

## Inside

**2**

**Behnke's at the  
National Cherry  
Blossom Festival**

**Garden Gurus  
on the Radio**

**3**

**Calendar of Events**

**4-5**

**The ABCs  
of Tropical Flavors,  
Fragrances and Forms**

**7**

**Behnke's Teams Up  
with the Bowie Baysox**

**Meet:  
Frank Monahan**

**8**

**Coneflowers:  
A Blast of  
Summer Color**

## Hydrangeas – Bodacious Summer Beauties

*by Miri Talabac, Woody Plants Specialist*

*A*s summer draws near and the spring flowers fade, we may think that the color extravaganza of the shady garden is behind us. Think again! Foliage gardening certainly has great appeal, but sometimes you just need to throw in some flowers – and while many annuals, perennials and shrubs deserve attention, the most flamboyant floral display of summer in the shade belongs to the hydrangeas. Be they green, white, blue, lavender, purple, mauve, pink, raspberry or rose, their blooms brighten our gardens and our moods. From three-foot-high dwarves to fifteen-foot trees, there is a hydrangea for every garden.

Although tolerances will vary by species, all hydrangeas prosper in a partially sunny to a mostly shady exposure. Soil should be evenly moist and well-drained. Most soils in this area benefit from some supplementation, and compost or other organic matter will improve drainage for clay soils and increase moisture and nutrient retention for sandy soils. Spring and summer applications of Holly-tone or another balanced slow-release fertilizer will keep flower colors strong and support rapid, vigorous growth.

Hydrangea blooms are actually clusters of two different types of flowers – sterile flowers and fertile flowers. The sterile flowers are the most noticeable, consisting of showy petal-like sepals but no other flower parts. They are found along the outer edges of the bloom, where they draw the attention of pollinators, just as petals do on other flowers. On the interior of the cluster are the true flowers – they lack petals but are fertile, capable of producing seed if pollinated. Through natural variation and breeding, garden hydrangeas now have either very few or almost all sterile flowers, allowing their use in garden design to be as bold or understated as needed. Blooms have the added bonus of drying easily for use in arrangements – cut them just past their prime, when they start to dry naturally on the plant,

*continued on page 3*





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## The National Cherry Blossom Festival



*Behnke President and CEO, John Peter Thompson, with Cherry Blossom Queens Reina Mochizuki (left) representing Japan, and Teresa Sablan representing the United States.*

Last month Behnke Nurseries was pleased to participate in the annual Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington, DC. As many area natives know, the beautiful Japanese flowering cherry trees were given to the United States as a gift of friendship from the people of Japan in 1912.

In keeping with this theme, Behnke's booth highlighted a few of the many botanical contributions Japan has made to America, such as Japanese maples, Japanese black pine and Japanese andromeda.

We were delighted to talk to many gardeners during the event, including some old and new friends, and even meet tourists from around the country—a few of whom used our booth as a backdrop for their photos!

## Garden Gurus on the Radio

In February 2005, Behnke Nurseries launched a new radio program, **Garden Gurus**, on WMET1160-AM. The move came after a one year run on WMAL's **Garden Sense** with Jos Roozen. "We had an opportunity to expand our program to a two hour format," said Anne Williams, producer of the radio show. Garden Gurus broadens the format to include interviews both live in the studio and by phone. "We are able to speak with anyone around the country about any issue," says Ms. Williams.

The lively host of Garden Gurus is John Peter Thompson, grandson of Behnke Nurseries founders Albert and Rose Behnke, and son of Sonja Behnke Festerling. Sonja was a Hollywood actress in the early 50s. "John seems to have inherited the performance bug," says Williams, "in addition to the horticulture gene. He's smart and quick on his feet in every interview. He was born to do this."

Garden Gurus recently broadcast a live-remote show from the Hotel Washington during the National Cherry Blossom Festival. The Sky Lounge at the hotel overlooked the White House, parade route, monuments and the Tidal Basin.

