



Lemon Dream [Anderson]

Photo by Greg McCullough

Lemon Dream is a very nice plant and flower. The plant can have flowers that are all yellow with others that are all pink as shown above. Occasionally flowers can be half pink and half yellow in the same flower like the one shown on the front cover of this newsletter. Lemon Dream is a sibling of Bartzella and in fact when the plant is covered with all yellow flowers it looks very similar to Bartzella but has a bit better plant habit with a more spherical shape.



Lemon Dream [Anderson]

Photo by Greg McCullough

2005 Calendar of Events

**April 20, 23, 24, & 26,
Linda Hall Tree Peony Garden Tour**

**May 11 to May 17
Trip to Pacific Northwest**

**May 21, 2005
Bus Trip to Hollingsworth Nursery**

**August 13, 2005
Grafting Workshop**

**September 30, 2005
Member Potluck Meal and Auction**

**October 1, 2005
Annual Fall Program and Public Sale**

Heartland Peony Society

The Heartland Peony Society Website
<http://www.peonies.org>

2005 Board of Directors

Leon Pesnell	President
Alana Holste	Vice President
Pat McBee	Secretary
Joe Schroer	Treasurer/Membership
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James Waddick	Advisor

<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. From the main page just 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. 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

There is also a description database on the website. You can help enhance this portion of the website by carefully observing your peonies and thoroughly describing them. Submit your description to the website and it will be immediately available to anyone who views the datasheet for that cultivar. If you would rather not submit directly to the website you can email your description to Leon Pesnell at LPESNELL@KC.NET

One of the utilities that we have on the website is a database of all peony cultivars that have been registered and have claim to a particular name. If you want to find the person who registered a particular cultivar you can find that information on the website. You can also find a list of cultivars that were registered by a particular person. Just enter the originators name in the "Search by Originator" box. From the main page click on "Registered Peony Names". This is an especially good utility for those who are considering registering a cultivar to be sure that the name is not already in use.

Another popular page on the website is the peony blooms sequence listing. Many people want to choose peonies that bloom over a long season. By choosing peonies from all of the bloom seasons you can have bloom that last about 2 months.

There are many other items on the HPS website. If you have not visited the website lately you may wish to see what wonderful things can be found there. ♦

Get ready for peony bloom season

There are many places to view peonies blooming in the Kansas City area. You should make it a priority this year to get away to view these very special garden plants. Some suggestions for opportunities for you to see these miracles in bloom are listed here.

Banister Garden Center: Tony and Neva Mistretta have a spring display of peonies each year that is breathtaking. They typically have over 4 acres of peonies in bloom and they have many potted peonies that are freely blooming. Bannister Garden Center is located at 10001 East Bannister Road, the corner of Bannister Road and Raytown Road. They are open from 9am to 6pm. Bloom season is from May 1st to the last week of May. If you wish to call ahead their number is (816) 763-4664.

Hollingsworth Peonies: Don & Lavon Hollingsworth near Maryville Missouri, grow some very nice peonies and they have about 12 acres of them to show off. You will see an array of herbaceous peonies, tree peonies and intersectional peonies. A group of HPS members will be traveling by bus to enjoy these peonies on May 21st. You should join us on that trip. If you wish to go with us on the trip you will need to complete the enclosed form and return it with your payment. You can also visit Hollingsworth peonies online at <http://www.hollingsworthpeonies.com>.

Linda Hall Library tree peony collection: The Linda Hall Library is located within the University of Missouri at KC campus at 5109 Cherry Street, Kansas City, Missouri. On their site they have a tree peony collection that is outstanding. These are some of the most mature tree peonies that you will see in the Kansas City area. The garden will be open for public tours on April 20th 4 pm to 6 pm, April 23rd noon to 2 pm, April 24th noon to 2 pm, and April 26th from 4 pm to 6 pm. As a member of the Heartland Peony Society you are invited to a special tour of these tree peonies on Saturday April 23rd from 10 am to Noon. There is no charge for these tours. ◇

If your knees are not green by the end of the day, you ought to seriously re-examine your life.

from 'Calvin & Hobbs' cartoon

Presidents Message

By Leon Pesnell

This is an exciting year and as peony enthusiast we have a lot to look forward to this year. Very soon the spring bloom season will be upon us. This is the best time of the year for peony people and I expect this year to be the best since I have been growing peonies. We as a group have several events planned this year that will give each of us an opportunity to experience these wonderful plants in all of their splendor.

There are several from our group who are taking the opportunity to travel to the Pacific Northwest in a few weeks to see tree peonies in the nurseries during the bloom season. This area of the country is noted for its mild winters and the terrific display that the spring brings to the area. They are sure to see tree peonies and herbaceous peonies as well as rhododendrons and irises.

