

# Hanson's Garden Gazette

Spring 2011



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Driving in circles to find the plant that you want or to get the advice you need? Hanson's Garden Village is just five minutes south of Rhineland, and just one mile south of Nicolet College. The drive is one of the prettiest short drives from the city you can take. So relax for a few minutes, take in the sights, and the natural beauty at Hanson's. From a global perspective, we are proud of the fact that about 95% of the hundreds of thousands of plants that we nurture are grown right here at our greenhouse and not shipped from locations many hundreds of miles away. If you've ever shipped finished plants, you know that this would be tons and tons of weight trucked around. When we do buy plants from other partners in horticulture we look for that ideal combination of the best and the closest. We feel that we have developed great relationships that meet our criteria. Even though we have national and even international connections, we still feel that "local" is the description that matters most. We feel honored to have business relationships and friendships with such partners as Northwoods Nursery (right here in Rhineland), Hartman's Towne and Country Greenhouse (Manitowoc), and Agrecol (Madison). Even more importantly, we depend upon the support of our neighbors in the Northwoods. It is area gardeners and landowners who have taken a chance with us for over 25 years that has made the Hanson dream possible. We thank you so much for your support.

The Hanson's  
Brent & Sue  
Beth & Eric  
and our Greenhouse "Family" Crew

## 2011 Spring Class Schedule

### SUE'S MOSS BASKET CLASS

Sat. April 9, 10-12 am

Tues. April 12, 10-12 am

Thurs. April 14, 6-8 pm

Sat. April 16, 10-12 am

Tues April 19, 6-8 pm

**\$42.00 plus tax (\$2.31) = \$44.31**

### HANSON'S HERB BASKET CLASS

Sat. May 7, 10-12am

**\$36.00 + TAX (\$1.98) = \$37.98**

For more information or to sign up, please call the office 715-365-2929



## Container Garden Salads

Salad gardens may be grown in many different types of containers, everything from an old children's wagon to galvanized buckets and tubs to large bowls and colorful planters. Be sure nutrient rich potting soil and containers with drainage holes. Many greens are grown easily from seeds. Just follow the directions on the package and use colorful varieties. However, you can jump start your season by purchasing plants at a nursery or garden center and transplanting them. Harvest your greens, selecting the larger leaves, first, leaving the smaller leaves to grow. New this year will be a mixture of greens called Alfresco Mix. This Mediterranean blend of arugula, endive, and radicchio will give you a nice mix of greens. Enjoy your salads!

## Crushed Egg Shells In Your Garden

We've all heard about how crushed egg shells will help add calcium to our gardens, especially tomatoes. According to the University of Minnesota, Department of Horticulture Science, egg shells are slow to breakdown and the yield of calcium is small. However, crushed egg shells will raise the ph in acidic soils. Low ph soils are usually low in calcium. It usually takes a long time before the crushed egg shell nutrients become beneficial, therefore crush the shells as finely as possible to promote quicker breakdown. Bottom line: If egg shells have worked for you in the past, keep up the good work; they won't hurt your garden!

## Who Am I?

I'm a favorite plant found in your Grandmother's garden. My tall, spike-like flowers, form a bell tower in the back of the garden. My colors vary and I'm even dressed in black sometimes. Some of my ancestors lived in ancient Iraq 50,000 years ago. In June, "I'm jolly around the clock", so tell me who I am. Call in your answer for a chance to win me in a drawing 715-365-2929.

## Savings In Your Pocket!

Hanson's annual Wooden Token program is returning for the month of May. You will receive a \$5 wooden token for every \$50.00 you spend. This does not include gift certificate purchases, but does include purchases MADE with gift certificates. Wooden tokens are redeemable any time of year and may be used on your next purchase.



### Garden Trivia

What is the only fruit or vegetable that is never frozen, canned, or processed?

Answer: on last page

## Landscaping With Edibles

When you are thinking about landscaping your yard this year, whether it is a new yard or re-doing an existing yard, think about edibles. Edible plants can perform the same landscaping functions as ornamentals do: seasonal color, height, texture, a focal point, and more. Where you may be planning to put a shade tree, try an apple, cherry, or plum tree. Instead of an ornamental shrub, try a hazelnut, American cranberry, or blueberry. Grow nasturtiums, violas, and calendula and include them in your salads. Tuck vegetables in your flower gardens or in planters or containers. The possibilities are endless. Here are a few more edibles to think about: serviceberry, raspberry, black currant, chokeberry, grapes, rhubarb, asparagus, strawberries, herbs, vegetables and the list goes on. Enjoy your garden!



