

From: Wisconsin Peony Society Ltd ovanspeonyfarm@send.mailchimpapp.com
Subject: [Test] WPS 2023-07 Newsletter
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To: rita5586@gmail.com



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President's Message

Michelle Ovans, President – wipeonysociety.president@gmail.com

The Secret is Out!

The Wisconsin Peony Society will be hosting The American Peony Society Convention the 2nd Week in June 2025! The convention will be held in Beaver Dam in conjunction with the Wisconsin Arts & Peony Festival.

This honor has been bestowed upon us because of the long-standing activism from past and present WPS members, holding offices within the APS, selling peony seeds, hosting a booth at the Garden Expo. in Madison, conducting grafting classes, donations of peony roots for the fall auction, and actively holding memberships in WPS, MPS, and APS. The list goes on and on, and only shows the great presence we hold in the peony community.

For the convention, APS members will lovingly package thousands of bundles of fragrantly prized blooms to hand-carry or overnight ship to the convention. These prized blooms will be prepped and displayed for all to see and enjoy during the "Flower Show."

The Flower Show will be the pinnacle of the convention, inviting all to show your prized blooms along with anyone within our communities. The peonies have an intoxicating effect on your senses when you walk into the showroom and the fragrance and the beauty from all the different colors and forms greet you at the door. It's an exhilarating experience.

Your participation is needed to ensure a successful convention and cannot be done without your help. As the planning has just begun, stay tuned for volunteer opportunities and ways you can ensure we host a fabulous convention in 2025!



2022 Peony Convention Syracuse, N. Y.

Michelle Ovans, President

Off to Syracuse N.Y. I went to experience how an APS convention is run. I had only ever attended one APS convention and that was many years ago. I had the misconception of the convention; that it was primarily for the hybridizer, professional grower, or elite hobbyist. Boy was I wrong! The convention was filled with friendly people that shared the passion and love for our beloved peony. Enthusiasm was shared by all while sharing information associated with growing peonies, whether professionally or as a hobbyist. More importantly it was the mutual appreciation and excitement for the exquisite beauty of

mutual appreciation and excitement for the exquisite beauty of each bloom on display during the "Flower Show."

Celebration by all began when a novice, Kathleen Zhu, showing her Somona Yedo ITOH entry won Grand Champion.

Arriving home to my husband frantically harvesting peonies from a heatwave and the farm full of visitors prior to our scheduled opening date, my sight was focused on this year's Wisconsin Arts & Peony Festival's success.

Over a seven-day period we hosted over 2,500 visitors to our farm. If this large number of visitors is any indication of the special place the peony holds in our lives, we can expect a significant number of peony enthusiasts at the APS Convention in 2025.

We encourage all WPS members to enter your prized blooms in the Flower Show and participate in the enthusiasm and joy of the mutual love for peonies!





2013 Grand Champion Sonoma Yedo

Kathleen Zhu

To All WPS Members

We are in need of a Vice-President. I promise, you will have a wonderful board to work with. For more information, please contact Any current board member, or Michelle Ovens, our current President at

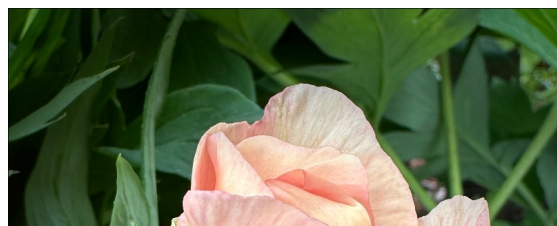
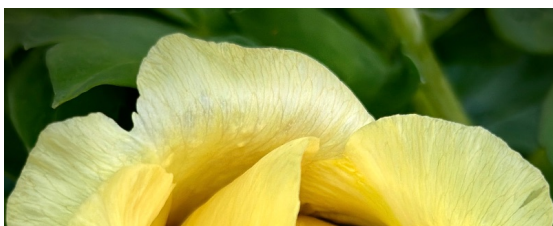
current President, at
wipeonysociety.president@gmail.com.