The Linda Hall Library has a beautiful grouping of mature tree peonies. You have multiple chances to tour this planting of tree peonies this spring. Make certain that you refer to page 9 of this newsletter to check out this opportunity. Don't miss this.

We are fortunate to have 2 large peony growers here in the Midwest. We will be traveling by bus to see the peony fields of Don Hollingsworth to view his peonies on May 21st. The cost for this trip is nominal and everyone that has gone on this trip in the past has enjoyed it.

If you like tree peonies the easiest way to multiply the ones that you have or to obtain plants like the ones that your friends have is to learn to graft. You can simply propagate tree peonies by grafting and make many more of the ones that you wish to have. We will be having a grafting workshop on August 13, 2005 at the Loose Park Garden center. Look for a special mailing to sign up for this workshop.

Mark your calendar now for our fall event. On September 30 we will have our potluck meal and auction. You might begin now to save your money so you can be prepared to do some competitive bidding for those special plants that will be offered in our auction.

On October 1st we will be enjoying our fall program with Lindsay D'Aoust as our speaker. Lindsay operates La Pivoinerie D'Aoust and grows peonies in Québec. Lindsay's website is <http://www.paeonia.com>. 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 wonderful plants and great prices. Plan now to attend the fall program and plant sale.

Nice gardens don't just happen. Begin planning now for your next year's garden. View peonies this spring and make a list of your favorites to purchase and plant this fall.

**Have a great spring bloom season
Leon Pesnell**

Report on Special Offering of Intersectional Peonies from New Zealand

On January 3rd 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 162 intersectional plants. Those plants are on their way to us and will be carefully handled. 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.

 Itinerary for the Pacific Northwest Trip
 May 11 to May 17

- Wed., May 11
 - Arrive Portland 2:10pm
 - Classical Chinese Garden
 - Dinner in Chinatown;
- Thurs., May 12
 - Red's Rhodies
 - Brother's Herb & Peonies
 - Private Garden
 - Bamboo Gardens - tentative, if time allows
- Fri., May 13
 - Cooley's Iris Gardens
 - The Oregon Gardens
 - Lunch at The Oregon Gardens
 - Silver Creek Falls
 - Dinner at German Restaurant in Mt. Angel
- Sat., May 14
 - Joy Creek Nursery
 - The Berry Botanic Garden
 - Japanese Garden
 - International Rose Test Garden
- Sun., May 15
 - Schreiner's Iris Garden
 - Brooks Peony Garden
 - Adelman Peony Gardens
 - Deepwood Estates
- Mon., May 16
 - Porterhowse Farms
 - Mt. Hood, lodge and scenic tour
- Tues., May 17
 - Leave Portland and arrive KCI 3:05pm

**2005 Spring Bus Tour
 Hollingsworth Peonies
 Maryville, Mo.
 May 21, 2005**

For a great opportunity to view peonies in bloom this spring you should join us on a bus trip to Hollingsworth Peonies in Maryville Missouri. We will be traveling by bus from Kansas City to Maryville Missouri to see some of the most beautiful peonies that exist. At 8:30 sharp we will board the bus and leave from Rolling Hills Presbyterian Church at 9300 Nall Avenue, Overland Park, Ks., We will also pick up passengers at a north Kansas City location at Embassy Suites, (Exit I-29 at Tiffany Spring Pkwy, the exit north of Barry Rd. You can park at the end of the parking lot on your left).

To join us on this trip, just fill out the enclosed spring trip sign up form and send it to Joe Schroer. The cost of the trip is \$20.00 and includes a box lunch; make sure that you mark your lunch preferences on the form. You must be a current HPS member to be able to go on the trip. The mailing label for this newsletter shows the year you are paid through. If you are not paid through 2005 or beyond then also complete the membership portion of the form.

This event will sell out fast and will be on a first come basis. Seating on the bus is limited. All reservations must be received by May 16th. For additional information call 816-459-9386.

Itinerary for May 21, 2005

8:30 am	Bus departs from Rolling Hills Church
8:45 am	Pick up additional passengers at Embassy Suites
10:40 am	Arrive at Don Hollingsworth Peony Nursery
Noon	Lunch (Box Lunch Provided)
1:00 pm	Depart Hollingsworth
2:00 pm	Arrive at Comanche Acres Iris farm
3:00 pm	Depart Comanche Acres
4:15 pm	Drop off passengers at Embassy Suites
4:30 pm	Arrive back at Rolling Hills

The Heartland Peony Society 2004 Year in Review

box has produced a clean and neat little plant that has been stressed for months and probably mistreated on numerous occasions. And this is just the start.