Check our website for list of available trees and shrubs!

## Flowers As Art

If Picasso were around he'd certainly love to plant the new Proven Winner petunia named Pretty Much Picasso. It is a very unique flower and has a dramatic coloration with chartreuse and purple flowers with a vibrant green edging. Nothing says WOW! Like Pretty Much Picasso. These can be grown in hanging baskets or containers and are sure to add a little touch of class! Combine these with the new black velvet petunia to create beautiful artwork of your own.



## Plastic Pot Recycling Program

Hanson's will once again accept used plastic plant containers for recycling. Hsu's of Wausau will work with us so we are able to collect used pots to be recycled. Drop them off out at Hanson's in our designated "recycling bin" located in front of the red barn. Please clean out soil and metal parts before bringing them in.

## Seeds, seeds, seeds....

The seed racks are in! We have more bulk packages of veggies. This year we are offering seeds from Olds Seed Company, Lake Valley Seed, and Weeks Seed Company.



## DEADHEADING FLOWERS

Deadheading is the process of removing the spent flowers from a plant. Pinching off or cutting off the faded flowers puts the plants' energy back into promoting more flowers and prolonging color in your gardens and containers. In some cases (e.g. Jacob's Ladder) cutting the plant back to the ground after it has bloomed may often encourage new growth and new flowers. Pinching petunias back to the first set of leaves will promote bushiness and prolong the blooming. Most petunias will benefit from deadheading. With cosmos and zinnias cut the flower stems to the first leaves to encourage re-blooming and branching. Deadheading a fuchsia is a must. Remove not only the flower but also the seed pod.

## EARLY BIRD PERENNIAL SALE



Our yearly perennial sale begins APRIL 18th and ends APRIL 30<sup>TH</sup>. Shop and find something new for your garden and get 20% OFF. New this season: We are offering a free babysitting service. If you buy any perennial during the sale and don't want to take it home just yet, we will take care of it free of charge up until May 22, 2011. It's an easy way to get what you need at the sale and take it home when you're ready to plant.

## Just in Time for Dinner...

### Spring and Rhubarb; You Can't Have One Without the Other

We all enjoy the wonderful pies, crisps, bars, jams, and wines this delightful plant provides for us. Now we would like to provide you with a few tips to help you grow and pick your rhubarb. First of all, not all rhubarb is created "equal". Begin with early spring divisions from what you know to be a good plant. We offer Chipman's Canada Red in bareroot (or pots later in the season). Start by digging a hole about 12 inches deep, fill to within 2 inches of the top with compost, well rotted manure, and soil you removed from the hole. Plant rhubarb crowns 1-2 inches deep. Mulch with 2 inches of rotted manure in fall, or in the spring fertilize your plant with organic fertilizer, according to the manufacturer's directions. In our experience, synthetic fertilizers do not seem to encourage rhubarb. Be patient; wait a year to harvest. Pick only a few stalks the second year. The third year you could pick a third to half of the stalks. Be sure to remove flower stalks as letting the plant flower will reduce the production of the stalks the next year. To harvest your rhubarb grab the stalk near the base. Twist and pull upward. You can also cut the stalks but cut as close to the crown as possible. Now enjoy your rhubarb. Here's a simple but yummy recipe for Rhubarb Coffee Cake:

2 cups of flour  
3 teaspoons of baking powder  
¾ teaspoons of salt  
½ cup of sugar  
5 tablespoons of margarine  
1 egg  
¾ cup of milk  
3 cup fresh rhubarb, chopped

#### Topping:

½ cup flour  
1 cup sugar  
6 tablespoons of margarine

Sift flour, baking powder, salt, and sugar. Cut in margarine until crumbly. Mix egg with milk and add to flour mixture. Stir slowly to mix, and then beat until well blended. Spread in 9 X 13 greased pan. Sprinkle with rhubarb. Topping- Mix flour and sugar, cut in margarine, and sprinkle over rhubarb. Bake at 375 degrees for 30-35 minutes. Cool, Serve and Enjoy!

16th ANNUAL HERB FEST 2011

JUNE 18<sup>TH</sup>

Watch our website for more details!