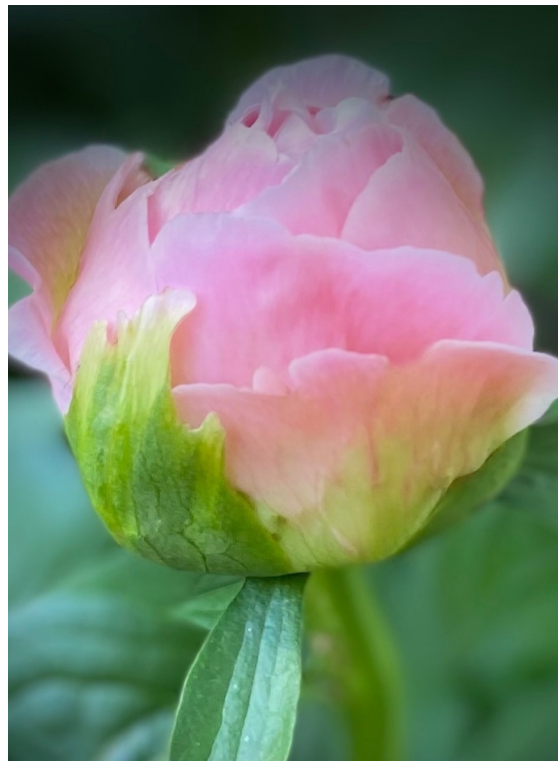
Consider the Bud

Rita Thomas, Newsletter Editor

Peony buds differ in form as much as the flowers and I feel are often more beautiful. The buds are considered to have 3 stages of development: marble-like stage, marshmallow stage, and early blooming stage.

To me, there is usually nothing interesting in the marble stage, it's when it reaches the late marshmallow and early blooming stages that the beauty begins to happen. I have been photographing buds for quite some time and I would like to share some of my photos with you. I hope you enjoy them.





Spring Peony Tour

Rita Thomas, Newsletter Editor

June 10, 2023 was a perfect day for a peony tour at Scott Parker's Tomah garden. He was ready for us and gave the grand tour. Rain was predicted, but as is common for this summer, didn't come.

Scott said we were there at a perfect time for the herbaceous bloom. It was obvious, as we could see the color in the many distant fields. Some of his fields appeared meadow-like because they were a mixture of various flower species that

because they were a mixture of various flower species that interest him.

Luckily for us, Scott's Pixie Ruby, was in bloom and it's a little beauty! See the photo below. There is much to see here, making it a place worthy of many visits.

You can view Scott's extensive list for sale, 189 varieties at last count, of herbaceous, itoh/intersectional, rock garden, and species peonies on his website:
www.parkerspeonies.com

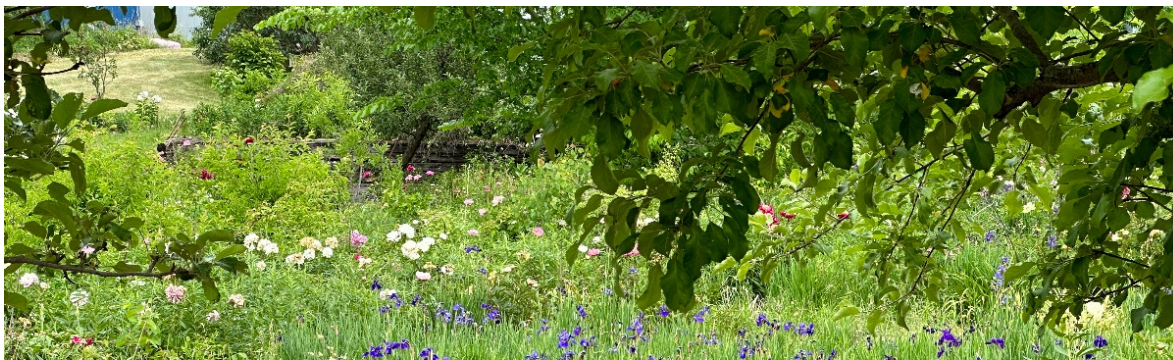




PIXIE RUBY- Hybrid

Red Petals with a Center of Yellow Stamens & White to Blush Stigmas, Single, Height 17°

Early/Mid-Season Bloomer, One Bud per Stem No Pollen, No Fragrance, Roy Klehm 2009





Get to Know Your Board Members

Sharon Schmitz

Membership

I first discovered peonies in 1976 on a Sunday afternoon drive which ended at the Brand Peony Farm in Faribault, MN. In the 80's I happened upon the Minnesota Peony Show and I made my first wishlist. Ben Gowen got fellow peony lovers together and revived the Minnesota Peony Society in 1998 - that's when my real peony love began! Now I have over 250 named varieties and still can't resist a new peony that catches my eye.

I lived in the Twin Cities before moving to the Madison WI area 6 years ago. It took me 10 years to move all my peonies to Wisconsin, but I couldn't leave/live without them!

I joined the Wisconsin Peony Society when Scott Parker started it in 2009. I've also been a member of the American Peony Society since around 2000. I've been the Secretary, the Membership Chairman, and auction recorder/treasurer for both societies, even an interim APS Treasurer and MPS Show Chairman once. I've learned so much about peonies; our societies are an invaluable resource for any peony lover.

