

PAEONIA

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Editors: Chris and Lois Laning 553 West F Avenue Kalamazoo, MI.	Farewell, Chris and Lois, page 1
	Hybridizing Just for Fun, Chris Laning, page 2
	Seed Distribution, page 3
Suggested yearly contribution: \$2.50 in the U.S. \$3.00 in Canada \$4.00 in Europe, New Zealand, and Australia.	Letters from our New Editor, Donald R. Smith, page 4
	Letter from Steve Varner, page 6
	Goals Not Attained as Recorded in This Last Issue, page 6
	Letter from Anne Oveson, page 7
	Directory of Paeonians, page 9

FAREWELL!

Now that the editing of Paeonia has come to an end for Lois and me, I'd like to say it has been a good learning experience for me. It is also a joy to have had such loyal readers and contributors. It is hoped you and Donald Smith go forward with the newsletter, finding it profitable for both! Dream dreams of grandeur and find happiness in gardening with seeds and little peony seedlings.

Chris and Lois



HYBRIDIZING JUST FOR FUN

Chris Laning

Originating something - something unique - is a desire we all have, and almost all of us have succeeded. Each and every peony seedling as well as every child is unique!

- Keeping records is important and making them available to others is the way to capitalize on their importance.

- Information on your new introductions along with their parentage published ensures their survival. Their distribution safeguards against their being lost.

- Progress toward your goals needs to be published. Inbreeding shouldn't be discontinued at death of the hybridizer (note '**Minnie Shaylor**', etc.) Share your projects with others even though you lose full control of a successful venture.

- Great things have been accomplished by Don Hollingsworth, Bill Seidl, Roger Anderson, Chris Laning, David Reath, "The Old Timers", etc. A complete list of their accomplishments, methods and projects would do more for the peony advancement than all of their plant introductions. If you will send me a detailed article (500 words or less) I'll see to it that it will get published.

- Share your goals with others! Also, share your best varieties with others - that they be not lost!

Seeds of the "Advanced Generation" tetraploid clones germinate quite readily. Get a collection of unnamed seedlings to start out on your hybridizing hobby. Pastel colors are glorious, especially the peach, warm pink, yellows, and bright reds. Develop your own color line using inbreeding, line breeding or just random selection of large populations of seedlings.

I can report no progress in some of my color line for blue, dwarf, multi-blooms per stem, and the stoloniferous trait. But the tenui x mloko F_4 's should bloom next year giving exciting results! Later someone else will have to continue this line breeding until finally with selecting and roguing by the 8th generation (F_8) the results probably will be what will appear to be a tetraploid mlokosevitschii- My F_2 's and F_3 's. are fertile, so in my opinion all that is needed is continuing the line breeding.

My Crimson Classic, dark red single, is fertile but it is too tall to suit me. To get a seedling like it but shorter and earlier, pollinating it with the tenui x mloko F_3 should give early results. (Yellow intensifies a color, though not diluting it.)

"Coral for Lois" is a clone that should not be lost! The plant provides coral single flowers on tall stout stems. Maybe you will be able to see it at the show next spring. It's fertile!

Variation is the main tool of genetics. Our knowledge is so limited that very little of it is fact - theory and hypotheses help us understand what may be going on but I suspect there never will be a conclusion of the matter. So, try anything and everything.

Just received two divisions of clones with violet color from Don Hollingsworth. One is named '**Color Magnet**' (Violet B), the other is unnamed but is called Violet A; colors that offer much for the hybridizer.

My idea in experimenting is to pollinate them with '**Sunny Boy**' and the reciprocal '**Sunny Boy** x Violet A and '**Color Magnet**'. The yellow of '**Sunny Boy**' may impart what is needed to give their offspring a lavender color. However, line breeding of these two clones may first be needed to produce a good line of violets. While I don't have time (too old) to complete this task and attain the goal, I'll get started on it anyway.

Another named variety (Greta) will be used in the same manner since this clone has purple flowers but is a lactiflora, therefore, a diploid. The late Roy Pehrson always said, "Try anything and everything". So while we can't predict results, we dream and work. Unexpected results are to be expected says I!!

New colors in the Itoh line are coming along such as white, another yellow, dark dark red, and a whole row of old rose flowers that turn yellow upon aging. Itohs are pollinated every year but for me not a viable seed is produced. If any of you has succeeded in getting an F2 seedling , write an article for our American Peony Bulletin and we'll all revel in the good news.

