry no credit cards) for we plan on tempting you beyond your control. You don’t want to miss this meeting.

### *H. serrata x acuminate* ‘Painter’s Palette’

An open pollinated cross of Dr. Michael Dirr’s UGA breeding program. Flowers open a green, pink, and white variegation that proceeds to pink. This vigorous grower has dark green foliage. Very eye catching bloom. Grows to 4ft.



From Wilkerson Mill Gardens  
2006 Catalog  
[www.hydrangea.com](http://www.hydrangea.com)

### Refreshment Reminder

Our membership rolls have swelled and the number of members attending our meetings has grown accordingly. We need your help in providing food for this hungry bunch of hydrangea lovers. Please bring a finger food for our October birthday celebration. A cake and cold drinks will be provided by the Society.

### *Hydrangea arborescens* ‘Hayes Starburst’ / *Hayes Starburst Mophead*

This variety occurred in the garden of Hayes Jackson in Anniston, AL. Lucky Hayes. Lucky Hayes for gardeners Hayes is an avid plantsman who recognized its uniqueness and shared it with others since voles have killed the original. The white flowers are comprised of myriad double, sterile florets some held away from the main inflorescence on longish pedicels, thus “starburst.” It is quite distinct, not at all like ‘Annabelle’ or ‘Samantha’. Flowers proceed through the same cycle of color common with other sterile arborescent hydrangeas, starting green and becoming white as they fully open.  
3' x 4'



August in Belgium with hydrangea lovers from 15 countries in 4 different continents . . . If this sounds like a “don’t miss” event, plan to attend the 2007 International Hydrangea Conference August 16-19, 2007 in Ghent, Belgium. The conference is co-hosted by the Ghent University Botanical Garden ([www.plantentuin.ugent.be](http://www.plantentuin.ugent.be)) and the Belgian Hydrangea Society, also known as “Hydrangeum”, ([www.hydrangeum.be](http://www.hydrangeum.be)). Highlights include:

- ➔ Pre-Conference Tour, August 16 — Visit the Belgian Hydrangea Society collection in Destelbergen with more than 150 different hydrangea species and cultivars and the Arboretum Kalmthout.
- ➔ Conference, August 17-18 — Lectures and workshops conducted by an international panel of Hydrangea researchers, collectors and growers. Representatives from the U.S. include Dr. Michael Dirr, Dan Hinkley, Don Shadow and Mal Condon.
- ➔ Post-Conference Tour, August 19 — Visit Corinne and Robert Mallet’s Shamrock hydrangea collection at Varengeville-sur-Mer in Normandy, France. With 1,200 varieties, Shamrock is the world’s largest hydrangea collection.



Hydrangeum Collection in Destelbergen

For more information on the conference including registration details, go to [www.hydrangeum.be](http://www.hydrangeum.be). Registration opens October 1, so start planning now for this exceptional event.

## Dale Skaggs — New Extension Agent

Congratulations to Dale Skaggs, one of our very own Mid-South Hydrangea Society members! On October 1, Dale will join the staff of the Shelby County Extension Service. As the new Extension Agent, Dale will be in charge of the Master Gardener program and will also work with the local horticulture industry and home gardeners. Dale is a native Memphian and has a bachelor’s degree in Horticulture from Oregon State University and bachelor’s and master’s degrees in Landscape Architecture from the University of Oregon.

Dale also has strong ties to the local horticulture community. “It’s no secret... I’m a plant nut. The late Karl Kaestle, owner of Four Fives Nursery, was my mentor and a strong influence on my life. Tom Pellett, Larry Lowman and Kitty Taylor have also worked with me and influenced my garden and world view. They are some of the finest gardeners in the world and are a remarkable asset to Mid-South gardeners.”

Among his interests, Dale lists “gardening, propagating plants, brewing beer, cooking, collecting plant books, visiting nurseries and botanic gardens, and spending time with family (wife Sue and daughter Madison).” In addition to Dale’s broad education and experience, he clearly brings a true love of horticulture to his new position. If you’re not already a Master Gardener, you may want to discuss the program with Dale. I’m sure there’s lots to be learned from our certified “plant nut”. Best of luck, Dale!

