

# The Heartland Peony Society

## **Fall Peony Program Saturday, October First**

please join us at 9:30 a.m.  
for a free, very special program  
*Seven Weeks of Bloom*  
By *Lindsay D'Aoust*  
*of La Pivoinerie D'Aoust Quebec, Canada*  
at Rolling Hills Presbyterian Church  
9300 Nall — Overland Park, KS  
See inside for more details

## **Peony Day Plant Sale 2005**

*A spectacular array of rare and select Herbaceous and Tree Peonies, including Chinese Flare Tree Peonies will be offered for sale beginning at 11 a.m.*

*See inside for more details*

**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30**—An evening of members-only events, including 'Pot Luck' meal and an incredible Peony Auction! If you are not a member we encourage you to join HPS (\$5 dues) so you can attend this event. Your membership also allows you to receive a 10% discount at the Peony Day Plant Sale and you will receive our newsletters with more details of all activities.

See inside for more details about the Friday evening members-only events.

## **Heartland Peony Society**

For more information:  
grnstuff@kc.rr.com or 913-432-5305  
[www.peonies.org](http://www.peonies.org)

## **Presidents Message**

**By Leon Pesnell**

**Great things are happening at the Heartland Peony Society. This has been our most active year and we plan to finish this year in a big way. The fall planting season is upon us and we have planned a series of events that may outdo all previous years. I am very excited about the Flare Peony plants that we are bringing in from China this fall. I believe these plants will surpass most other tree peonies for our area. And, these plants are at a bargain this year. Let me tell you about the special events that we have planned for our members and friends.**

**On September 30 we will have our potluck meal and auction. We have some excellent plants lined up for this auction. So be prepared to do some competitive bidding for those special plants that will be offered in our auction. This is always a fun time for everyone, don't miss out on the fun. See the announcement on page 5 for the exact time and location of this special event.**

**On October 1<sup>st</sup> you are invited to enjoy the fall peony program with our speaker, Lindsay D'Aoust from Quebec Canada. She will be talking to us about how you can have up to 7 weeks of extended peony bloom.**

**Following the program there will be a peony plant sale. Last year we opted to skip this sale and this year you can bank on it being big and better. There will be lots of the Ziban Mudan Flare Peonies that you will hear so much about in this bulletin. Plan now to attend the fall program and plant sale. See the special announcement on page 4 about this sale.**

**Nice gardens don't just happen. This is the time of the year for peony people to be planning for their next spring bloom season and by adding several new varieties to the garden now, you can have spectacular peony bloom right in your own garden next spring and many springs to come.**

**I hope you enjoy all that we have planned for you this fall.**

**Leon Pesnell**

**All gardeners know better than other gardeners.**

**- Chinese Proverb**

<http://www.peonies.org>

# HPS Spring Trip to The Pacific Northwest

## By Alana Holste

When it was suggested that the HPS organize a trip to another city I was ready to go. The trip turned out even better than I hoped. All but one of the group met at the local airport and flew to Portland, Oregon. We waited at the airport for our last member whose airplane had been delayed because of a storm. The Pacific Northwest Peony Society in the form of Jim Adelman and friend arrived to pick us up. The friend took our luggage to the motel we would be staying at while we went to the Classical Chinese Garden in downtown Portland. Rick Rogers and the staff of the garden met us. We then had a wonderful tour of the garden. After dinner at a Chinese restaurant with pickled chicken feet and even tastier dishes we were taken to our motel for a good nights rest.

The next morning we arrived at the Adelman Peony Gardens and were given a tour of the fields by Carol and Jim Adelman. The fields, both near and far, were alive with color. The Adelman's grow peonies both for the cut flower and plant trade. The cut flowers must be in from the fields before it becomes too warm.

After receiving additional directions we were off with Leon Pesnell driving and our very determined map guy Jerry Edison pointing the way.

The trip was a blur of beautiful plants. Although peonies were what we came to see we did not leave anything out.

Rick Rogers sought permission to take the group to a private garden overlooking Portland to see the tree peonies that were an important part of the landscape. There we saw several tree peonies that were not common in most nurseries that Rick had provided from his sources and his own plants. Rick does the hard work for us by grafting the scions on to nurse roots and growing the plants in pots until the nurse root can be removed. By providing own root plants the plants received are stronger and more able to adapt to moving from pot to garden soil.

Porterhowse Nursery is a nursery specializing in dwarf and rare conifers. Our host, Don Howse took us on a tour of his grounds. This is the nursery that has been on PBS and the Discovery Channel showing witches brooms and their collection. Witches brooms are clusters, generally at the end of branches showing unusual growth. They are caused by a mutation of the plant perhaps by environmental factors, virus, or other damage to the cell structure that alters the cell structure. Many of the really dwarf or natural bonsai trees that are appearing in nurseries are from the plants collected by this nursery.