Jerri O'Connor

Director-at-Large

My love of peonies came from my dad. He had a couple in his yard and every year he would look to find something new. My dad got cancer and when he passed, my mom always wanted to come and plant something new in my yard. I still have tulips she planted in 2002

planted in 2002.

I really didn't have time for gardening; we were busy breeding and showing show quality miniature horses, my children were involved in hockey, and dance, and my daughter was also on a riding team with her Quarter Horse. It made my mom happy so we did it. Then my mom got cancer and also passed away.

I wanted to make a memory garden for them both. I had a couple of peonies I wanted to add to it, but didn't know how to divide them. I went to Garden Expo and Scott Parker was there doing a demo on dividing peonies. He also said there were hundreds of varieties. WHAT!!! I went back to the booth and picked up a Adelman Peony catalog and along with SongSparrow, I ordered 25 immediately to add to the memory garden. Then I joined WPS.

It's Scott's fault that I have this addiction now! Thanks Scott! :) I also love to hybridize. It takes years to see those crosses and it's so much fun. I said this year I am not getting any more. Ha, I have 9 coming!

Laura Cutsforth

Treasurer

I'm your new WPS treasurer Laura Cutsforth and I was also the first WPS treasurer in 2009 for 4 years. Five years ago I down-sized and moved to Birchwood, WI. but somehow my peony collection got larger as I have around 800 peonies with over 500 varieties.

Growing in zone 3b-4 I grow mostly herbaceous peonies with a few scattered Itoh's. Lyra, my lone tree peony had bloomed last year and has made it through the winter again. It got to be a rush moving and my plants did not get labeled so I've been purchasing the peonies I grew before hoping to identify some of them.

I've added some fun items to my garden: a pergola, clawfoot bath tub, a cupola, a full-size 100-year-old windmill and my latest find, a carousel horse. This past winter I organized binders of my plants, listing the information about them and where and when purchased.

Spending time among the beauty and peacefulness of being out in the garden filled a void for me after my husband passed away. Now that I'm retired I spend my days in the garden again.



Laura Cutsforth's peonies

Calendar of Events

October 7 – Fall Root Auction and Business Meeting

10:30 A.M. check-in, auction registration

11:00 A.M. business meeting and lunch

12:00 P.M. auction

Spring 2024 Meeting - date TBA

Share Your Photos

Part of the fun of growing peonies is photographing them, because more than any other flower, they are oh, so, photogenic!

Our previous photo contests were so much fun, let's do it again at the spring 2024 meeting. Watch for contest rules and submission dates in early 2024.

2023 Annual Root Auction

Saturday October 7, 2023

It's time to start looking ahead to our annual fall peony root auction. With more and more commercial growers closing or cutting back operations, we depend even more on individual members to provide the plants that keep our auction going.

We ask our members to look around their gardens for plants which can be divided, moved, or perhaps even removed entirely to make room for something better. It doesn't matter if you can only spare a single division of something common, or if you're donating 20 rare varieties - your donation will help pay for important Society activities like the Garden Expo booth, informational meetings and workshops, and the support we give to good causes like the Sisson Garden, the West Madison Agricultural Research Station, and the Peony DNA project.

Along with the satisfaction of supporting the society and its programs, any member who donates 4 or more plants will get 10 Peony Bucks.

The auction will be open to the public, so bring your friends, relatives, and other peony lovers for an afternoon of fun.

Please contact Tracey Nelson (traceynelson@icloud.com, tel. 608-516-9639), Scott Parker (oldtooltrader@centurytel.net, tel. 608-378-4778), or Damon Smith (damonsmith56@hotmail.com, tel. 608-335-0336) by September 15 to let us know what you'll be bringing so that we can find pictures, produce the auction list, and PowerPoint presentation. If you need help digging your roots, let us know as early as you can and we'll do our best to find someone to help you with that.

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Meeting Timetable:

10:30 A.M. check-in, auction registration

11:00 A.M. business meeting and lunch

12:00 P.M. auction

Membership Report

Sharon Schmitz, Membership Coordinator

We recently received several new memberships; we now have 107 members. Our numbers seem to remain steady.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone again at our fall auction.

Treasurer's Report

Laura Cutsforth, Treasurer

7/3/2023

Checking	2,889.86
Savings	11,760.92
Cash	306.00
TOTAL.	\$14,956.78

Board Members

President: Michelle Ovans

***Vice President:**

Treasurer: Laura Cutsforth

Recording Secretary: Damon Smith

Membership: Sharon Schmitz

Newsletter Editor: Rita Thomas

Director-At-Large: Jerri O`Connor

Director-At-Large: Scott Parker

*Our elected president resigned, so Michelle Ovans who was vice-president, has moved into the role as president.



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You signed up to receive newsletters when you became a member. We will be using this for newsletters and reminders of scheduled events.

Our mailing address is:

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