"We will do more remotes in the future, the next one will be at Behnke Nurseries in Beltsville sometime this summer," says Ms. Williams.

Garden Gurus broadcasts live Saturday mornings from 9 to 11 am on WMET1160 on the AM dial. You can also listen live over your computer by going to [www.WMET1160.com](http://www.WMET1160.com) and selecting *live*. You may also go into the weekend programming and listen to the archives of past shows.



*John Peter Thompson prepares to host the live radio show, Garden Gurus, Saturday mornings at 9 on WMET1160.*



# Dig This: Upcoming Events

## Potomac Bonsai Society Auction

Saturday, June 18, 2005 from 10AM-noon, at Behnke's Beltsville  
All are welcome to attend the auction. Please note: Those who wish to bid in the auction must register and obtain a number beforehand, between 9AM and 10AM.

## Soap Making Workshop

Sat, June 25, 2005, 10AM to 12:30PM, at Behnke's Beltsville  
Discover the pleasure of making old-fashioned soaps from oils and fragrant herbs. You'll create and take home your own soaps. Tuition is \$40 and includes all necessary materials. Please bring your own protective gear: goggles, rubber gloves and an apron. Students must be at least 18 years of age. Class size is limited. Pre-registration is required. Please call 301-937-1100.

## Founder's Day Weekend

July 9 and 10, 2005, at both Behnke locations.  
Join us for our Founder's Celebration — fun for everyone, including food, music and special activities for kids of all ages.

## A Taste of Maryland

Saturday, August 13, 2005, at Behnke's Beltsville  
Sample offerings from local restaurants.

## Invasive Plants: Perspectives, Prescriptions and Partnerships

A two day symposium will be held this summer to discuss the problems of invasive plants. The symposium is sponsored by The Mid-Atlantic Exotic Pest Plant Council (MA-EPPC), a regional group that seeks to increase public awareness of invasive plant issues, particularly in terms of how they impact upon parks and natural lands. John Peter Thompson, president of Behnke Nurseries, is also completing a two year term as president of this volunteer, non-profit group.

The conference is of interest to environmental, nursery and landscape professionals, as well as curious gardeners. Talks will cover a broad range of topics, including the effect of global warming on the growth of weeds, issues involved in new plant exploration and introduction, and practical weed management tools for land managers.

The symposium will be held on August 16-17, 2005 at the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA. For a brochure, call the Morris Arboretum at 215-247-5777, ext. 156 or 125.  
"Speakers were very knowledgeable but also down to earth." —A 2003 Conference Participant

## Hydrangeas, from page 1

and finish the process with silica gel for a few more days.

There are seven species of hydrangea commonly available, with hundreds of varieties between them. Here's a basic introduction to each, with just a few of the great choices you can look forward to!

'Annabelle' is the most widely recognized variety of the smooth hydrangea, *Hydrangea arborescens*. This species is native to woodlands along much of the eastern U.S., where it is found in rocky river valleys, even in deep shade. They are very cold-hardy, quite adaptable, and relatively pest- and disease-free. Flowers arise in early summer from the new growth of the season, so pruning is best done in winter. The large round sterile-flowered blooms on 'Annabelle' start apple-green and mature white for up to two months before fading to brown. 'White Dome' is closer to the wild form, with only a few white sepals surrounding the fertile flowers. It would make a nice understory planting for a naturalized woodland garden of native shrubs.



Perhaps the most popular garden hydrangeas are the bigleaf species, *Hydrangea macrophylla*, and their cousins, *Hydrangea serrata*. A compact habit allows them to be tucked into the perennial border or sprinkled into a wooded garden, although bigleaf hydrangeas are also very tolerant of seashore conditions. Their blooms are perhaps the showiest of all hydrangeas, and they adorn the plants most of the summer. Two basic categories are commonly referred

to by their flower types, "mopheads" (that's not very flattering...they're also called "hortensias") and "lacecaps." Mopheads have ball-shaped blooms full of sterile flowers. Lacecaps have flattened clusters of fertile flowers surrounded by a ring of sterile flowers. When lacecap blooms are pollinated, the sterile sepal flowers flip over and redden as a signal to pollinators that they should move on to other blooms. Since these two species bloom on the previous year's growth, the timing of pruning is a matter of some debate, but it is best done in moderation just after flowering to give the plant time to develop next year's flowers.

