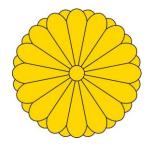
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WESTERN AUSTRALIAN





HRYSANTHEMUM "the golden flower and queen of the autumn"





May - June 2023

President's Notes

The Annual Show and Australian and State Championships are nigh. What more can I say? Exciting, isn't it?

Hopefully you still have blooms yet to reach their peak that will be at the point of perfection come show judging day on Thursday 9th May. Please take note that we like to encourage participation and so the blooms do not need to be perfect, just presentable.

We will need helpers for the show and a calendar of dates is included in this newsletter which also indicates the times when some help will be appreciated. We can sell plants and blooms this year and we will need all hands on deck on Saturday 13th after lunch to bunch the blooms for sale and pack everything away.

Our advertised social days have been well attended and participants seem to have had a good time. All those who attended Ron and Lynn Seaton's bonus home open held recently will have been impressed by his extremely well grown show plants and impressive blooms. Many of Ron's seedlings looked promising and I understand that some of the older ones, that have proven themselves over successive years, will be released in time for next season.

Make sure that you make time in your calendar for the Presentation Luncheon where we can celebrate our achievements for the year and enjoy a convivial afternoon with a great group of personable people. Personable people; how is that for inclusivity and respect? After all, we are the WACS. Would you expect anything less?

Cultural Notes

Keep the water up to your plants until you have picked the blooms. Letting the blooms wilt now will court disaster. Following these notes I reprint, once again, advice on how to keep your "too early" blooms in reasonable condition for the show.

Once the blooms are finished there will often be some small flowers at the base of the plant yet to open. Why not consider making a cross or three with these flowers. If you intend to do that then make sure you enclose the flowers in a paper bag so that the bees do not make the crosses for you. They are not choosy about what cross they make and the results are unlikely to be as good as you might hope.

Once you are finished with your plants you can either cut them back to around 20cm straight away or else leave them alone until the leaves begin dying off and falling to the ground. Very few of our growers live in areas where frost is a problem and as we do not start taking cuttings for the new season until August or September there is no need to hurry. Some growers believe that plants left to their own devices will utilise the extra time available after blooming to produce stronger stolons below the soil surface and, as a result, more and better cuttings will be produced in the new season. If trying this latter approach then keep a watch out for fungal attack or give a preventative fungicide spray after the blooms have been picked. Cutting the plants down straight after flowering requires less work and does give you an extra month or two to put your feet up and think about other things.

More Cultural Notes by Merv Bloom, from the May - June 2012 WACS Newsletter

Some Points to consider:-

No two people have exactly the same method for growing Chrysanthemums. Here are some points that you may like to consider.

For May:-

You should have finished your feeding programme by the 16th of April and no later than the 23rd. and therefore your plants will be free-wheeling it by May. Now you should study your flowers and show schedule. Choose if you're going to display or not and into what section. We should have our flowers benched by Tuesday the 8th and you will find that this is a very pleasant and informative evening. Everyone gathers together to prepare their blooms for staging. This can be an educational experience as people cut their bloom's to the given length as is dictated by the season that we have had. Some members have an adjustable height gauge to ensure that all blooms within a section are at the given height. Now you should preen and clean to the Judges requirements. Tissue paper can be used as a wading to keep the flowers vertical but don't forget to leave a hole so that the bottles can be topped up during the show. Although we are in competition you will find other members willing to help you and give advice upon presentation – it really is an enjoyable but very busy evening.

Presenting on the bench:-

Do not select your flowers on size alone as there are some that too large a bloom distracts from the aesthetic appearance. E.G. singles. Form, colour and foliage are also important and I have seen some bloom's that, in my opinion, fall short of the given criteria but still win on the bench.