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SEED DISTRIBUTION -

This year Dr. Kent Crossley and I will be distributing seeds. His address is: 1245 Delaware Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55118

Varieties listed are:

lactiflora - mixed colors

macrophylla - hybrids

tetraploid - mixed colors

'**Sable**' x Super "D" - dark red fertile single flowers

'**Roy Pehrson's Best Yellow**' - cream colored flowers

'**Martha W.**' lactiflora used for Itohs

Advanced generation tetraploid seeds with four or more species in their makeup.

Also, five pickets of named varieties seed from Maurice Ménard, Canada,

and a nice bag of suffruticosa seeds from David Furman, California.

Donald R. Smith
46 Exeter St.
W. Newton, Ma. 02165

2 AUGUST 1994

P.C. "Chris" Laning:
553 West F Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49004

Dear Chris,

I have been a subscriber of Paeonia since the early 1970's. It is fair to say that most of what I have learned about hybridizing peonies over the years has come from the pages of this wonderful newsletter. You have done a terrific job of keeping this valuable publication going for more than two decades. You have made a lasting contribution to the improvement of the peony and to the education of many amateur hybridizers such as myself. I thank you for sharing your experiences and knowledge with all of us. I truly appreciate your hard work and unselfish dedication to the group over all these many years. You have certainly done more than your share and should feel no guilt about your decision to move on. It is right and it is time that this job fall to the hands of others.

As you probably know, I have been exclusively a "receiver" for more than 20 years. It is certainly time for me to start giving something back. Therefore, I would like to volunteer to take over the job of publishing the newsletter beginning in Jan 95. Although I have no experience with such an endeavor, I do have a personal computer and the necessary software. At age 52 I am still employed full time as a research physicist for a USAF research laboratory. My research involves measurements and studies of infrared emissions from the earth's atmosphere including such things as airglow and aurora. My breeding activities are primarily limited to intersectional (Itoh) and shrub peony hybrids due in large part to a serious limitation of space. I keep excellent records of all aspects of my work (like a true scientist) and can probably write numerous articles of interest to the group from these notes and records. I assume you and Don Hollingsworth will continue to write and contribute articles, but clearly other contributors will need to be recruited as well.

If this arrangement is agreeable to you, I will need to have a copy of the current subscribers list and any records you may have on dues payments, etc. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future. Thanks again for 20+ years of reading enjoyment.

sincerely,

Donald R. Smith

Donald R. Smith
46 Exeter St.
W. Newton, Ma. 02165

10 October 1994

P.C. "Chris" Laning
553 West F Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49004

Dear Chris,

I am pleased you have accepted my offer to take over the publishing of the peony hybridizers newsletter beginning in January 1995. I hope I can maintain the high standard which you have established for this publication over the last twenty plus years. I will certainly try my best to carry on the tradition which you and Roy Pehrson have set for us. As you suggested I have written to Don Hollingsworth to ask for his help in keeping this venture alive and well. I assume you will continue to be an interested reader of Paeonia. Maybe you could let me know from time to time how you think I am doing. In order to get going I will need a complete list of all the current subscribers. I would appreciate it if you could send this list as soon as possible. In addition, I seem to be missing a number (6) of back issues of Paeonia which I hope you can provide. The issues which I am missing are Dec 81, June 85, Dec 91, Oct 92, Dec 92, and Dec 93. With these issues, my set will be complete. I think it is fairly important for me to maintain a full set of newsletters for reference purposes. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

sincerely,

Donald R. Smith

Rt. 3, Box 5
Monticello IL 61856

October 12, 1994

Dear Chris and Lois:

I trust you are both well - a relative term at our ages. I am grateful to you both for your service to APS in editing and publishing the Paeonia.

The 'Red Charm' x 'Sunny Boy' No. 93002 has been registered as 'Major Steve'. It has been precocious in blooming so soon. It had a bud when it was 14" high and still a single stemmed plant. This bud was killed by a late frost in '92. Last year it had 7 stems and blooms 20" high. This year over 20 stems 34" high. It has fertile pollen and sets seeds. 'Red Charm' set at least one pod to its pollen.

It is a nicely capped, two row pastel flesh pink flower, one per stem. I have harvested a lot of seeds of this cross over the years but this is the first I have had survive to bloom.

Four of the five plants you sent me bloomed this year but not the unique bicolor. I am looking forward to seeing it again. I am awaiting a color print made from a slide of 93002 from Kodalux. They have had it for about a month. If it turns out well, I'll send it to you to look at.

Steve (Varner)

GOALS NOT ATTAINED AS RECORDED IN THIS LAST ISSUE

Dwarf peony varieties, while desired, have not resulted in any gain. It doesn't help to produce little (short) plants if they are not fertile. Crossing P. lobata clones with various dwarf species does give plants that are two feet tall or less but they are infertile - never - an F2 seed.

