



Bear Creek Press

"Bringing in the New"

Volume 18, Issue 1

Spring 2019

Bear Creek Heirs Apparent

After several years of search, rich rumors enough to build a healthy raised bed or two, and a short courting, the Bear has new owners. Nick and Heather Cross are now firmly in control of our friendly neighborhood garden center. Visitors to the farmers market ten years ago will remember Heather Cross as the indefatigable manager. Nick grew up in Eureka Springs so has roots more established than an oak tree. Together, their exceptional organizational skills will serve well to move the nursery into the future.

You, our gentle readers, have made this business a neighborhood nursery. This has become a gathering spot where you recognize old friends each spring and where new folks come in ready to accept the challenge of gardening in the Ozarks. A place where your questions and requests help all of us learn and grow.

As for the staff who helped over the years, our gratitude is unending. You have embraced the hard work, dedication and willingness to make everyone who visits a happy gardener. The current force, Amanda, Beth, Chad, Dusty, Nancy and Tyler, have all contributed so much to the Bear and, in doing so, have made this nursery a delight to all.

Tina and I have been humbled by all the support we have received at what started twenty five years ago as The Little Greenhouse. We have enjoyed working with fellow gardeners, writing this newsletter, sharing our lives and ranting about the changing trends in gardening through the years. Mostly we have enjoyed sharing plants, finding new treats for the flower beds and the tree or shrub that works best in your yard. We will enjoy a future at Ducky Days Demi Farm, never really stop playing in the dirt, just trimming it back a bit.

Thank you, everyone, for helping us out.

Cats Pajamas Catmint-So let's put down the smart phones for a minute and stop watching videos of cats. Focus your attention for a minute on a member of the Catmint family. This diminutive kitten of a plant will catch your eye and not let you rest. Long flowering and playful, Catmints are in bloom for most of the summer and fall. A compact mound of aromatic foliage deter deer browse. We hope you may find this cat to be more fun than the ones on your phone.

Charlotte's Web Spiderwort-The Tradescantia family includes some of our favorite native wildflowers as well as the popular houseplant, the wandering jew. Charlotte's Web is a golden perennial form that holds up well in the sun or shade. Growing to about 20 inches tall, she forms a dense mound of arching foliage. Clusters of blue flower buds are borne at the tips of the leaves, opening one per day.

Mint on Fire Monardella-This small dark-leaved herb is a terrific rock garden plant. Brightly aromatic foliage will catch your attention before a single flower emerges. Known as Hummingbird Trumpet Mint, the real show is when it flowers in a mass of tubular red blooms. A xeric plant that likes good drainage, the Scarlet Monardella is both drought tolerant and deer resistant.

Premium Daylilies-If you have not seen the latest in dazzling daylilies, you are missing an eye-popping addition to the landscape. Daring Deception Daylily is striking for the strong contrast between its purple throat and cream-pink petals. A purple pie crust edge and re-blooming habit will make it the queen of the summer garden. Marque Moon Daylily features cream petals, yellow picotee edges and, in case that is not enough, deliciously fragrant flowers. Lastly, a giant among daylilies, Ruby Spider grows to 36 inches tall with dazzling ruby red flowers a full eight inches across.

New Perennials

A perennial problem that we face seems to be which of the many new perennials are to be included in the newsletter. As usual, there are many more than space allows. This year also features marketing departments gone crazy. It seems plant producers are more concerned with catching your attention with plant names than with the plants themselves. Fortunately for gardeners, the plants' performances have lived up to their names. In no particular order, here are a few of our favorites.

Blue Ribbons Bush Clematis -Large indigo blue flowers are only one feature of this unusual clematis. The bush form is non vining, requiring just a light staking to support the foliage. Fuzzy silver seed heads adorn the foliage after bloom. June flowering attracts summer pollinators and the wandering gardener's eye. Try this delightfully uncommon clematis for everyone's sake.

Storm Cloud Blue Star-Dark shoots emerge in the spring like a pondering storm on this selection of a native favorite. Silver veined leaves fold out to form a robust mound. Amsonia, or Arkansas Blue Star, is a weather-proven perennial growing to over two feet tall. Hundreds of light blue stars cover the dense foliage in late spring. Yellow fall color finishes the show on an extremely well adapted native plant.

Bear Creek Nursery & Landscaping®

2798 Highway 23 North, Eureka Springs, Arkansas 72631
(479) 253-7466

bearcreeknursery@yahoo.com »-« www.bearcreeknursery.net

Grape Gumball Bee Balm- Another family of plants the breeders have been tinkering with is Monarda, commonly know as Bee Balm or Bergamot. Let's just say they are making some progress. Grape Gumball is the deepest colored Bee Balm, with dark magenta flowers sitting atop two foot stems. The mid to late summer blooms will please the pollinators who will be looking for prized pollen as the garden heats up.

Tres Amigos Coneflower- Three colors are the tres amigos of this new Coneflower. A color progression from coral to rose to burgundy is a very friendly combination. Compact and sturdy, the stems are covered with these strong hued flowers. Echinacea is one of our favorite native plants; Tres Amigos is a three-way addition to a great family.

Little Moonshine Yarrow- An excellent cut flower, Yarrow is a classic native plant. Tough, drought resistant and evergreen, these fern-like plants hug the ground to form a dense mat. Achillea will throw out dense umbels of small, bright-colored flowers when you are least expecting them. Little Moonshine is a perfect example with its dazzling yellow tops. A short variety, this Yarrow grows to 14 inches tall and combines well with almost any other plant.

Blue Jean Baby Russian Sage- The ultimate rugged, deer resistant perennial, Russian Sage comes in many sizes. Blue Jean Baby is a shorter, less floppy form, growing under three feet tall. A strong essence to the leaves will deter even the hungriest deer. A long blooming period, starting in mid-summer, makes a show well after other perennials have faded. As the blooms

wane in the cold, the color of the dried flowers persists through the fall.

Fashionably Early Flamingo Phlox- Someone stayed up late drinking strong coffee to think of a name for this new garden Phlox. They came up with a mouthful. This densely leaved garden Phlox blooms earlier than traditional varieties. Give this Flamingo plenty of space. At three feet tall and mildly spreading, this well dressed perennial will stand out alone or in the back of a mixed border.

Perfect Profusion Summer Sage- This brand new introduction is a perfect addition to the Salvia family. Perfect Perfection is a prolific rebloomer when the spent flowers are cut. Soft blue flowers cover a 20 inch mound of dark, dense foliage. One of our favorite deer resistant plant families, the Salvias



Spring Hours: Monday ~ Saturday, 9 to 5; Sunday 9-4

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