- 1. Flowers should conform to the given shape as described in the classifications. Where shape and size are dictated then you must try to achieve these results. Don't be deterred if yours is not to prescription as I have seen bloom's that were almost there, take off a prize on the bench.
- 2. Flowers that have distorted or protruding disc florets, where there should be none, you should not choose.
- 3. Split, bruised and malformed petals should be very carefully removed, if possible. If you have a very steady hand you could try snipping them off, right at the bud, or gently pull them off with tweezers, but be careful. Sometimes, if they are not too bad, you are better off trying to hide them amongst the other florets. This can be done using a chopstick to gently poke them behind another petal. The judges are not going to shake the daylights out of your bloom.
- 4. If you had to puff some insecticide into your blooms before the show then wash them before bringing in for staging. This can be done by inverting the bloom into a very weak solution of detergent and softly twisting and rotating it. Do this until all the dead insects have been removed and then hold it above the bucket and twist again to remove any liquid. Hang it in this position, if you can, and let it drip dry. Then turn it right side up and with a chopstick groom and dress the petals into the correct position.
- 5. When you pick your chosen bloom's make sure that you crush the end of the stem so as to facilitate the drawing up of water. Cut the ends square and then use the heels on your Secateurs to do this procedure. I also put a couple of teaspoons of lemonade into the bucket if I'm going to store these for a day or two. This is not necessary but it is an option as it feeds the blooms if they are not fully open.
- 6. Refer to the judging points standards as stated in the handbook. Pages 21 & 22 in my copy. This will help you to ensure that you have your flower's as close as possible to what the judges are looking for. Maybe!
- 7. Make sure the stems are at the right length for this show. You will be informed closer to the time what this is to be. When you bring them in for the staging night have them longer than what is required. It is easy to cut them on site than fiddle around trying to flute in an extra piece of another stem. The display looks so much better when all the blooms are at the prescribed height.

Jobs to be done:-

- a) Keep a record of when your flowers are in full bloom.
- b) Keep a record of those cultivars that did well for you.
- c) Cull hard and destroy all those that don't look well. I put mine in a plastic bag- along with the root ball and soil and put them in the rubbish just to get them off the property.
- d) Make a list from the show of varieties that you would like to try next season
- e) Cut back stools after flowering. Be careful I have lost a few when doing this. Make sure that you have at least 2 good healthy leaves on the stump as this is what the stolen breaths with while resting. You can cut it down to ground level after new shoots have been sent up.
- f) Sprinkle around some snail and slug pellets as these pests are very active during winter.
- g) After you have removed all of your stakes, dip the ends that have been in soil, in a bucket of bleach to disinfect them. Then store in a dry place ready for next season.

This applies if you're growing for show or a garden display. There are some members who grow for show in their gardens instead of pots. These notes are intended for you as well – just apply them to your method of culture.

For June:-

Put the Chrysies to bed. Its time for them and you to have a rest. However like everything in life you still have to keep an eye upon things and there are some jobs that have to be done.

- " Keep the snail and slug pellets going.
- " Keep the weeds at bay by your chosen method.

" Ensure that pots are kept moist. They may be asleep but they still need water. I find that in our winters there is not enough rain at times and so occasionally I have to give a light sprinkle to keep them moist.

" Put your coverings away for next year. Pick a dry day so as they will not rot or go mildewy when you fold them up.

" Go for a holiday. If you're old like me may I suggest going to a warmer climate and let your old joints recuperate. The Philippines is good on a pension. If you're young or young at heart then jump on a plane and go and see Europe in spring. The flowers are great especially the acres and acres of Tulips in Holland.

Hope to see you all next season.

Merv Bloom

Bloom Heights for Exhibition (Measuring sticks will be available at the show set up.)

Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 (Show) and 10 - 55cm

Sections 6 – 42cm (*with the exception of the Forrestfield Championship which is 55cm*)

Section 8 (Blooms) - 35cm

Sections 7 (Cuts), 8 (Cuts) and 9 – no set height. A few centimetres between the top of the bottle and the origin of the lowest pedicel looks attractive. Sections 7 and 9 are staged in large bottles and Section 8 in small bottles.

Keeping Blooms in Show Condition

When looking around your Chrissie patch and planning for your show exhibits you may find that some of your blooms are likely to be at their best prior to the show. What is to be done? I have an old NCS (UK) Manual which addresses the subject. Things to try –

- 1. Retarding development. When blooms are approaching full bloom, the pots can be moved to a location having a cool, dry atmosphere and partly excluded light. Only water when essential to prevent the leaves and petals from flagging.
- 2. Keeping blooms in water. