

# Friends of the Hort Farm Spring 2025

## Letter from the Co-Presidents

Rain, rain, *enough already!* Unfortunately, the rain canceled two workdays with no way to postpone them for another date. Because those dates were raining, too. We will survive this. Hopefully, the plants will too.

In spite of the rain, we have held successful events. Ann Hazelrigg was able to hold her Pests and Diseases event inside, the Bloom Time Festival had plenty of visitors, and everyone enjoyed themselves in spite of the storms rolling through. Sure, we got caught in the rain dashing from the new pavilion (it's amazing) to the lilacs and hiding in the little pavilion out in the lilacs to race through the lilacs during the breaks in the storms.

On another note, it pays to volunteer, as you never know what will come your way as a wonderful surprise.

When I joined the FHF, I ended up with more incredible friends, and more knowledge I could put to use, and plenty of sore muscles working in the lilacs. And offering my services to the ILS with



Josh Miller and Kitty Werner

their Journal and publishing their book, as that's what I do.

We lost a sweet lilac, 'Dr, Masters' in 2022. Tad and I fought the battle, and we lost. I put out a hopeful request to Mark DeBard of the ILS, who held the lilac zoom event last year, about getting another 'Dr, Masters' as this lilac is a bit rare. Josh Miller brought one with him and there we are, all three of us, Josh, 'Dr, Masters' and me, Kitty in front of 'Paul Thirion' to celebrate our newest lilac.

See? You never know! Thank you, Josh and the ILS.

Kitty Werner  
Hayley Hornus  
Co-Presidents

## Upcoming Events

### LILAC PRUNING WORKDAY

**Saturday, June 7, 10-12**

Now is the time to prune the dead and dying bits off the lilacs. Find out how to do it.

### IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

**Saturday, June 14, 10-12**

A walk to identify invasive plant species, ways to address the problems, and the benefits of native trees on the ecosystems and climate change.

### ANNUAL PLANT SALE

**Saturday, July 12, 9-1**

The best of plants donated by Vermont nurseries to benefit the Friends of the Hort Farm Members get first choice!

## Contents

Bloom Time Festival! May 25

The Lilac Collection

The future Miner Pollinator Garden

FHF Online Programs



Friends of the Horticultural Farm  
65 Green Mountain Drive  
South Burlington, Vermont





# Reflections on a Stormy Bloom Time Festival!

We knew ahead of time that we might have stormy weather, but we did not expect claps of thunder and flashes of lightning so close to our tent! In spite of this, our Bloom Time Festival on May 17 turned out to be a great time for everyone.



## Kid's Activities

Under a cloud of light rain, early arrivals brought parents and children who rushed into the big white tent for the Kids Activities, where they began to build fairy houses, terrariums



Getting a "tattoo". We all just had to!



with moss and stones, and garlands of willow with flowers and ribbons. At the other end of the tent, the "tattoo painter" painted flowers and animals on the arms of children of every age. Smiles and laughter filled the air, as all seemed to ignore the storm outside, until the rain became so threatening that everyone raced for sturdier cover in the new pavilion.

## Hort Farm's New Pavilion

The huge new pavilion had tables with information from the Master Gardeners on testing your soil for lead, answers to questions on gardening, information on jumping worms and seed planting, and free vegetable seeds for your garden. Mark Twery presented publications from the USDA Forest Service's education and outreach program, "The Natural Inquirer", including classroom guides for a variety of topics and coloring books for varying skill levels. He also distributed infor-



The Town Hollers

mation on invasive species gleaned from the Vermont Urban and Community Forestry program and other sources. The Friends of the Hort Farm offered information, membership opportunities, and updates on the Miner Memorial Garden. This garden, in memory of Don and Stephanie Miner, two of the founders of the Friends, is being created near the lilacs.

## All About Lilacs

Between breaks in the storm, lilac curator Kitty Werner took people on a tour of the beautiful blooms, offering information on growing lilacs, the many varieties, when they bloom and their care. Under the pavilion's awning, the Town Hollers trio gave us lively music to keep us smiling.

Happy children and parents, information on gardening and the environment, music, and beautiful lilacs made for a very good day. Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped make this a fun event in the pouring rain!



# Hort Farm Lilacs 2025

Kitty Werner, Curator

When I joined the International Lilac Society in 2019 after being appointed curator, my dream was to have someone come to our lilacs and help me identify them. May 13, I received an email from Josh Miller, of the ILS's Preservation Committee who wanted to know if he could come and do just that. Was I dreaming? How could I refuse.