Stoloniferous peonies would be desirable but there again - no progress. P. potanini will not cross with suffruticosa nor with lutea hybrids. Some little success is being seen with the lutea hybrids but stolons are few and my plant is weak.

Itohs are a joy and the colors are expanding though no seed is gotten. My Itoh, old rose, is a dandy for flower arranging and needs to be made available to the general public.

Probably the great success for Paeonia is its seed distribution. The advanced generation seeds will show great diversity in the future.

(Cont. on page 8)

71735 Dougherty Loop
Wallowa, Oregon 97885

July 23, 1994

Dear Chris Laning,

Your letter arrived yesterday, and I was pleased to receive it as I had just come back from gathering the peony seeds from the plants out in the pasture and had wondered if you were going to want some. I don't have as many seeds as last year although there were four blooms out in the hills and 3 on my plants here at home. I wanted to save pollen from these here and ended up with not pollinating the blooms here correctly. Got nearly 30 seeds last year and none this year here at home. Bugs had eaten several seeds out in the pasture and it has been so dry this year that some seeds didn't fill. I kept 6 seeds to plant out in the pasture. I'm so forgetful that I can't remember what I wrote you about my browniis. I've written to Galen Burrell, Geoffrey Charlesworth, and Myron Bigger about the browniis. I've offered to send Mr. Bigger a root since Chet Tompkins had wanted one to send to him, but I don't think he had very good luck with the ones I sent him to forward on to Mr. Bigger. Galen suggested I not send many more plants because the seeds were rather easy to germinate. I also gave a plant to Duane Meek last year and his survived. He had his in a 5 gallon bucket. When I sent them to Duane and Al Rogers as well as Galen, I forgot to tell them what they were. Rogers wrote and asked but Duane didn't know until his came up this spring what it was.

Did I tell you that I pollinated '**Early Windflower**' last year with brownii pollen? I got 1 seed from the cross, but the plant also set another seed from a bloom I hadn't pollinated. '**Windchimes**' also set 2 seeds (self, I guess). I planted all 4 seeds August 18. The cross is the only one that came up so far. It sent up a regular leaf. I was quite careful with my pollinating and marking my planting, yet I never quite trust that I should be lucky enough to get something done right. I am positive the seed that germinated was from '**Early Windflower**'

The peonies (brownii) that I have here came from another location with a higher altitude than my pasture by at least 100'. I'm going up there to look again but earlier I had thought that there were not going to be any blooms on them this year. I don't think they had any last year, or I didn't find any seed pods.

I am glad someone is working with pollinating with brownii. I have never seen it mentioned but have been getting the Bulletin only since 1988.

The elevation here where I live is 3000'. My browniis here are at the edge of my lawn, just through the fence from a cow pasture. I am careful not to get that part of the lawn watered very well, but my other peonies are right along the same fence.

I didn't get a take from using the little pollen from brownii that I had when '**Minnie Shaylor**' bloomed. I probably hadn't taken proper care of it. I'm assuming the pollen was probably all right even though the brownii blooms didn't set seeds either. I have a sister who is a month ahead of me and I'm going to ask her to send me pollen next year from some of her plants to try on my brownii. Brownii bloomed April 28 and '**Early Windflower**' bloomed May 8. 'Rose Crystal' bloomed a day earlier, but sets no seeds at all for me, ever - not even empty pods. The majority of my peonies bloom in June. We had days up to 80° in both April and May before having 24° nights. Many of my plants didn't bloom at all, some only lightly, and some had the nicest blooms I've ever had.

I don't know if I told you that I had 2 plants survive my weeding. The foliage on the one in the pasture has dried up but it looked all right a few weeks ago. I planted 3 seeds there. I think I planted 10 seeds around the plants down here, but pulled several up thinking the cotyledons were weeds. The 2 plants I've had here for several years have increased by a plant apiece underground. The plants are slightly different in color and so are the young plants.

Probably most of this is a repeat of what I've written before and if so, please excuse me. I don't type very well, either. I hope to hear that you have good success with the seed.

Thank you very much for the seed you sent. I have it all planted in pots and a screen over them with the potted seeds that Galen sent me.

Sincerely,

Anne Oveson

GOALS NOT ATTAINED, continued

P. californica and P. brownii seeds did produce seedlings the first year and died the second. You must keep working with them until success is achieved. The earlier issues of Paeonia revealed my interest in these species and lack of success. Will someone who lives near these wildlings intensify his efforts in domesticating them??

I feel the rescuing and growing of species peonies are in good hands and S.P.I.N, will safeguard them from being lost! Thanks French, German and other enthusiasts for your great efforts!

- Chris