

# Southern Virginia Daylily Club Newsletter



## Breed Apart

Volume 1, Issue 4

November 2008

### Special points of interest:

- Club Happenings
- Meeting November 15th.
- Membership
- Updated Contact Info
- Meet Jim and Margo
- Hybridizing, Part II

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## October Meeting – Vermicomposting and More...

**Chase City:** Mr. Robert Rietzke of Finney Road near Chase City was our guest speaker. Robert, a retired music teacher formerly from New Jersey, spoke to the club about Vermicomposting (Using worms to make compost and a special brew called “worm tea”). His presentation was quite entertaining and very informative.

In his presentation, Mr. Rietzke shared his method of creating worm composted soil and talked about his success in raising beautiful large chrysanthemums using the compost created by his multi-million worm farm and the “tea” extract he obtains from the composting process. The presentation include a complete “how to” discussion for starting, maintaining, and harvesting compost from a worm farm. A large plastic bin with red wigglers was used for demonstration. Using newspaper, vegetation such as lettuce leaves, banana peels and whatever else you might throw away, sufficient moisture, and proper moisture and temperature conditions anyone can start their own vermicomposting and make it as small or large as you wish. The program was presented with humor and all who attended were attentive and very interested. Mr. Rietzke answered many questions.



Canadian Border  
Patrol

## Saturday—November 15th Meeting 12:30 MMMG

Next meeting will be Saturday, November 15th. The meeting will start at 12:30. Members are asked to arrive between 12:00 and 12:30. **Each member is asked to bring finger foods, snacks or hors 'duerves to be shared**

From 12:30–1:00 PM, prior to the start of our program. Meeting will be held at MaCallum Moore Museum and gardens.

**Program Speakers:** Jim Murphy and Margo Reed from Woodhenge Gardens

in the Blue Ridge Mts. of Virginia. (See article on Page 2). There will be a slide presentation. There will also be a short business meeting.

As always, we welcome new members and prospective new members.

## Club News and Upcoming Events

- October Plant Auction Summary:** The club's first plant auction conducted at the October meeting was a huge success. Members were eager to bid for the plants so generously donated by Browns Ferry Gardens. At evening's end the club netted a total of \$152.00!
- South Central Fair:** Belinda Sheppard did a superb job at setting up our booth at this year's fair in Chase City. Club volunteers manned the booth every day and a number of new contacts were made. We will want to repeat this next year. A big THANK YOU to all who contributed their time and effort for this event.
- Member Plant Program:** In March of 2009 we will receive plants from Small World Gardens will give provide our club with some higher quality hybrid plants. These will be the first plants for our member plant program. Plants will be nursed by members until they have multiplied and are ready to separate. At this time, plant will be dug, separated and sold to club members at auction. This is a great program and gives members the opportunity to purchase great cultivars at a reduced price. Seed money from these auctions will be used to purchase new plants to continue the program.
- Christmas Social:** The club is planning a Christmas Social for its December meeting. The social will be discussed in the November business meeting and we encourage all members to contribute to the planning process to help us make this a festive holiday success. Plan on sharing food, fun and fellowship with club members. There will be **NO** business meeting or daylily program for this event.

SCDC serves Southern Central Virginia including the counties of:

- Brunswick
- Charlotte
- Halifax
- Mecklenburg
- Nottoway
- And the surrounding areas.
- All in driving range of our meetings are welcome!

## Meet Jim and Margo

### Woodhenge Gardens, North Garden, Virginia

#### Margo Reed:

Margo started hybridizing in a small backyard in 1978. Her focus has been on distinction, exotic qualities, and good plant habit. Margo works full time as a kindergarten teacher in remote, rural North Garden, Virginia near the Blue Ridge Mountains. Margo speaks of Woodhenge Gardens: "We have 9 acres, wonderful for walking except most of it is vertical. A river runs through it." She loves to paint and draw daylilies. She is a member of the Charlottesville Daylily Club, and is an AHS exhibition and garden judge. Her goal: To produce the first pure white ruffled 12" cascade spider daylily that is 6 feet tall, and has 6 way branching. Margo has registered over 90 cultivars, and about 16 of them have won awards. Of these, 10 are very popular and Margo says she's always sold out and can't remember what they look like.

#### Jim Murphy:

Jim works full time as a horticulturist and buildings and grounds manager for a large country estate and a horse farm. He loves to breed daylilies and work on the 3 acre home garden. Jim helped to start the Charlottesville Daylily Club, and served for 3 years as its first president. He also chaired the 2006 Region 3 Convention, and co-hosted a tour garden. Jim is an AHS Garden Judge and Senior Exhibition Judge, and is a member of several daylily clubs. Jim loves breeding daylilies, and specializes in diploid narrow forms (called Spiders), and tall plants. He starts about 7,000 seedlings at a time, and selects about 12 per year for introduction. Jim started hybridizing daylilies in 1988, and his first was in 2001. His goals for hybridizing are many, but the most important is: Breeding

## Hybridizing Daylilies—Part II

This is Part II first of our series discussing plant characteristics and how to hybridizing daylilies. Reminder to members: The objectives of these articles is to promote our club interest and knowledge of daylilies by expanding our general and technical knowledge of these enchanting and somewhat addictive glories of nature.

Last month in our introduction we looked at the reasons hybridization is so popular and the vast numbers of plant possibilities. Variations in colors, flower form, plant height, productivity, hardiness, and dormancy differences among cultivars show that possibilities are virtually infinite. Well over 50,000 cultivars have been registered.

This month we will look at some additional plant characteristics used to help separate hybrid keepers from throw-aways. (There are some enthusiasts who believe virtually any hybrid cross is a keeper—Hmmm!)