## Fertilizing Hydrangeas . . .



**Hydrangeas  
Plus®**

If your hydrangea's leaves are lush and green but don't have any blooms, it could be that you're fertilizing too much. Hydrangeas bloom best if they are a little stressed. High nitrogen-based fertilizers can actually inhibit blooms on most varieties. Hydrangeas don't like to be overfed with fertilizers. Some hydrangea growers never feed their hydrangeas and have great blooms and healthy leaves. However, some must feed every few months to maintain the healthy plant. It really depends on your soil and the nutrients that are found naturally in your soil. Luckily, hydrangeas are such wonderful plants, they will tell you what they need.

As a general rule, we recommend fertilizing twice: early spring and early fall. Use a time-released fertilizer that releases slowly (by water or temperature or both) over a 4 to 6 month period. A commonly available product is called Osmocote but there are other brands that are equal. The general blend that yields 10-10-10 or 16-16-16 is all you need. There is no need to run out and buy a special fertilizer for every variety of plant in the garden. This particular mix is great for everything.

There are some fertilizers just for acid loving plants available on the market. These are a great instant boost for plants but tend to be very high in nitrogen and may actually inhibit the ability for the plant to bloom. Too much nitrogen and the plant will focus on stems and roots – which is not a bad thing. However, you bought these plants to bloom so there needs to be a balance.

Our recommended use for these instant fertilizers is for emergencies only. In May or June (depending on your area) hydrangeas begin to set bud and grow very quickly. The hydrangea will begin absorbing nutrients from the soil at a very rapid pace. If your soil doesn't have enough nutrients, hydrangeas may get yellowing leaves on the inside parts of the plant. This is a perfect time for the instant fertilizer when the hydrangea needs it most.

What do your hydrangeas need in terms of fertilizing? The three essential components of fertilizer are nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium, the N-P-K numbers on any fertilizer. Nitrogen is for healthy green growth by helping the plant to grow chlorophyll. Fertilizers high in nitrogen like 25-10-10, is great for greening up your lawn. Phosphorus helps a plant grow good roots and stems in the early growth season then in flower production. A mix like 10-30-10 is great for flowers on your annuals and perennials. The Potassium (K) helps your plants generate and process nutrients. Other important elements in fertilizers are calcium, magnesium, iron, copper, manganese, zinc, and sulfur. Organic fertilizers are usually very low in these trace elements.

Hydrangeas like a balanced fertilizer. We prefer the granular time-released kind that delivers nutrients to the plant constantly for a 3- or 4-month period. Water will break down the outside coating of the fertilizer slowly and nutrients won't dwindle out in the active spring growth season. Be sure that the soil is slightly moist when applying the granulated variety and keep the fertilizer off the foliage to prevent burn. For blue hydrangeas, a low phosphorus element (the 'P') is important as too much will limit the plant's ability to absorb aluminum. The amounts of sulfur (lowers pH) and calcium (raises pH) are important to keep the blue color. A good soil test from your local garden center can tell you what elements are missing from your soil.

Kristin VanHoose  
www.hydrangeasplus.com

## Membership Update

Welcome to our new Mid-South Hydrangea Society members who have joined since the June issue of the newsletter. This brings our total membership to **281**.

Averill, Larry	Foster, Janice	Newbern, Linda	Sloan, Gene	Werts, Chris
Baird, Alex	Hawkins, Sherry	Owens, Cheryl	Smiltnieks, MaryLou	Whitaker, Anita
Cook, Joy	Jewett, Betty	Quaintance, Gay	Thomas, Lynda	Yeager, Joyce
Dennis, Felecia	Kelly, Amye	Ralston, Beverly	Weber, Vicki	
Edwards, Shirley	Nance, Diann	Rando, Teresa	Welch, Dale	

## PROGRESS REPORT

### Memphis Botanic Garden — Hydrangea Collection

The long term goal of our society is to develop and maintain a regionally significant collection of hydrangeas at the MBG. The wheels are now turning and the Memphis Botanic Garden hydrangea collection is growing thanks to the generosity of the following contributors:

- ➔ The Mid-South Hydrangea Society has pledged \$1,000.00 (one-thousand dollars) for the purchase of *H. macrophyllas* and will make future contributions as the beds progress.
- ➔ Diane Meucci and Wolfgang Marquette of Gardens OyVey have made a generous commitment to donate a number of serratas and arborescens plants. As you know, Gardens OyVey carries the widest selection of *H. serratas* available in our area. Go to [www.gardensoyvey.com](http://www.gardensoyvey.com) for a look.
- ➔ We are also pleased to report that other local garden clubs are jumping in too. The Southwind Garden Club made a recent contribution to the Memphis Botanic Garden to fund the purchase of paniculatas for the sun hydrangea bed.