Josh arrived on May 23 at 9:30 and didn't leave until 3:30. Josh and I quickly toured the lilacs, then using printouts he had downloaded off our website (<https://fhfvt.org/collections/lilacs/>), we started at 1-1 'Saugeana' and worked our way through everyone of the lilacs, row by row—at this point, about 100 of them.

Josh confirmed, corrected a name, took notes and plenty of photos of the ones he had questions about.

There were many surprises, such as when I pointed out a stray lilac that grew next to the irrigation pipe between the two 'Paul Thirion' lilacs. "That's a 'Maiden's Blush'!" Now, where did that one come from? Supposedly, we had one at one time, but the one that was named as 'Maiden's Blush' turned out to be a different cultivar.

Sadly, several lilacs had died this year, mostly likely due to the weird weather. Ones that were covered with



Josh photographing 'Capitaine Baltet'

blooms last year were reduced to a fraction of their size.

The DynaPower team had cleaned out so many dead canes, those poor lilacs looked like goners. But, if you looked down, there were plenty of new shoots surrounding the bases. There's hope!

Since we do have some lilacs that are on the rare side, Josh asked if he could dig up shoots of a few lilacs to take them to the arboretum that makes sure we

can keep these lilacs alive and thriving. With our luck here, I was thrilled.

Years ago, our little 'Dr. Masters' died. Josh presented me with a replacement from the ILS.

Josh told me he rarely enjoys being in the lilacs as he is usually focused on the job at hand.

On this visit, he thoroughly enjoyed himself. He had a chance to stop and smell the lilacs.

We both did.



L to R: Erich Sullivan, Parviz Rasulov, Thea Steeves-Boey, Carly VanOpdorp, Mark Halpin, Jaime Plouffe, Zach (Zachariah) Sundby, and Austin Wright.

On May 8th, eight volunteers from DynaPower came to work in the lilacs—six hours of cleaning out plenty of dead canes and errant trees within the lilacs, pulling out and unwinding bittersweet, and cleaning out under the lilacs. And the piles left behind?

Enormous. (Sorry, Brian.) The crew tackled many of the lilacs that hadn't seen a volunteer in years, simply because there aren't enough workdays, time or volunteers.

*Thank you, DynaPower for loaning us your amazing crew. The lilacs love you!*





# More Upcoming Programs

## Identifying And Managing Invasive Plant Species

**Saturday June 14, 10-12**

A walk to identify invasive plant species and ways to address the problems. And the benefits of native trees on the ecosystems and climate change.

## Annual Plant Sale

**Saturday, July 12. 9-1**

The best of plants donated by Vermont nurseries to benefit the Friends of the Hort Farm Members get first choice!.

## Conifer Walk

**Saturday, October 11, 10-12**

What is a conifer? How to use them in your landscape? Curator Paul Wiczorek will tell you all on this walk.

## Winter Centerpiece

**Saturday, December 6, 9-11**

Our very favorite program where you create your own centerpiece from our fresh greens and cuttings.

## Workdays

## Invasives Species Clean-up

**Saturday, September. 27, 10-12**

Now is the time to prune the dead and dying bits off the lilacs. Find out how to do it.

## Putting the Pollinator and Miner Gardens to Bed

**Saturday, October. 4, 10-12**

Join us to put our perennial gardens to bed for the winter and learn about cleanup tasks to do in your own gardens, including how to divide and transplant perennials, what plants to leave standing for wildlife, and what to mulch.

## A Message to Garden and Plant Lovers!

Every year, the Friends of the Hort Farm care for plants we call “the collections”. This is part of our mission—to care for and protect the collections, and to offer programs to our members and the general public on horticulture and gardening.

As a member of the FHF, you are part of the organization. Because your board cannot do all this alone, we are asking you to Become An Active Member and be part of the process. If you have the time and interest to help your organization, please contact Kitty Werner, [kwerner@wcvr.com](mailto:kwerner@wcvr.com), or Hayley Hornus, [Hayley.hornus@gmail.com](mailto:Hayley.hornus@gmail.com) or talk to us at one of our programs.

Become An Active Member

## Miner Memorial Garden

To honor the memory of Don and Stephanie Miner, two of the founders of The Friends of the Horticulture Farm, a new garden is being created near the lilacs. The garden will include walking paths, pollinator plants, shrubs, trees, and benches.

If you would like to volunteer on this project, contact Kitty Werner, [kwerner@wcvr.com](mailto:kwerner@wcvr.com).

We will be seeking funds to help us create this garden. If you would like to contribute to the Miner Memorial Garden, [use this link](#).