Joy Creek Nursery is a grower of unusual plants perched on the top of a small hillside. There are extensive gardens to tour. The clematis lovers marveled over some of the blooms that were at least eight inches across. Maurice, one of the owners, explained what the plants were, where they originally came from, and most importantly would they grow in our area.

Brooks Peony Gardens in Brook, Oregon had several of the Saunders peonies that I had only heard of and never seen such as Tessera. Therese Sprauer and Abel Zavala were great hosts. They have a large number of *Paeonia mlokosewitschii* growing in the fields waiting for homes in your gardens. A slow grower "Molly" is the basis of many of the yellow peonies. In addition they grow an extensive number of iris only a few were in bloom for our visit. <>

**Fall Program and Peony Plant Sale**  
**October 1, 2005 9:30 am**  
**Rolling Hills Presbyterian Church**  
**9300 Nall — Overland Park, KS**

Our fall program speaker is Lindsay D'Aoust of La Pivoinerie D'Aoust in Québec Canada. She will be talking to us about how we can extend our peony bloom season. This sounds like an exciting topic and there will be lots of photos showing us many of Lindsay's favorite peonies. Lindsay's website is at <http://paeonia.com>.

Immediately following the program the plant sale will begin. Last year we did not have a fall sale so we expect everyone to be eager to get a chance at the bargains that we have collected for this sale. We have imported many of the Flare Tree Peonies or Ziban Mudan from Northwest China. These peonies are very promising for our area. See the special article by Jim Waddick that begins on page 6 about these special peonies.

We have also brought in a nice collection of species peonies. Among those are *P. anomala*, *P. veitchii*, *P. coriacea*, *P. mlokosewitschii*, *P. tenuifolia*, *P. delavayi*, *P. lutea*, *P. ludlowii*, and *P. osti*. Even the avid collector can find something of interest here.

There will also be a collection of Japanese tree peonies and a large collection of herbaceous peonies. Another exciting group of peonies that we have available for you this fall is made up of herbaceous peonies that have been collected within the former USSR. We will have information on these peonies for you to examine. I have been growing some of these in my garden for the past several years and they are very nice.

The sale will begin at about 11:00 am immediately following the program.

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## Club Event Report

### Report on Special Offering of Intersectional Peonies from New Zealand

On January 3<sup>d</sup> we mailed a newsletter to you inviting you to take advantage of a special offer of intersectional peonies at an incredibly low price. Many of you took us up on that offer and we have ordered a total of 138 plants. If you ordered plants they will be ready for you to pick up at our October 1 meeting. Your remaining balance is due when you pick up your plants.

<http://www.peonies.org>

**The Heartland Peony Society  
Fall Events**

**Fall pot luck meal and Auction  
September 30, 2005 6:00 pm  
713 White Oak Lane, Gladstone, Mo.**

Each year we enjoy the great food the society members prepare. This meal seems to always 'come together' with complementing dishes of food that play on the palate to exhilarate taste buds and liven every heart. Conversation is lively and everyone anticipates the peony treasures that will be in the auction that follows the meal. This event is open only to members of the society. If you are not a member there is a membership form included in this bulletin. Membership is only \$5.00 per household. Bring your spouse, no children. I hope you will join us for this evening of fun. Just bring your favorite food item and plan to enjoy yourself.

The auction will have very special herbaceous peonies, tree peonies and intersectional peonies for you to bid on.

This meal will begin at 6 pm on Friday evening, September 30<sup>th</sup>. The location is at Joe and Claudia Schroer, 713 White Oak Lane, Gladstone, Mo. The Auction will be later that evening after the meal.

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**Membership Renewal**

The mailing label on this newsletter has the year that you have paid through following your name. If the label has a year prior to 2005 your membership is not current. To reinstate membership in good standing, you must pay dues for 2005. Your membership must be paid to be eligible for discounts at our fall sale.

# **ZIBAN MUDAN**

by James W. Waddick

**Sounds odd, doesn't it. What is it? What are they? Do I need any?**

**First they are a gorgeous 'new' variety of tree peonies coming from western China. Here's more.**

**HPS has brought dozens of different Tree Peonies to our members at the fall sale. We have had great reports about survival, bloom and vigor. Some have done well, but some, especially some Chinese varieties, have not flourished in our climate.**

**We have decided to import NONE of these Tree Peony varieties from China this year.**

**Last spring (2004) and again this spring (2005), I was in China to see Tree Peonies and was struck by the beauty, size and vigor of a whole new set of varieties (cultivars) called 'Ziban Mudan'. There is some discussion of the correct meaning of this name, but the foremost authority on these varieties, Dr. Fangyun Cheng has recently published a book devoted to them and he calls them 'Flare Tree Peonies'. All of them share one characteristic of the flowers. Each petal has a dark 'flare' emerging from the center of each petal. Some of these flares are deepest purple, near black, while others are redder, like flames. The contrast is gorgeous.**