[www.hansonsgardenvillage.com](http://www.hansonsgardenvillage.com)

## New Thrillers for Your Containers!

Whenever you plant a combination planter, it's always a good visual to put something tall in your creation to attract interest. The old standard for many years was just a plain old spike (*Dracaena*). Today there are many choices which you might like to try. The new grass called Fireworks has really hot variegated foliage! *Cordyline Red Star* has red foliage, a nice change from the traditional green spike. The most popular grass being used is the Purple Fountain Grass. If your container is in the shade, Corkscrew rush can be used. For more color use purple, pink, or white *Angelonias*. Pink *Gaura* adds wispy pink flowers to your containers. These thrillers can be placed in the back or center of the container depending on how it will be viewed.

## EARTH DAY

April 22 Friday -Do something Green!



## Book Drive

The book drive that was held last spring to help our daughter Beth, who is in the Peace Corps, was a great success. Thanks to all who donated books for the schools on the Island of Dominica. Beth has set up an awesome library at the school where she works. The kids are so excited and very appreciative. View photos on our website and facebook. Thanks again!



## New Perennials for a New Season

Another season is upon up! Spring is here and so are the new perennials. We have plants arriving everyday and are looking forward to a great selection of unique cultivars. Here are some new selections:

For the shade lover: Old Fashioned Bleeding Heart (*Dicentra spectabilis*) is always a favorite. For a break from the usual white and pink varieties, try 'Valentine' with red flowers and deep green foliage.

For seasonal color: *Astilbe* 'Color Flash' sports burgundy/purple leaves that turn orange, red, and bronze in late summer. It's 18 inch pink spires bloom mid season. 'Color Flash Lime' has soft pink spires with light green, almost yellow leaves, edged with dark red. Both tend to be deer resistant and thrive in shade.

*Hosta* lovers will be happy to know we have 'Empress Wu'. As the largest commercially grown *Hosta*, it reaches a height of 5 ½' at maturity with leaves spanning 2' or more. This *Hosta* will need some space but will make for a unique and interesting specimen.

For sunnier gardens: *Dianthus* 'Ashley Kate' has a carnation-like flower. It has a new look for a *Dianthus* with 22" yellow flowers edged with red.

Attention coneflower lovers: We now carry the *Echinacea* PowWow series. 'Wild Berry' is a great choice with its compact growth habit and dark berry fade-free flowers. Also new is *Echinacea* 'Now Cheesier'. With 5" gold flowers, it will be a standout in any garden. *Echinacea* 'Tomato Soup' is a true red with a 6" flower.

For those who enjoy hollyhocks, *Alcea* 'Mars Magic' is the first red that is a true perennial. *Alcea* 'Black Night', also a true perennial, has purple almost black flowers. Both varieties grow 6'

The tall *Phlox* lover will enjoy *Phlox p.* 'Tiara'. The huge flower heads sit atop a compact plant with double flowers that unfurl like rosebuds. We also carry a selection of shorter garden *Phlox* for those who prefer them.

These are just a few of the new selections. Stop by the perennial department for complete list. Hope to see you all at the Early Bird Perennial Sale.

## Color Your Veggies Like a Rainbow



Who likes boring white potatoes? Why not plant a purple or yellow cauliflower? Did you know carrots can be purple too! Radishes used to be red, but black is now a color option. White icicle is an interesting choice for radishes as well. We love putting colorful Rainbow Swiss Chard in our flower garden, so if you're not looking for a pot of gold, look for a rainbow of vegetables!

## It's the "Year of the Tomato"



Let's celebrate with the National Garden Bureau this season and plants tomatoes. As growers of these vegetables we try to offer you a new selection of tomatoes as well as the tried and true varieties. Our tomato lover employee Marlene went on an early shopping trip for tomato seeds and brought us some of her new suggestions. Then we got a little "tomato-mania" ourselves and found a few more. Most customers just ask for 'Early Girl' or 'Better Boy' but why not try a new variety and experience a new flavor. How about trying 'Stupice'? This new variety has 2 oz fruit and ripens in 52 days. Another new variety called 'Tumbler' is a great tomato to put in baskets or containers. Just think how easy it will be to harvest your crop and get it on your table at home. Remember, before you move your tomato plant outdoors, nighttime temperatures should be 55 degrees or above.

## Colorful Coleus

We can't forget the stunning new colors in this great foliage plant. Many varieties are upright, but some will trail in your container. New this year is 'Splash', 'Red Head', 'Mint Mocha', and even a 'Stinky' *coleus*. I enjoy the planter at the Holiday Gas Station that uses only *coleus* and a few other foliage plants. It's a great color container and hardly needs to have its flowers pruned.