MEMPHIS BOTANIC GARDEN

Calendar Youth & School Programs Adult Programs **The Gardens** Facility Rental About MBG

- Anne Heard Stokes Butterfly Garden
- Cactus Garden
- Conifer Collection
- Daylily Garden
- Four Seasons Garden
- Herb Garden
- Hosta Trail
- Hyde & Seek Prehistoric Plant Trail
- **Hydrangea Garden**
- Japanese Garden of Tranquility (Seijaku-En)
- Japanese Maple Grove
- Little Garden Club Sensory Garden
- Madlinger Azalea Trail

**The Gardens - Hydrangea Garden**

There are about 10 varieties of hydrangeas at MBG. These plants have become increasingly popular with home gardeners over the past several years. They bloom from May until September, and can be found next to the Hosta Trail.



Rick Pudwell and Kyle McLane have been putting their heads together with Diane Meucci and have come up with a future plan and site for the growing hydrangea collection. A new bed which will display *H. paniculata* and *H. arborescens* is currently being prepared near the butterfly garden, where a new water garden is also in the works. The current hydrangea bed, located next to the existing Hosta Trail, will be expanded by adding lacecap varieties of *H. macrophylla*. An additional large circular bed separated in the middle with an oval of grass will be created directly west and across the walkway from the existing collection and it will be planted with varieties of *H. macrophyllas* and *H. serratas*. A listing of the varieties planted will be provided in our next newsletter.

Expansion of the Memphis Botanic Garden hydrangea beds does not come with funding alone, some 'sweat equity' will be required. **We anticipate a planting and work day sometime in October.** Rick and Kyle will keep us apprised of the bed preparation and advise us as to a date.

### Large Crowd Attends 2nd Annual Hydrangea Tour

Approximately 125 attendees took advantage of the beautiful weather to visit the four gardens open for the 2nd Annual Hydrangea Society Garden Tour. Hosts were kind enough to serve lemonade, pull out original garden blueprints, dig plants for out of town guests, and answer an endless stream of questions. Hats off to Buff and Thomas Adams, Lucy and Tom Lee, Karen and Alex Wellford, and Anne and Jerry Riordan for their hospitality. Our organization was pleased to present each of our hosts with the new hydrangea macrophylla "Blushing Bride" by way of our thanks. The plant sale which was held at the Riordan garden was very successful, raising in excess of \$500. Plans for the 2007 tour are in the making. If you wish to become a host, call Anne Riordan at 683-7458 or e-mail [mailmanann@bellsouth.net](mailto:mailmanann@bellsouth.net).

# Mid-South Hydrangea Society

## Membership Application

Memphis, Tennessee  
Founded October 2004

hydrangea@midsouth.tn.com



**Annual (Calendar Year) Membership Fee: \$10**

**New Member**     **Renewal** (check one)

Make checks payable to Mid-South Hydrangea Society

Send your form and membership fee to:

Linda Lanier  
Mid-South Hydrangea Society  
635 West Dr.  
Memphis, TN 38112

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Birthdate** (Month / Day only) \_\_\_\_\_

**Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_ Home  
\_\_\_\_\_ Work  
\_\_\_\_\_ Cell

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**How do you prefer to receive the newsletter** (check one):

**E-Mail** – full-color PDF attachment     **U.S. Mail** – black & white

**Other Garden Clubs you are a member of:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Membership includes:

- Four newsletters per year
- Quarterly meetings normally held the 2nd Monday in February, April, June (annual garden tour), and October

THE MID-SOUTH HYDRANGEA  
SOCIETY

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## MARK YOUR CALENDAR...

- ✓ **Monday, October 9**      Mid-South Hydrangea Society meeting  
Memphis Botanic Garden, 7:00 p.m.  
Hayes Jackson, "Expanding the Palette of our Native Hydrangeas" (... with a peek into a plant collector's adventures in Vietnam & Thailand)
- ✓ **October 2006**      Hydrangea Garden Work Day — Memphis Botanic Garden  
Date to be Announced
- ✓ **Monday, February 12**      Mid-South Hydrangea Society meeting  
Memphis Botanic Garden, 7:00 p.m.  
Eddie Aldridge, Aldridge Gardens  
Birmingham, AL