**This dark flare is characteristic of the well-known and costly variety known as 'Joseph Rock'. This Tree Peony was first seen and collected by the Austrian-American botanist Joseph Rock in his travels to a small lamasery in central Gansu Province in western China. He collected seed and distributed these to botanical gardens in England and the United States. This is the source for this beauty.**

**Later collectors and researchers determined that wild plants (not the cultivated lamasery garden plant) fit into a new**

species; *Paeonia rockii*. All share the dark flare. More studies have found that many of these Flare Tree Peonies have been collected and hybridized in Gansu for over 500 years. Cheng's recent book lists around 300 named varieties. All seem to share some heritage with *Paeonia rockii* and the named 'Joseph Rock', but may involve repeated selection, hybridization and even other wild peony species. Collectively they are 'Ziban Mudan' or 'Flare Tree Peonies'.

There are a number of distinctions; the dark flare in each flower, the small fine foliage and their extraordinary hardiness and vigor. I saw plants trained as a single stem into a small tree eight feet tall with a canopy of 8-10 inch wide flowers. They all come from Western China in conditions very similar to the central Mid-West. They flourish in hot dry summers, cold windy winters and are quite drought tolerant. In a word, they seem terrific for our part of the country.

There are dozens of growers in and around the capital city of Lanzhou. One nursery alone has over 200,000 plants for sale from young seedlings to fifty-year-old plants. I saw no ugly plants, but I do not care for the extremely double varieties that others rave over.

Named varieties are propagated by grafting, a fairly slow and expensive process, compared to the rapidity of growing from seed. I saw numerous seed nurseries with row after row of beautiful plants from newly germinated to 15 years old.

Seedling grown plants have many advantages for gardeners.

1. Seedlings are whole plants, not grafts and are growing on their own roots.
2. Seedlings are cheaper to grow and thus have a lower price to buyers.
3. Each seedling will be different- any color is possible from white to pink to deepest red and in a variety of combinations. Flowers may be single to semi-double to very double.

On the other hand, the buyer will not be able to know before the plant blooms exactly what color and form of the flowers will be produced.

Heartland Peony Society has tried to make a compromise. We have on order for our fall sale a few named varieties, but these are still a bit pricey. These seedlings are much more of a bargain. For the price of a single named variety, near blooming size seedlings will cost at least 1/2 to 1/3 their price. We encourage members to go wild with these bargain seedlings. We will have a special price for groups of three or five seedlings at even lower prices. We hope you'll plant a group of them, let them bloom and in a year or two decide which ones are definite keepers and which ones just aren't your color or form. These make wonderful gifts.

We are really big on these new 'Ziban Mudan'. Plants are just beginning to appear in exclusive garden sites around the country as well as Europe. These may be the first to be available in the Kansas City Metro area and will be priced to get them into every garden.

We have already increased our initial order after the buzz started. We hope to have ample for each and every buyer at the sale. Personally, I think this may be the most extraordinary group of plants we have ever offered on a widely available basis. I hope you'll check these out and jump in. I know you'll thank HPS for bringing these plants to your garden and they will add to its beauty and diversity. <>

*If you give a weed an inch it will take your yard*



Membership form

To renew your membership or to join the Heartland Peony Society,  
fill in the information below and submit with the appropriate membership  
dues to:

Joe Schroer  
713 White Oak Lane  
Gladstone, MO 64116-4607

USA Household Membership(\$5.00/Yr)  
Outside USA(\$15.00/Yr)

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

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

City/St./Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**If you would like to volunteer to help the Heartland  
Peony Society in any way indicate below:**

- Membership Committee
- Programs & Events Committee
- Web-site Development Committee
- Sales & Merchandising Committee
- Publications Committee
- I am interested in writing an article on peonies that  
**I grow.**

**Comments:**

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Cut along this line to remove membership form

This page is left blank for your convenience  
in using the membership form

# The Heartland Peony Society Website

<http://www.peonies.org>

We are on the web at <http://www.peonies.org> Our website is very active with many people taking advantage of the resources that we have posted on the web.

The website has a searchable question and answer section where you can find answers to your questions concerning all aspects of peonies. Just go to the main page and click on "FAQ".

Our peony photo gallery has over five hundred cultivars represented with more than one thousand photographs. On the main page of the website click on "Gallery"

You can help us to make the website even better by contributing photos of your favorite peonies for use in the gallery. You can even contribute your own descriptions of your favorite peonies. Your description will help to make the database even more complete and functional.

If you have photos that you would be willing to have placed in the Heartland website gallery contact Leon Pesnell, 1104 East 2000 Road, Eudora, Kansas 66025, or phone at 785-542-3316, or by email at [LPESNELL@KC.NET](mailto:LPESNELL@KC.NET)

# Chinese Flare Peonies