## What's New in Annuals?

### Some new annual additions for 2011

New from Ball are the 'Black Velvet' and 'Phantom' *petunias*. These new selections will be the talk of the season. *New Wave Petunias* include 'Shockwave Coconut', 'Easy Wave Violet', 'Easy Wave Pink Dawn', and 'Easy Wave Plum Vein.



In *Double Wave Petunias* are Red, White, and Blue. Other *petunias* of note are, 'Sophistica Dusty Rose', 'Lime Bicolor', and 'Blue Morn'.

In *pansies* the Fizzy series offers some new color choices: 'Fizzy Grape' and 'Fizzy Fruit Salad'. Both are ruffled flowers.

A few new *Begonia* varieties will be offered this season, one of those is 'Gryphon'. This plant is named after a mythical creature with the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion. It's a great looking foliage *begonia* with a majestic beauty for your container or garden. After the growing season outdoors, you can bring your plant indoors to enjoy. Other *begonia* selections are 'Sparkler' and 'Bonfire Chocolate'.

'Pink Shimmer' *Euphorbia* has white flowers with a tinge of pink in both the flowers and the foliage.

'Double White' *Bacopa* have been out for a few years. We are trying a 'Double Blue' variety this year as well.

'Sunpatiens' is a very vigorous *impatien* for sun.

'Patchwork Impatiens' have two-tone flowers. It has a larger flower than other *impatiens* and is good for shade. We will have 'Peace Prism' and 'Pink Shades'.

'Taishan Yellow' *Marigold* is not totally new but worth a try.

'Deep Rose' *Gypsophila* is a baby's breath that we've had in the past but requests prompted us to grow it again.

Whether is hot or cool, 'Blueberry' *Phlox* puts on a magnificent display of color.

'Twisted Dart' *Juncus* offers a unique look with its unusual straight and twisted foliage.

## WASTE NOT...WANT NOT



Being somewhat conservative (as most farmers are), we have always tended to use equipment long past its normal life, and then throw it on the scrap pile hoping upon hope that we would find a use for some of its frame or parts. This does not always make for a pretty sight. But, hey, we can always shift away from the accusation of frugality to claim the virtue of being “Green”.

We occasionally work with Focus on Energy in an attempt to make our energy usage lower. Often this works out well for us, and hopefully helps out the planet as we trim our energy usage. I was discouraged recently, however, when I was told that Focus would help us financially if we purchased NEW 2” high-density foam insulation board to insulate some perimeter walls, but not help us with the costs of recycling other insulating materials that were being removed from another area. But I guess that they have their own rules to go by.

The clear polycarbonate sheets that we have on some of our greenhouse roofs don’t look so clear after about fifteen years. So we had to change them this past fall (we put in a more energy-efficient triple-wall version for the new install). We had a PILE of 20-foot long structured plastic sheets! Focus on Energy helped us figure out that seven layers of the twin-wall sheets would equal the insulation value of the 2-inch foam. We opted to use, or reuse, the polycarbonate. We created a four-foot high “knee-wall” on the East wall of what we call the Five-Bay and protected it with an outer layer of steel sheeting, which we would have had to do with the foam as well. It works and looks great. We still had lots of polycarbonate sheets left, so we gave them to a company that pre-fills hanging baskets for greenhouses. They cut them into squares to use as slip-sheets between the layers of baskets on their shipping pallets.

We save our empty growing mix bags to bag up bareroot orders in the spring. We have Opportunities Unlimited (next door) shred many of our cardboard boxes. That shredded cardboard is used in the bags to keep the bareroot plants moist until you get them home for planting.

We try to reuse what we can of each years growing containers as well. However, for plant health and efficiency reasons we can’t reuse a lot of it. We keep looking for recyclers that can take these materials, and most years we are successful. Last year, and again this year we will be aided by Hsu’s Composts and Soils of Wausau, a company that is very GREEN in their thinking.

Still, I fear that we go too far sometimes! Unfortunately our main hot-water boiler went out this last winter and needed to be replaced. After I stripped it of its valuable copper-fin core, and any parts that had potential use, some of our ladies started using it as a potting table. It worked pretty well. It even has a chute in the middle where the vent pipe was where you can put a bucket for scraps destined for the compost pile. You will see our “Boiler Bench” in the U-POT area where customers are welcome to pot up their creations (and leave us the mess).

Look for the plastic flat and pot recycling bins in front of “The Barn” again this season. Any home gardener from the area is invited to bring used plastic plant containers from April 1<sup>st</sup> through Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>.

- Brent Hanson

## NAME YOUR FLOWER



Many of the beautiful flowers get interesting names. This year we have a few flowers with names of our employees. It just happens that we are growing a new color of a *Martha Washington Geranium* named ‘Crystal’. We hope you take a look and tell our Crystal, who has worked for us over 11 years, that you like the new color. Then there is a *pansy* named Sherry so we couldn’t leave out another familiar face who has greeted most of you for the past 5 years. Last but not least, the garden *mums* have had the Cheryl Series. We all know they must have been named to honor Cheryl out in the perennial department. Did you also know that *Heliopsis* ‘Lorraine Sunshine’ was named after a neighbor, Lorraine Marks, who worked for us as well? So no matter what, we’re sure there is a flower named after someone you know.

# BOOK REVIEW

## BRINGING NATURE HOME

By Douglas W. Tallamy

Douglas Tallamy's book, *Bringing Nature Home*, should give us all pause to think about the necessary role that native plants have in the well being of the planet. Written along the same lines as *Noah's Garden* by Sara Stein, *Bringing Nature Home* gives us all even more reasons to grow native plants in our yards and gardens. Tallamy, a professor and chair of the Department of Entomology at the University of Delaware, has researched the relationships between native plants and the insects that feed on them, as well as the need that higher levels of life have for both these plants and those insects. Written in a more scientific vein than *Noah's Garden*, both books have the same theme. We as people need plants, but more than that, we need the native plants that have evolved here along with the insects, animals, birds and all wildlife. Why, do we need native plants? Aren't plants, plants? Tallamy explains this thoroughly. He examines the plants that are native versus alien or exotic plants, showing how insects will bypass those alien plants preferring to feed on native plants. Without native plants, there will be fewer insects, and thus, fewer forms of higher life in the food web.

There are tables showing the studies done on the number of insects feeding on aliens and those feeding on natives. It's astonishing to see the difference. Tallamy goes into particular insects and the higher forms of life feeding on them. The book holds striking photos of insects with amazing descriptions of their role in the food web.

There is a section on just moths and butterflies with their special host plants that includes the role of their larvae in the feeding and nourishment of bird nestlings. Did you know milkweed plants can host up to 11 different moth and butterfly larvae? Did you know tent caterpillars are great bird food for baby birds and their host plant are the native cherry trees? Did you know an oak tree can be host up to 536 different kinds of moth and butterfly larvae, all possible food for baby birds?



It's pretty clear from the book "*Bringing Nature Home*" that each of us has a stake in this world of ours and, in some small measure, we can each do a little to improve it by adding native plants to our yards, to our gardens, to our businesses, and, yes, to restore what has been bulldozed and taken away.

This book is highly recommended.

**"We can each make a measurable difference almost immediately by planting a native nearby."** Douglas W. Tallamy

## All American Selections

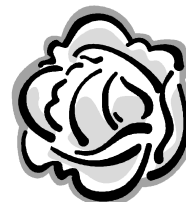
Since 1932 these varieties are tested at official sites across North America and are judged worthy for home gardens as unique or superior to the leading established varieties in the same class. A few varieties we will be carrying this year are: Perennial Flower Award winner, 'PowWow Wild Berry' *coneflower*, Annual winner 'Moonsong Deep Orange' *Marigold*, Bedding Plant winners 'Double Zahara Cherry' *Zinnia* and 'Double Zahara Fire' *Zinnia*, Vegetable winners 'Cajun Bell' Pepper and 'Shiny Boy' Watermelon. Be sure to try these All American Selections in your own garden!

## Chickity Doo Doo

We are offering a new 5-3-2 Organic Fertilizer this year called Chickity Doo Doo. It can be used for lawns, shrubs, trees, flower and vegetable gardens, as well as indoor planting. It has 9% calcium and is 100% weed free. It provides more nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium than any organic fertilizer in its class.



Answer to Garden Trivia: LETTUCE





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**PRSRT STD  
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### Upcoming Events:

Call now to register for Sue's Basket Classes!

Moss basket classes held the month of April and Herb basket class is May 7<sup>th</sup>.

April 18<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>: Early Bird Perennial Sale

April 22<sup>nd</sup>: Spring Bareroot Sale

June 18<sup>th</sup>: Herb Fest 2011

### Note:

If you are receiving this newsletter in a printed version, consider signing up our email list. You will receive notices of the Hanson's Gazettes posting on our website, [www.hansonsgardenvillage.com](http://www.hansonsgardenvillage.com), as well as additional news and offers that are not available in print form.



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