

CAPE COD HYDRANGEA SOCIETY

Spring 2017



Hydrangeas for sale at the Harwich Stop and Shop

Photo by Joan Harrison

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We had an excellent Spring Meeting on Wednesday evening, May 17 – our first non-Saturday meeting ever. Attendance was strong; we avoided the difficult conflicts many of our members have confronted in the past during the very plant busy month of May. My special thanks to all attendees for supporting our meeting change. Our speaker – and new member - Joyce Williams gave us an excellent presentation entitled “How to Use Hydrangeas in Creating Artfully Designed Landscapes”. She provided many examples of hydrangea and companion planting arrangements we can incorporate into our own gardens.

Congratulations to our new Vice-Presidents Judy and Peter Berrien! We officially elected them as the opening item of our business meeting. Members of the Board – and I believe every society member – are most pleased to have the Berriens assume this responsibility as a team, utilizing their considerable individual skills to create strong and effective direction and leadership for our Society.

Judy and Peter Berrien



CCHS membership continues to grow; Emily Woudenberg reported we are now 190 members strong. Ginny McCabe shared financial good news as our treasury balance is at \$19,000. So we must be doing something right. My profound thanks to everyone who has participated in realizing these significant successes.

Hydrangea Festival 2017 - Hydrangea University

Hydrangea U and Heritage are partnering for this year's opening event for the Festival. Dean Joan Brazeau and her committee have the CCHS responsibilities well in hand. Heritage is handling the marketing and reservations, the latter via their website and sign-ups are running ahead of last year. Here is the link to the reservation page.

<https://21349.blackbaudhosting.com/21349/tickets?tab=2&txobjid=aedf4b83-89c4-4e73-b962-7919ec3e13b4>

The event begins at 8:30 am on Friday, July 7. The speaker – technical sessions will fill the morning and guided tours of our Display Garden and the Test Garden will follow. Full program details are featured on the websites of CCHS and Heritage. Do go to our site as you can simply click on the above link without having to enter the full text.

Hydrangea Festival 2017 - CCHS Member Garden Tours

Mary Kay Condon and her helpers have arranged another great selection of members' gardens for this year's Festival. Seven member gardens will be featured. Return gardens from last year include Linda Coven, Dan Pessoni, and Yours Truly. Newcomer gardens are those of Marcia & George Chapman, Barbara & Noel Spillane, Liz O'Shea, and John Posey. My special thanks to all! It's great to have such strong support especially from the 'newcomers' who have only recently become CCHS members. Garden details and location directions are posted on our website and similarly on the CCCC Hydrangea Fest site.

The CCHS Display Garden at Heritage

Betsey Godley and her dedicated and growing Maintenance Team are continuing their bi-weekly sessions on Wednesdays this year. These **work & learn** events will continue into fall with an occasional call for special help - like final prep prior to the start of the Festival on July 7.

As they did last year, Heritage has scheduled a full complement of hydrangea activities for the Festival; this info is available in the program guide on their website. This will be an excellent opportunity to join the CCHS Docent Team and become involved with telling the good story about our wonderful Display Garden. Pat Vigliorolo has taken charge of scheduling our Docent Team for all Festival events; do contact her or Betsey if you're interested.

CCHS Website - Judy Bartha

Judy continues to do a super job of maintaining our website. Please do check it out when you have a few moments. You'll find easy access to our events and dates, links to other related sites, and timely info for every hydrangea lover.

Propagation & Plant Sales – Tom Bartha

Tom and Judy continue to produce plants, always sharing their techniques and enthusiasm for 'making more hydrangeas'. They will again be hosting **learning & helping** sessions. We're actively exploring the prospect of offering these plants for sale at some of our member tour gardens during the Festival. Lots of opportunities for member helpers here too.

Our Monthly Members' Day at Heritage

As we enjoyed last year – in thanks for our continuing sponsorship of the Test Garden at Heritage – we are welcome to enjoy the total Garden on the last Thursday of each month now through September. Stop at the admission's window when entering Heritage and show your membership card. It's one of the best days of the week to be in the garden so do take advantage of this 'thank you'.