### Scape Characteristics:

The scape is a rigid leafless flower stalk, with the exception of an occasional leaf-like bract below the bloom branches. Scares that routinely produce bracts are desirable for producing proliferations which are small plantlets that can be easily rooted to produce perfect duplicates of the mother plant. Proliferation production is a very desirable trait as free extra plants can be produced at little or no cost to you. This is particularly desirable with expensive recent introductions to commerce. Plants scape height can be a factor when choosing a plant for a garden scheme. You do not want to use a plant which has skinny, weak scapes which fall over under the load of heavy blooms. Scares should be strong and straight to hold the weight of Daylilies at peak bloom. The height of the bloom is also important. Many prefer tall strong scapes, but balance is more important to some. Daylilies come in a variety of scape heights. Tall scapes for the back of a bed and shorter scapes near the middle and (Continued on Page 4)

## New Club Members and Membership Status

Please welcome Lori Mitchum-Burns from the Fort Mitchell area and Louise Walton to our club. They joined our club at the last meeting.

WELCOME Lori and Louise

**FREE PLANTS:** Our club offers a free daylily to each new member who signs up and pays dues.

Remember that club membership is open to all who have interest in daylilies and would like to join our club. In addition to club membership and benefits, we also engage in social activities during the year to share in fellowship.

Please spread the word and ask folks to attend. As our club grows, the benefit to members increases as well.

## Notice to Members

Please feel free to invite friends and prospective new members. Our club is growing and maturing. We should encourage others to join and make our club a resounding success.

Membership forms can be obtained from me at meetings or you can request them to be sent by email. Just email David at : [davekeim@mindspring.com](mailto:davekeim@mindspring.com)

Or telephone your request to: (434) 372-5677

## Club Committees:

**A Member Plant Program Committee will be added soon. We need to develop and finalize our club rules and determine how we will manage our local plant program. We anticipate implementing our plant program in March of 2009 and need to be able to house plants at that time.**

**We have rules from area clubs that can be used as guidelines.**

## Upcoming Programs:

**We are already working to provide interesting meeting programs with noteworthy speakers. If you know of some one who may have a presentation interesting to our daylily club please submit information to Libby Keim.**

**Southern Virginia Daylily Club  
Contact Information**

**Club President :**

Southern Virginia Daylily Club  
% Belinda Shepard  
392 Hite Drive  
Clarksville, VA 24580  
Phone: (434) 374-4910  
Email: [belinda23955@yahoo.com](mailto:belinda23955@yahoo.com)

**Vice President:**

Rachel Adams  
963 Quarter Horse Rd  
Wylliesburg, VA 23976  
Phone: (434) 735-8464  
Email: [Rachel8464@msn.com](mailto:Rachel8464@msn.com)

**Treasurer:**

Judy Mathis  
Phone: (434) 372-0129

**Club Secretary:**

Southern Virginia Daylily Club  
% Libby Keim  
6171 Highway Ninety Two  
Chase City, VA 23924

Phone: (434) 372-5677  
Email: [ekeim@mindspring.com](mailto:ekeim@mindspring.com)

**Membership Chair:**

Southern Virginia Daylily Club  
% David Keim  
6171 Highway Ninety Two  
Chase City, VA 23924

Phone: (434) 372-5677  
Email: [dave-keim@mindspring.com](mailto:dave-keim@mindspring.com)

**COMING SOON:  
VISIT SVDC  
ON THE WEB**

**Hybridizing—Part II Cont'd:**

front of the bed. Some individuals simply love really tall scapes while others don't like the blooms towering above short foliage.

**Branching:**

Evaluate the branching to see if plants have several branches and are properly spaced. Normally hybridizers will not use any Cultivar with less than 4 way branching. You would not want branching which is spaced too closely together thus preventing the blooms from opening fully to their intended beauty and grace. Closely spaced branching can also be a problem for the resulting seed pod produced by hybridizing. If they are too close to each other they could break off the scapes before becoming mature, depriving you of your efforts. Hybridizers strive to improve branching constantly.

**Bud Count:**

Bud count is also a very important consideration when selecting Cultivars for your hybridizing program. You would naturally want your Cultivars to bloom as long as possible. Select Cultivars that have proven track records for high bud count, re-blooming and extended blooming seasons. These are some of the factors to consider when purchasing new Cultivars for hybridizing programs. If possible you need to see three images of a plant cultivar you are purchasing for hybridizing. One to show the beauty of the single or multiple blooms. A second to focus on the eye zone and throat. And finally a third, used hopefully to satisfy the need of the hybridizer. The image of plant clumps mainly to focus on scapes, branching and bud count, as well as a clump in full bloom.

**Fertility:**

This element is of paramount importance. All Daylilies are not created equal. Some are not Pod and Pollen fertile. Never assume a plant is either Pod and/or Pollen Fertile. There are a great many that are not. Some are only fertile depending on the climate in which they are being grown. Temperature has a great deal to do with the fertility of a plant on a given day. Some Cultivars are nocturnal and require pollinating at night, which can be a bit of a pain. Fertility can be found from different sources. Hybridizers may publish this information and many growers provide it to customers for the asking. There are other sources of Fertility information. These include AHS publications, Hybridizers websites, and Hybridizers catalogs. Hybridizing is an art, not a science. Some crosses succeed and some simply don't produce seeds. Hybridizers in cooler climates enjoy better success than those in the hot south. Sometimes you may need to be persistent with a cross to obtain fertile plants. As you hybridize your own plants, you will need to test fertility and gather that information for your records as well.

We will stop here for this month. Next month we will start with the collecting of pollen and the beginning steps of the hybridization process. See you then.