One of the most appealing features of bigleaf hydrangeas is their ability to produce a variety of changeable flower colors. Aluminum is a key component of the blue pigment, and it is most readily available to the plant in acidic soils. When the soil pH (a measure of acidity) is between 5.0 and 5.5, flowers will be blue. Pink flowers will arise in near-neutral soils with a pH of 6.0 to 6.5.

*continued on page 6*





# More ABC's of Tropical Fl

*A*s promised, I'm back again with the balance of some of my favorite tropicals from A-Z. This time, I'll focus on the second half of the alphabet. (The first installment appeared in GardeNews in Spring 2004. You can access the article on our website, [www.behnkes.com](http://www.behnkes.com). Click on GardeNews and .....) Okay, I admit that the letters N-Z presented an interesting challenge, so I may occasionally drift between Latin names and common names to adhere to the format, and I'll just skip the letter X altogether.

**Nerium oleander** is a tough, versatile plant with showy summertime flowers in white, red, pink, salmon and light yellow. Some varieties are delightfully fragrant, and, alas, all are poisonous if the leaves are ingested in large quantities, so don't eat them. Oleanders prefer bright sun and can survive both dry or wet soils. Although some cultivars can reach up to 20 feet tall, they can be pruned as needed to maintain a nice shape. Otherwise, I might suggest a cute little variety, 'Petit Salmon', which is a dwarf that grows to only 4 feet.

**Odontoglossum orchids** are becoming very popular for their ease of growing and long lasting sprays of small, distinct flowers which often have a pleasant fragrance. They will typically bloom once a year and can be grown in the home, as well as in a sheltered area in the garden. Repot at least every two years when the new shoot is two inches tall or when new roots appear, using the orchid mixes available at Behnke's. Through hybridizing with Oncidiums and other related orchid types, there is a seeming endless array of striking color patterns possible.

**Plumbago auriculata** is a favorite of butterflies, blooming most of the spring,

summer and fall. For continuous bloom, place in full sun and feed with Miracid™. Plumbago can be pruned to grow like a vine and scramble over supports, or pruned into a more compact mounded shrub suitable for borders, foundation plantings, and for color massed in beds. When planting in a container for your porch or patio, use a light, sandy soil mix with good drainage. This is a beauty with its long, gracefully arching branches that shower the air with sky blue flowers.

**Queen of the bromeliads**, yes a common name, for the not so common



*Serissa foetida*

**Aechmea 'Chantinii'**. You probably know her relative, the silver vase bromeliad, with its powdery leaves and pink flower cluster (inflorescence). Bromeliads flower only once, lasting a month or more, but little "pups" or offsets are produced that can be

severed from the mother plant when they are several inches tall. This particular variety is strikingly different and I can not do it justice by describing it. You will just have to come by and see it for yourself.

**Rosemarinus officinalis** is the backbone around which all other herbs rally. Rosemary, the herb of remembrance, friendship and love, has been used as a medicinal and aromatic herb for thousands of years. Rosemary can be tricky to grow, but its fresh, clean scent when brushed against, puts it on my favorite list. When grown in a container, use a clay pot that dries out quickly, and a very well-drained planting medium such as Schultz™ cactus mix with perlite. Supplement with lime once a year and provide at least 6 hours of full sun every day.