Have you ever wondered why the same three or four varieties always show up at your local garden centers? Well these are the VERY SAME varieties used in huge wholesale cut-flower acreage in the country of origin. The same stressed root you might be tempted to buy probably had 1/3 to 1/2 of its stems cut the previous spring for cut flowers and already has been stressed before being dug for sale. Old plants outlive their productivity and fields need replanting.

Then the final blow is that peonies are always stressed by spring planting. They are best dug in the fall (as these garden center box plants were), but then it is best to replant them immediately (or store them cool and dark for a few weeks). If planted promptly they'll start growing new roots immediately and settle into new homes.

When you add up one stress and indignity after another, the 'bargain' peony in a pretty box is near death. Then it sits on a warm shelf for a month and you bring it home and throw it into the ground ("Which way is up?"). Is it any wonder that beginners get a bad impression about peonies when these are purchased year after year and never perform well or take years to settle in?

These plants can survive, but you are still left with big, old-fashioned weak-stemmed double flowers, not really suited to the perennial or mixed bed or any modern garden.

Avoid these pretty boxes like the plague! Use your precious spring time to visit specialty growers or study their catalogs and web sites to place orders for the newest improved types for fall delivery and planting. You'll get a larger plant that has been properly dug, divided, stored and shipped to assure the least stress and a rapid return to healthy growth and bloom.

It is the warning about a 'bargain' and buyer beware fits here: Caveat Emptor.

Of course members of Heartland Peony Society know this and would never buy one of the colorful box peonies in spring. Come to the HPS Public sale this October to get prime peonies ready to plant. These are 'real' bargains. ♦

Where flowers bloom, so does hope.

Lady Bird Johnson

This past year went well for The Heartland Peony Society. One of the highlights of the year was our fall program. The speaker was John Elsley. John is the chief horticulturist for Klehm's/Songsparrow nursery. He spoke to us about some of his favorite ornamental plants. The talk was supported by a large number of photos that had us all wanting to go to a garden center to start planting trees and shrubs. Though the kind generosity of Songsparrow Nursery, everyone that attended the program was able to leave with a free herbaceous peony plant.

Later that day the HPS member's potluck dinner was a great success. The dinner was preceded by a small plant sale that helped to satisfy the desire of many to have another peony fix. The potluck dinner is always a mix of good food and good company. The auction that followed the potluck dinner was also a success. Some very special peonies showed up for this sale. An offering of several intersectional peonies including Bartzella, Sonoma Apricot, Scarlet Heaven, Pastel Splendor, Julia Rose, and Callies Memory drove people into a frenzy of bidding. Tree peonies such as Bubble Gum and Guardian of the Monastery along with an un-named Daphnis seedling and a few Chinese rockii cultivars caused complete disregard of economy and frugality. And finally, there were herbaceous peonies including Goldilocks, Mackinac Grand, and Lemon Chiffon and some that are not even offered commercially.

If you missed the events last fall plan to be a part of the exciting events that we are planning for this coming fall.

Another event that marked the year with a gold star was the production of *The Genus Paeonia* by Josef Halda & James Waddick. The book is a comprehensive treatment of the entire species and is the first of its kind in over 50 years. Josef Halda authored the technical portion of the book. James Waddick provided valuable information on growing peony species, with a full account of cultivation requirements, hardiness, propagation, and diseases and pest. The book is complimented with watercolors and line drawings which are the work of Jarmila Haldová. The Heartland Peony Society sponsored the publication of this book. ♦

Membership Renewal

The mailing label on the envelope for 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. A membership form has been included with this newsletter.

Two 'Dangers' by J.W. Waddick

Although spring is the best time for peony growers, there are a few concerns. Now is the time to go out and soak in your own plants, smell their flowers, cut blooms for indoor display or for storage and later use. Plan trips, local and more distant ones to see peonies in bloom at public and private gardens, commercial growers and friend's houses. Place orders and make plans for fall planting, and just enjoy the season of peonies.

But spring has some dangers and temptations.

1) The foremost spring concern is the danger of botrytis. This is the most prevalent disease to infect peonies. It is fungus caused by minute spores that over-winter on the ground or blow in from nearby. Botrytis spores attack the newly emerging shoots and cause them to become discolored and turn a sickly brown, black or gray, or a combination. Stems are twisted and distorted and definitely look like they are unhealthy and growing badly. If left untreated they can die back and you will have no above-ground growth.

Later additional, smaller buds may grow and be unaffected by the later season conditions, but the plant will be weak. If this repeats over a few seasons, the plant will die. Fortunately there are cures and routine care procedures that can keep botrytis at bay or prevent it.

