

Region 2 2025 Howard Hite Award for Hybridizing Excellence

by Gail Braunstein, Awards and Honors Chair

Jerry Marlatt, Ogden Station Daylilies



Jerry and Lisa Marlatt
following the announcement of
Jerry's winning of the Howard Hite
Award for Hybridizing Excellence

Photo by Barb Buikema

Congratulations are extended to Jerry Marlatt of Ogden Station Daylilies in Blissfield, Michigan, for winning the Region 2 Howard Hite Award for 2025.

This year members of Region 2 nominated five exceptional candidates for the Hite Award. The selection committee is composed of a representative from each state in the region. The selection of Jerry Marlatt was unanimous. Jerry has been nominated prior to this year and has definitely earned the honor of the Howard Hite Award.

Jerry has spent most of his life in the Blissfield area. He has been married to Lisa for

52 years. He and Lisa have 2 children, Anne and Nathan and 12 grandchildren. Jerry and Lisa live on the family farm, which has been in Lisa's family for nearly 150 years. The name "Ogden Station Daylilies" comes from a thriving early railroad town and it was an attempt to keep the name on the local map.

Family is incredibly important to Jerry and Lisa and they have encouraged the grandchildren to be involved in growing daylilies. Two of their grandchildren have hybridized and registered their own introductions. Granddaughter Ella registered "Perfect In Every Way" in 2020. Grandson Abram registered "Corona's Wrath" in 2021. Jerry and Lisa hope that other grandchildren will develop a love of hybridizing.

Jerry has more than met the criteria for the Howard Hite Award. It all started in 2007 when he purchased 400 unnamed seedlings from Fred Sheill, locally known as "The Daylily King." Not knowing much about daylilies, Jerry knew he loved the beautiful colors, and in 2009 he began to hybridize. His first registration 'Merry Margarite' was in 2014. Since then he has registered 111 cultivars, and has 15 names reserved for future registrations.

Jerry's hybridizing program consists of something for everyone—toothy edges, appliques, ruffles, sculptured blooms, cristate blooms, and broken patterns. All the while he has been working for better branching and bud count. Bloom size ranges from 4 to 10 inches and one can find both dips and tets.

Jerry's favorite introduction to date is "Brokenness Is What I Long For." Many of the Region 2 members who nominated Jerry expressed their love of some specific cultivars of Jerry's, including "God's Mercy," "Incredible Ada," "No Need For Dentures," and "Don't Go Bacon My Heart."



'Brokenness is What I Long For'
(Marlatt-J., 2024)

*Photos by Lisa Marlatt
unless otherwise noted*



'No Need for Dentures'
(Marlatt-J., 2020)



'Incredible Ada'
(Marlatt-J., 2014)

Photo by Mary Ann Cleary

ADS Region 2 Great Lakes Daylily

Truly an ambassador for promoting daylilies, he has spoken to a number of regional clubs and has presented at the Shirley Farmer Hybridizers' Meeting. He has a background in biology and chemistry and enjoys sharing information about weed control, pest control, and fertilizer. Jerry has donated many plants for local club and Region 2 auctions, including "I Think I Love You" and "Jolly Joanna" this year at the Summer Meeting. Many who grow 'Jolly Joanna' describe it as the whitest daylily in their garden.

The Marlatts have a Display Garden for both ADS and the National Wildlife Federation. Their farm includes a ten acre of conservation area with an emphasis on native pollinators.

Grateful for those who encouraged him, Jerry expressed how much he appreciates Charlie Harper, Mike Anders, and John Heinze. He also offered special thanks to Sandy Holmes for sharing her expertise.

Jerry has a true passion for daylilies, but the passion for his wife Lisa is second to none. Jerry says Lisa is his rock. She handles their website, takes the photos, and keeps Jerry organized. She is also in charge of composting the seedlings that just do not make the cut, the ones that Jerry just does not have the heart to toss.

His advice to beginner hybridizers is to join a daylily club and to attend as many meetings and daylily conferences as possible. He also recommends that you plan your hybridizing, but be flexible. Think outside the box and make some "crazy crosses."

Congrats Jerry! Your Howard Hite Award is well-deserved.

A special thanks to the Southern Michigan Daylily Society for sponsoring the Howard Hite Award.

Editor's Note: You can learn more about Ogden Station Daylilies and the Marlatts' hybridizing program in prior GLD articles:

Winter 2022: "Our Daylily Journey on the Family Farm" by Lisa Marlatt

Winter 2024: "Reflections of Fred Sheill" by Jerry and Lisa Marlatt

Spring 2025: "What's in a Name?" by Lisa Marlatt

The Ogden Station Daylilies website is <https://ogdenstationdaylilies.com/>.



'Jolly Joanna'
(Marlatt-J., 2016)



'Don't Go Bacon My Heart'
(Marlatt-J., 2020)
Photo by Mary Ann Cleary



One section of the field
at Ogden Station Daylilies



A variety of Jerry's promising seedlings