**Serissa foetida** is a diminutive shrub with tiny deep green leaves, pink flower buds and a profusion of little white funnel shaped flowers. It is one of the most popular of all bonsai subjects, but it can be difficult to maintain. Behnke's Beltsville store will carry several named cultivars to include 'Flore Pleno', 'Variegated Pink', 'Mt. Fuji', and 'Kyoto'. My advice is never water serissa if it is without leaves and always take home a Behnke care sheet.



Wandering Jew

**Trachelospermum jasminoides** (common name: confederate jasmine) is a beautiful and energetic vine that goes two-tone in the spring as it flushes light green with new growth against darker green glossy leaves. Shortly thereafter the scene

# avors, Fragrances & Forms

transforms again when the delicate white pinwheel flowers breathe enchanting fragrances, lasting several weeks, into the spring air. These sun-loving, pest-free, easy to maintain, drought resistant marvels will go quickly when they begin to bloom.

**Umbrella plant (commonly identified as *Cyperus alternifolius*** in many garden books) is a great choice for containers and will thrive in regular potting soil with regular watering. This close cousin of the papyrus plant, from which the ancient Egyptians made paper, grows in clumps in wet and boggy areas. In bright sun, clumps will be compact and the stems closely packed. Under shady conditions clumps will grow higher and be composed of fewer stems and larger leaves giving a more graceful aspect. Confined to containers, this plant is a must for fish ponds and

water gardens (whiskey barrels), where this fascinating plant will add height, beauty, and a tropical touch.

**Vandas** have recently become one of the favorites of the orchid world. The show from one spike can last up to eight weeks, and vigorous plants, if adequately fertilized, can be expected to bloom twice yearly. They

enjoy full sun in the morning or late afternoon, but will require shading from about 11am-3pm. They are priced on the high end of the scale, but as popularity continues to grow, you will see the prices go down.



*Tradescantia zebrina*)

**Wandering Jew (*Tradescantia zebrina*)** is a succulent-stemmed plant that creeps and sprawls and trails all over itself to make a dense groundcover. That's right, I said groundcover. We know it to be grown indoors as a hanging basket or container plant, but in warmer months, wandering Jew is grown outdoors as a groundcover or a bedding plant, to create a tropical atmosphere. To encourage it to spread as a groundcover, plant the rootball in good soil, then spread out the trailing stems and partially cover them with organic mulch. Groundcover plantings can be established effortlessly, then ripped out and moved with ease when the landscape plan changes. You can make a gorgeous flower arrangement out of practically anything by sticking a few wandering Jew sprigs in with it.

Yellow-flowered **Kafir lily** cultivars are highly prized and truly rare. When given a month of cool night temperatures in autumn, followed by a six-to-eight-week rest period with very little water, a Kafir lily (*clivia*) will reward you with a spectacular bloom just as winter enters its bleakest stage. Equally important, the strap-like, dark green leaves are virtually blemish-free, making clivia an attractive foliage plant, even when not in bloom. A mature plant can be 2 to 3 feet tall and almost as wide, with long, arching sword-like leaves, so consider a large, wide-based, clay pot that won't tip over. At the same time, they prefer to be kept rootbound and can remain in the same pot for as long as five years. Behnke's

will have some very young plants that will begin to bloom in two years, so you must be patient.


Last but certainly not least is the ***Zamioculcas zamiifolia*, which you can call the "ZZ" plant.** It looks very similar in shape to the cycad *Zamia furfuracea*, also known as the cardboard palm. But the "ZZ" plant is actually in the aroid

family along with the peace lily, philodendron, Chinese evergreen, and anthurium. This unusual looking plant has thick fleshy, naturally glossy leaves. It is easy to think that the plant has had a leaf shine put on it, but we don't recommend leaf shine. Understand that these plants grow slowly, so the larger sizes will be priced on the high end of the scale. But, the "ZZ" plant



*Zamioculcas zamiifolia* "ZZ" plant.

handles low light, has low water requirements, is tough under indoor conditions, handles neglect well, and best of all, has no insect problems.

Both Behnke garden centers eagerly anticipate truckloads of tropicals that arrive in early May, along with a continuous supply of decorative containers, potting mixes, plant foods, garden gadgets and accents for your gardening enjoyment. These plants will enjoy the summer on your deck or patio and be grateful to winter over indoors. 

— by Mike Bader, Plant Buyer



## Hydrangeas, from page 3

Between these two ranges, flowers will be varying shades of purple. If a pH test reveals your soil isn't acidic enough for blue flowers, use aluminum sulfate to lower it. Lime is needed for pink flowers if your soil is too acidic.

This year brings exciting new bigleaf hydrangeas to the garden! One group premiering this year is the Halo Hydrangeas series, with variety names beginning with "Angel." They sport white-edged flowers in shades of blue, blue-violet, raspberry-violet and cherry-red (depending on pH). Picotees are quite uncommon in hydrangeas, and these Angels are sure to grace your garden with definitively eye-catching blooms. For lacecap fans, there is 'Lady in Red,' a variety selected by renowned plantsman Michael Dirr. Pink to light blue flowers age to deep rose over highly disease-resistant foliage detailed with red veins. Petioles and stems are also red, and the leaves turn deep burgundy-red in fall. This Lady really knows how to spice things up!

Two recent introductions also return this year: 'Big Daddy,' an aptly-named mophead variety bearing huge flower heads up to 14" across and thick leaves; and 'Endless Summer,' a mophead that blooms on both new and old growth, ensuring good flowering even after harsh winters or mistimed pruning. Don't let the flowers hog all the attention, however – 'Lemon Wave' sports white and yellow variegation and 'Sun Goddess' glows entirely yellow-green. And did we mention 'Nigra' with its purple-black stems?

Oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*) is native to the southeastern U.S. and brings four-season interest to the landscape. Attractive oak-shaped leaves emerge in the spring richly coated in gray-green down. Panicles of white flowers appear in summer and last until fall, changing to pink, rose and brown as they age. Fall foliage color ranges from reddish-purple to red to orange-brown, and the leaves usually remain on the plant well into late fall or even early winter. Bare winter stems show off the peeling cinnamon-colored bark that has developed on older wood. While tolerant of a full sun exposure, oakleaf hydrangeas are



'Angel Smile' (left) and 'Angel Song' have an uncommon, and very attractive, white edge on each flower.

best in a location with some degree of shade. Rarely bothered by pests, diseases or cold weather, there are many varieties available today, selected for flower characteristics and mature sizes. 'Sikes Dwarf' and 'Pee Wee' are dwarf forms that reach only 3 feet in height – perfect for those tight spaces. New to the market this year is 'Little Honey,' a yellow-leaved form of 'Pee Wee.' 'Snowflake' is a beautiful double-flowered form, with layers of petals aging to rosy brown underneath white faces with apple-green eyes. The most sun-tolerant varieties are 'Alice' and 'Snow Queen,' with the latter having the most sturdily upright flower clusters. All oakleaf hydrangeas flower from buds formed on the previous year's growth, so any pruning desired should be done right after flowering.

Panicle hydrangeas (*Hydrangea paniculata*) begin to flower when the oakleaf blooms are passing their peak, starting around midsummer, and also age to rosy pink as they dry on the plant. Their shape is something akin to stacked lacecap blooms tapering to a point. In autumn, the leaves can be yellowish or carry hints of red before they fall. Due to their mature size, these hydrangeas lend themselves well to "limbing-up," or the gradual removal of the lower branches to train it into a tree form, and as such would make fine small trees around 15 feet high. There are smaller-growing varieties, however, and 'Little Lamb,' 'Limelight' and 'Pee Wee' (yes, a different one) may only reach 6 feet in height. Other selections have been made for flower color, such as 'Angel Blush,' which ages to a deep pink. The emerging flowers of

'Limelight' are apple-green, like those of the 'Annabelle' smooth hydrangea. And lastly, the "oldie but goodie" of the group, 'Grandiflora' (a.k.a. "PeeGee") can develop huge flower clusters that last well into fall, when they turn deep rose or burgundy. *Hydrangea paniculata* does well in full sun or part shade and is quite adaptable, tolerant of urban conditions and very cold-hardy. Flowers develop on the new growth, so pruning can be done in late winter with no impact on later bloom.

If you just don't have the space for one of the shrubby specimens, consider one of their climbing cousins. *Hydrangea anomala petiolaris* (climbing hydrangea) and *Schizophragma hydrangeoides* (Japanese hydrangea-vine) are clinging vines that can anchor themselves to a variety of structures, such as wood fences, walls, arbors, trellises or old trees. While initial growth may seem slow, they will soon take off and adorn their supports with clean deep green foliage. Japanese hydrangea-vine stays flat against its support and bears lacecap flowers with large single sepals. With climbing hydrangea, the ascending stems develop short horizontal branches that bear honey-scented white lacecap flowers from late spring to early summer. Faded flowers of both species dry to a soft brown and persist until fall, when the foliage glows yellow before revealing multi-toned exfoliating bark. For added interest, 'Moonlight' *Schizophragma* has attractive silver-washed leaves with dark veins; 'Roseum' has soft pink sepals. All do best when shaded from the hot afternoon sun and given a rich, moist soil. ☞





## Behnke Teams Up with Bowie Baysox

Two of America's favorite pastimes, gardening and baseball, come together in a unique partnership that will spell fun for area families.

- Louie, the Baysox mascot, will make several appearances at Behnke's\* and a few lucky families will win free tickets to Baysox home games!
- Behnke's is sponsoring a Fireworks Night at the Baysox stadium on Saturday, June 25, 2005.
- Trained horticulturists will be on the concourses during four games this season\* to answer your gardening questions.
- Every Game Program handout this season will contain a coupon redeemable at Behnke's.

\*Date to be determined. As they become available, we'll post dates and times on our website: [www.behnkes.com](http://www.behnkes.com)

## Meet: Frank Monahan



**F**rank Monahan is the new Vice President of Marketing and Retail Operations for Behnke Nurseries.

Although he was enjoying his former job as VP of the advertising agency which handled the Behnke account, he decided to throw his hat into the ring when Behnke CEO, John Peter Thompson, began looking for an Operations Specialist. Frank had been a Director of Operations for an international company several years before and felt it was time to get back to what he loved most (in addition to marketing and advertising).

Frank is a "people person" who enjoys working with Behnke staff as well as the general public. Says Frank, "I particularly

enjoy the aspect of my job that requires the integration of people and systems, which always need adjustment and is terrifically challenging and interesting."

Frank lives happily in Fairfax, VA with his wife, Karen. His two children, both grown, are Frank, Jr. and Alexis. Frank, Jr. is a Deputy Sheriff for the City of Virginia Beach and Alexis is entering her senior year at Virginia Tech University this coming summer. Frank and Karen live in a beautiful home nestled in a small forest and garden that keeps them plenty busy when not working, especially because Frank, since coming to work for Behnke's, has been bitten by the gardening bug.

Frank, a native of Philadelphia, is a dyed-in-the-wool Eagles fan. In his free time he loves to play golf with his friends and softball with his alumni association from Penn State University.

Though he came to Behnke's straight out of the advertising market, Frank received his degree in Microbiology and Cell Biology from Penn State. He worked for 15 years for SmithKline Beecham Laboratories (now GlaxoSmithKline) as a virologist, working on critical microbiological cases such as Legionnaires Disease, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, and AIDS.

"I've been fortunate enough to work for great organizations with great opportunities and I am most proud of my early work in virology, developing testing kits for Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and AIDS (in conjunction with scientists at Dupont Labs)," says Frank, "I've also received several awards for my work in advertising with Snyder Communications, Admine.com and ProAd Advertising. My next goal is to help continue and grow the great success and longevity of the Behnke Nurseries as we celebrate our 75th Anniversary.

Frank is busy working on many exciting programs and innovations for Behnke's, including a partnership with the Bowie Baysox (see story at left) and the creation of a "Market Street" at Behnke's Beltsville, which will combine the talents and wares of local artisans in an open air market during warm weather weekends. Watch this space for more details, or sign up to receive Behnke's email newsletter (see below), which will keep you updated as plans are finalized!



The Behnke Landscape Department beautified the beds at the Baysox Stadium in Bowie, Maryland.

**Sign up now to receive our new email newsletter, which will keep you updated on specials and events at Behnke Nurseries between copies of *GardeNews*. Simply go to [www.behnkes.com](http://www.behnkes.com) and click on "Mailing List."**



## Coneflowers — A Blast of Summer Color

— by Larry Hurley, Perennial Specialist

The explosion of new cultivars of perennials continues, with new plants appearing so rapidly that sometimes we older horticulturists feel sort of like the Coyote trying to catch up with the Roadrunner. Meep-meep.

This year, Behnke Nurseries will be carrying a particularly large number of new *Echinacea* varieties, a total of perhaps 20 cultivars over the course of the year.

At the annual meeting of the *Perennial Plant Association* in 2002, we were all amazed to see orange coneflowers in a trial garden at Chicago Botanic Garden, test plants from their breeding program. Up until then, we were used to seeing pink, purplish pink, and white, with a not-real-commonly-planted yellow species to round out the spectrum. Meanwhile a private nursery, Itsaul Plants, was also breeding colorful coneflowers down south, and Terra Nova Nurseries in Oregon was fixin' to release a bunch of shorter/taller/bigger flowered/fragrant cultivars.

So for you who have mostly sun, want summer blooms, and want to attract butterflies and not deer—here are some of the new coneflowers to watch for this year.

From the Chicago program come Orange Meadowbrite™ and Mango Meadowbrite™. Growing 2 to 3 feet tall, these are trademarked names of clones from the orange 'Art's Pride' cultivar. (Even I don't quite understand it, except to say that a cultivar, set in single quotes, is a botanical name, while a trademarked name is a marketing name. Some Dutch breeder might call a rose 'Floopderwoop', and when it's released for sale in the United States, the name may be trademarked as Lustrous Pearl™ so that you, the public, are more likely to buy it. This is rather controversial, by the way, amongst those who care.) The Meadowbrites are tangerine and fragrant, and mango-yellow, respectively.

Saul Brothers breeding program developed Big Sky™ 'Sunrise' (yellow) and Big Sky™ 'Sunset' (orange), both described as vigorous growers to a height of 30 to 36 inches, with large, fragrant flowers.

'Razzmatazz' is a double pink that has been kicking around for several years—I actually saw one once—on the covers of various catalogs, generating a lot of interest. It appears that it will finally be more commonly available this year. The flowers are fully double.

From Terra Nova we have 'Fragrant Angel', with 5 inch white, fragrant flowers with horizontal petals, and 'Ruby Giant', which has deep pink, fragrant 5 inch flowers on 30 inch tall plants. 'Little Giant' is an improved dwarf, only 16 inches when in flower, with 5 inch red-purple, fragrant flowers on a 16 inch tall plant. We overwintered these three varieties at our Largo farm and should have good availability for spring and summer. Additional cultivars may be available this summer, including 'Hope', a pale pink coneflower the purchase of which benefits the Susan G. Komen Foundation's "Plant for the Cure" program.

Behnke Nurseries Perennial Department continues to stock new plants all summer, so you can plant a garden with year-round interest. Here's to a colorful summer!!



The purchase of the *Echinacea* 'Hope' benefits the Susan G. Komen Foundation's "Plant for the Cure" program. Watch for it in late summer.

Sign up now to receive our new  
email newsletter! See Page 7

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