First, some of the easier considerations. Botrytis is a fungus and like most fungi it grows best in cool, damp shaded conditions. If you can avoid these conditions, you will be free of botrytis. But of course these are typical springtime conditions. Cloudy damp cool days are common and encourage developing fungus spores to grow rapidly and invade your peonies. If your climate has more warm days than cool, and windy weather to keep new shoots dry then botrytis will be less a threat. But there is another consideration.

Botrytis spores are believed to stay harbored in old dry peony stems and foliage that winter over in the garden. Cleaning up all foliage after it is dry and fallen and trimming stems down close to the ground will reduce latent botrytis spores. All old foliage should be kept as far as possible away from the peony garden and it is recommended that you do NOT compost it, as this will also be a source for spores. Instead, bag and dispose of all old peony foliage to get rid of any spore contamination.

We are fortunate in the Kansas City Metro area to have generally warm, sunny spring days and brisk breezes that keep the area around peonies well ventilated and dry. Botrytis is not common here. In climates such as the Pacific Northwest where they commonly have long cool and damp springs, botrytis is a serious

concern and cleanliness alone is insufficient to keep it at bay.

If you do suspect that your plants show signs of botrytis (discoloration, misshapen and poor growth) you should treat them immediately. The old fashioned but still effective traditional treatment is use of 'Bordeaux Mix'; a copper-based fungicide. This requires multiple spray treatments at designated intervals. New treatments may involve other fungicides and other treatment schedules. In all cases read the fine print on the labels, ask the professional at the garden center and follow directions carefully.

Properly diagnosed and treated, botrytis is not very prominent in our near-prairie gardens.

2) The first hint of spring gets all gardeners eager to get their hands in the soil. Spring flower shows, early spring bulbs and mild days all make gardeners slightly goofy about the strange condition of clean fingernails. You must correct this.

About this time, garden centers, big home stores and mass marketers start displaying bags of summer flowering bulbs, colorful boxes of still-dormant perennials and early fruit trees and shrubs. Inevitably a beautiful peony in full bloom, brightly printed on the side of box at an amazingly low price, just calls you to make a bargain purchase.

Did you ever wonder how these tidy boxes came about?

First, the majority of these peony roots are grown outside the US and have gone through a journey of thousands of miles. They might be in a refrigerated container, but they might not.

How many 'hands' has this peony passed through? The grower may be a member of a cooperative of growers, who brings his newly dug roots to the co-op late in August or September. There they are stored properly (or not) until enough are gathered to go to a broker or wholesaler. There may even be another middleman here. Eventually they reach the merchandiser who will trim and pack the roots. As much as 3/4 of the roots are cut off to make a uniform 'product' (no longer a peony, just a 'product'). They are packed in peat or ground wood fiber and put into plastic bags and colorful boxes. These are shipped internationally to a wholesale distributor here in the US. He ships it to the main warehouse and then to you garden center (or a regional warehouse for big mass marketers). Eventually it is trucked to your sales outlet. It may pass through six to ten 'hands' before it appears on a shelf. This trip may take six months or even more!

It has been cold, warm, cool, and hot and dry. The roots have been trimmed and they haven't seen moisture for many weeks at the very best. The colorful =

Membership form & Spring Trip form

To sign up for the spring bus trip to Hollingsworth and/or to renew your membership or to join the *Heartland Peony Society*, fill in the information below and submit with check or credit card information for the appropriate bus trip charge and/or 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	_____
Email	_____
Phone	_____
Membership Fee	\$ _____
Hollingsworth Trip	Number of people: _____ @ \$20.00 = \$ _____ Choose One Sandwich per person: <input type="checkbox"/> Roast Beef & Cheese on Challah <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey Club on Croissant <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable Sandwich on Challah Choose One Dessert per person: <input type="checkbox"/> Carrot Cake <input type="checkbox"/> Chocolate Brownie <input type="checkbox"/> Cheesecake
Total Amt	\$ _____
Credit Card Payment	<input type="checkbox"/> Master Card <input type="checkbox"/> Visa Expiration Date: _____
	Card Number: _____ Name as it appears on the card: _____
	Signature: _____

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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	_____
Email	_____
Phone	_____
Membership Fee	\$ _____
Hollingsworth Trip	Number of people: _____ @ \$20.00 = \$ _____ Choose One Sandwich per person: <input type="checkbox"/> Roast Beef & Cheese on Challah <input type="checkbox"/> Turkey Club on Croissant <input type="checkbox"/> Vegetable Sandwich on Challah Choose One Dessert per person: <input type="checkbox"/> Carrot Cake <input type="checkbox"/> Chocolate Brownie <input type="checkbox"/> Cheesecake
Total Amt	\$ _____
Credit Card Payment	<input type="checkbox"/> Master Card <input type="checkbox"/> Visa Expiration Date: _____
	Card Number: _____ Name as it appears on the card: _____
	Signature: _____

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