This year's winter weather was comparatively easy except for March. Damage on our beloved Hydrangea macrophyllas was largely a tip bud issue. Good news is the lateral buds down the stems have survived quite well and we should see some decent blooming in July – certainly better than we've experienced the past three summers. We're always complaining about the weather and this spring has been cool, cloudy, and wet. But, the rain has definitely been a blessing as it has brought us back – at least partially - from last year's serious deficit. Year to date – today, May 28 - we're at 20.58" vs the norm of 18.06" – a big 2.5" plus! It's been several years since we've enjoyed this margin entering June.

Lots of good hydrangea things happening during the next two months. May the sunny days arrive soon and persist, let the rains continue but move to a night-time schedule, and especially enjoy your hydrangeas in bloom. ~Mal

CCHS TENTH (!) ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



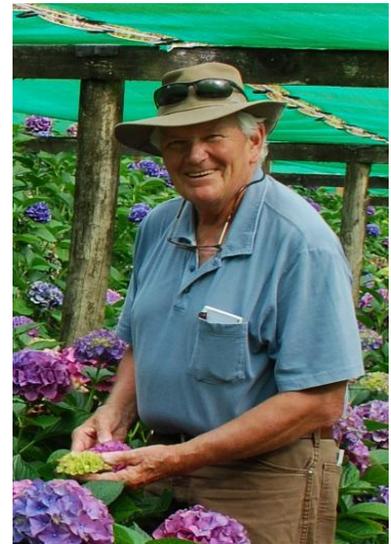
An Ice Cream Social will be held at the home of John Bimshas and Joan Harrison in Orleans on July 18th from 5-8pm as a celebration of our 10th anniversary. Our wonderful organization has grown from the original 8 members to 190 members. We have much to celebrate! Details will follow but for now, save the date!



Would anyone (or several of you) be willing to take on the challenge of making cupcakes decorated like hydrangeas to go with our ice cream? If so, please contact Joan Harrison for further discussion and planning. joanofma@hotmail.com. 508-468-7869.

Mal's Corner

Well it's late Spring as I compose this edition of my 'Corner' – May 30th. And this Spring has been very slow to show us good weather; just lots of gray, cool, and wet. The latter is quite okay as I mentioned in the 'President's Message'. Winter 2016-2017 was unusual. The December through February period was either the warmest or second warmest of ALL time. Winter did eventually arrive – in March. I returned home to the Cape on March 4 and viewed my gardens the next day. It was very apparent the *Hydrangea macrophylla*s had liked the warmer winter. A few days later – March 10 through 12 – morning low temps were in the mid to low teens and highs did not break freezing. That cold took a big toll on the tip buds. The outer leaf tissue had begun to expand ever so minimally and the late cold resulted in an 80 to 90 % failure rate. Fortunately, the lateral buds further down the stems on many cultivars remained 'tight' and survived. They are just now beginning to form flowers. This is so good! It won't be a bonanza blooming year but we'll have lots more blooms to enjoy this July versus the past three summers.



Let's share a little pruning information. The chilly March (5th coldest all time on the Cape) and April did provide a small positive for spring pruning our much favored *H. macrophylla* species. It slowed the early bud break progress considerably giving us more time to do the needed internal pruning – getting down inside the plant to the basal crown to remove the dead and aging stems. This is Step 1 in Spring Pruning. Removing the no longer productive interior wood opens the plant's basal crown and accelerates new stem development – the very critical regeneration process essential for the plant's long-term existence. Step 1 pruning can begin anytime you have a decent weather day in winter. March is favored as the days are getting longer and a few pleasant, windless days can occur (but there weren't many this March). And getting this early start insures you can get right down to the plant base without worrying about knocking off new growth. You can concentrate just on this internal old wood only clean-out, leaving all the vital productive stems totally untouched until your later attention. And you'll recognize the vital stems by their color – typically a darker brown or reddish tan – versus the flat lifeless gray of the old wood. Bud condition is a good indicator too; vital buds are firm and look alive, not open or shriveled.

Step 2 of our seasonal pruning strategy is the 'Detail' Step – the removal of the upper portions of the stems that did not survive. Typically, this Detail effort can be delayed well into May to give the tip and lateral buds every chance to develop. We're already well along in this 'optimistic' phase this year; stem sections without obvious growth should be cut back as far as possible. Keep in mind it will be more difficult to reach down inside the plant now without knocking off vital new growth. And Step 2 Detail Pruning may dictate a minor repeat performance on larger well-established plants.

Unfortunately, many gardeners – and landscapers too – only practice Step 2 Pruning and often poorly as well. Even plants with excessive amounts of deadwood often regrow a sufficient amount of new foliage that can mask much of the poor wood condition. And in good years – minimal winters – these plants can produce a fair show of flowers. Eventually, however, plants 'maintained' in this condition will decline, often quickly following long dry spells and hard winters. 'Total' pruning – Steps 1 and 2 – will sustain your prized *H. macrophylla* in peak growth condition for a very long time, and reward the pruner with superior blooming. ~Mal

Calling all photographers!

Now that we've returned to the season of beautiful hydrangea blooms, I know that many of you will have many photo ops with the hydrangeas in your own garden. When you stop to admire your hydrangeas, please take a picture to share with us! If you take some inside to make an arrangement, please send us a picture of that. Let's share the beauty! Email all photos to Joan Harrison. (If you don't like taking pictures, call me. I'm always happy to take pictures of beautiful hydrangeas.)

joanofma@hotmail.com

Hydrangea Plant Series – Part 2

In the last issue of the newsletter (Winter 2017) we covered the Everlasting® hydrangea series marketed by Plants Nouveau. In each issue another hydrangea series will be covered, in no particular order. The goal of this exercise is to introduce you to (or reacquaint you with) a large number of new hydrangea cultivars. The hydrangea series on the docket this time is the Cityline® series developed in Germany and marketed by Proven Winners.

Cityline® Series

The traits featured in the Cityline series are **large blooms** with **strong stems** on **compact plants**. The plants are low growing to about three feet tall and wide. They are very well suited to growing in containers and the front of borders. The series was developed by Franz-Xaver and Konrad Rampp at the Rampp Hydrangea Nursery in Bavaria, Germany. The individual plants were named for major cities with about 35 different cultivars in the series. Not all of these are available in the United States. In fact, we are able to buy just a select few from the series including Berlin, Paris, Rio, Vienna, and Venice. The photos below on the far left are from Proven Winners. The photos to the right of these are by Joan Harrison. It's helpful to compare photos taken at garden centers here on the Cape to the marketing photos to see if they really are as beautiful as they look in advertising.

Cityline® Berlin



Dwarf Cityline hydrangeas stay tight and compact without any pruning, making them a great choice for container gardens and foundation plantings. The clear pink flowers of **Berlin** are the largest blooms in the series. Easter-egg-colored blooms are long-lasting, changing to an attractive green with age. The glossy green leaves have a very high level of mildew resistance.

(Description from Proven Winners.)

Cityline® Paris



The reddest hydrangea out there! Ooh la la! The tight, compact habit of Cityline **Paris** hydrangea makes it a well-behaved garden or landscape plant, while its vivid deep red flowers make a bold and stylish statement. One of the smallest hydrangeas on the market, it does not need pruning (in fact, don't prune it at all!) and its deep green mildew-resistant foliage looks handsome all season.. Cityline Paris keeps its red color in most any soil, developing only purplish centers in acidic soils.

(Description from Proven Winners.)

Cityline® Rio



A small to medium, early blooming selection with large flowers that range from strong blue to purple depending on the soil; add aluminum sulfate to the soil to encourage blue flower color. The blooms are large and long lasting. This plant has excellent mildew resistance, and makes a great container plant. Like the other Cityline hydrangeas, **Rio** is compact so it does not need pruning. It's perfect for foundation plantings and milder-climate container gardens.

(Description by Proven Winners.)

Cityline® Venice



Big, bright fuchsia-pink flowers are long-lasting and change to an attractive green with age. They will change to blue in acidic soils with good aluminum availability (apply aluminum sulfate to your soil to change the flower color.) Like the other Cityline hydrangeas, **Venice** is a dwarf plant that does not need pruning. It will stay small and compact - perfect for foundation plantings and container gardens. The glossy green foliage has excellent mildew resistance so it stays clean and attractive all summer long.

(Description by Proven Winners)

Cityline® Vienna



Pink or blue - it's up to you! Cityline **Vienna** hydrangea naturally grows as a neat, compact mound, covered in big mophead blooms. Strong stems bear leathery, disease-resistant foliage, and summer brings vivid pink or blue blooms. Does not require pruning, thanks to its low growing habit. Flowers will be pink or blue, depending on soil pH. Very disease resistant and easy to grow.

(Description from Proven Winners)



Note: My photo above of **Vienna** does not look just like the marketing photo from Proven Winners. The sepals in my photo looked much more pointed than the sepals in the marketing photo. I can only speculate about the reason for this. I wondered if the plant in the garden center was simply mislabeled until I went looking for other images of **Vienna** online and quickly found others with more pointed sepals. (see photo at left by Garden Crossings.) Then I wondered if the more pointed sepals develop gradually as the plant matures. This is something I will be paying attention to this summer.

~Joan Harrison



The photo at left is of Cityline® Mars, marketed by Proven Winners. Its inclusion in the Cityline series was a mystery to your newsletter editor because **Mars** is not the name of a city. I consulted the latest issue of the *International Index of Cultivar Names* to try to make sense of this. **Mars** is included in the STAR-LINE series (along with 'Blue Earth', 'Orion', and 'Saturn'). It is also included in the Cityline series but without the code provided in the Star-Line series. The code provides documentation. The index also notes the Cityline series is subject to revision. My guess is that Proven Winners wanted to include **Mars** in its existing Cityline series because it has similar characteristics. Perhaps they feel Mars is an out-of-this-world city!

~Joan Harrison

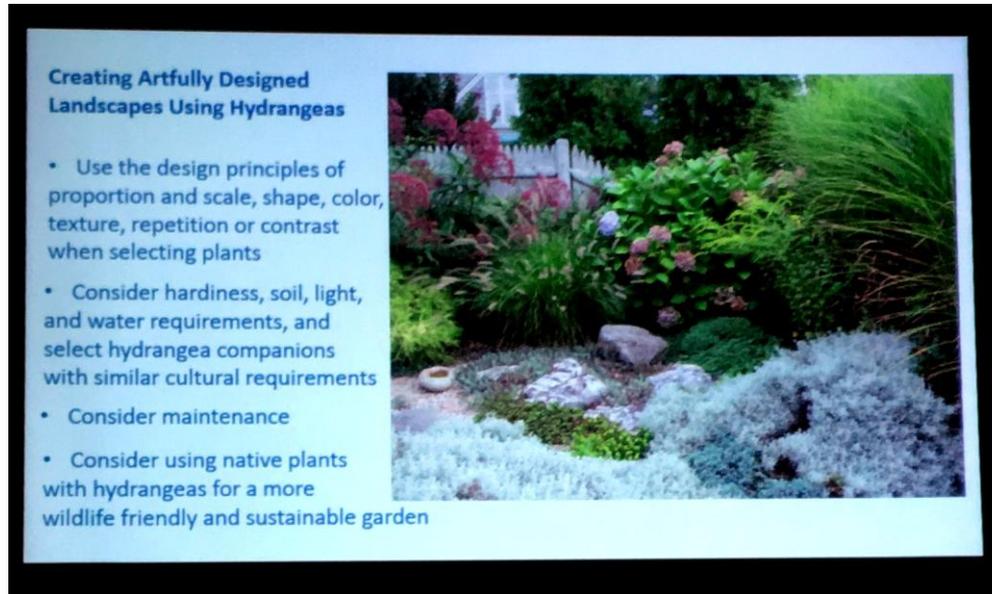
REMINDER

Please send your own observations and photos of any plant in either of the two series covered so far, the Everlasting series, and the Cityline series, as well as the series to be covered in the summer newsletter: the Endless Summer collection to Joan Harrison, joanofma@hotmail.com. Let's compare notes on these plants so all can benefit from shared knowledge.



SPRING MEETING SPEAKER: JOYCE WILLIAMS

CCHS new member Joyce Williams entertained and inspired members at the spring meeting with a presentation about “How to Use Hydrangeas in Creating Artfully Designed Landscapes”. Pictures on the screen enhanced her comments about some of the basic principles of landscape design including proportion and scale, shape, color, and texture. She also covered some elements of style: repetition and rhythm, the use of focal points, and suggestions on companion planting. Excellent!



Here oakleaf hydrangeas are artfully paired with ostrich ferns. Joyce was making a point about varying textures to good effect.

This lush row of blue mopheads is made up of plants which had been cut back severely to renew them. They certainly rewarded the effort!





JOAN HARRISON
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

HYDRANGEA VARIETY AVAILABILITY AT LOCAL GARDEN CENTERS

I was at the Agway in Orleans the other day and was, as usual, curious about what varieties of hydrangeas they had in stock. I decided to share the list of 37 varieties with 6 different species represented for two reasons: (1) you can easily see if they have one of the varieties you want to get for your garden and (2) It's interesting to see the selections made by garden centers as an indication of what they think customers want. I noticed in particular the number of paniculata varieties in stock (8) and the number of plants associated with hydrangea series (15 of the 37). I would like to see us establish as a society a regular collection of this kind of information from as many Cape Cod garden centers as possible, with an eye toward sharing the list with members. If you would like to be part of this endeavor please email me (joanofma@hotmail.com) and tell me which garden center(s) you would be willing to check on for the rest of us.

Agway Orleans hydrangeas in stock (37)

Paniculatas (8)

Little Lime
Strawberry Sundae
Vanilla Strawberry
Quick Fire
Little Quick Fire
Pinky Winky
Bobo
Limelight



Mopheads (19)

Bloom Struck
Blushing Bride
Pia
LA Dreamin'
Cityline Rio
Cityline Venice
CitylineParis
Cityline Vienna
Everlasting Revolution
Everlasting Harmony
Double Delights Expression
Let's Dance Rave
Glowing Embers
Pistachio
Madame Emile Mouillere
Enchantress
Nikko Blue
Endless Summer
Penny Mac



Lacecaps (5)

Blue Wave
Coerulea Lace
Tokyo Delight
Twist-n-Shout
Zorro



The other 5 were H.a. Annabelle, H.s. Blue Bird and Preziosa, an unnamed oakleaf, and the climbing hydrangea Petiolaris.



H.m. 'Firefly'

In other news I heard about a new reblooming mophead with beautiful color called 'Firefly'. (See photo at left.) So far I have not been able to find out much about this variety but I will keep looking. If anyone knows more about this plant, please let me know!

~Joan Harrison

The American Hydrangea Society recently reported that several serrata varieties were donated last year to the new National Hydrangea Test Garden at Heritage. Our own Mal Condon played a role in this as he suggested to Gary Starrett, owner of Beulahland Gardens in Georgia, that he grow a selection of serratas for the garden, which he did. He presented 18 different varieties as a gift to Heritage in July, 2016. Look for the following serratas in the new test garden this summer:

'Purple Tiers'
'Rosebillo'
'Blue Billow'
'Blue Deckle'
'Blue Bird'
'Preziosa'
'Miranda'
'Tiara'
'Midoriboshi'
'Temari'
'Kurohime'
'Grayswood'
'Hallasan'
'Wilson'
'Amacha'
'Beni Gaku'
'Shirotae'
'Diadem'



H.s. 'Blue Bird'



H.s. 'Diadem'

DISPLAY GARDEN WORK DATES REMINDER

Don't forget, you have opportunities to spend lots of quality time in the display garden at Heritage. The dates for volunteers are all on Wednesdays from 9:30-noon. (Wear your CCHS name badge and check in when you arrive.) **June 7 & 21, July 5 & 19, August 2, 16 & 30, September 13 & 27.** For further information contact Betsey Godley. betseygodley@gmail.com.

Propagation Hint:

Member Joyce Jenks sent in a hint about propagating plants. She got this hint from a Garden Gate reader who suggested putting potted cuttings in the kind of stiff plastic bags that are found in cereal boxes. The good thing about these is they stand up on their own and need no propping. Good idea. Thanks, Joyce!

PS This newsletter welcomes all hydrangea-related hints!



Don't forget to check our website for information about upcoming events!

www.thecapecodhydrangeasociety.org

To get into the member page,

User name: member

password: nikko

Enjoy!

Many thanks to Judy Bartha for doing such a great job with the website!

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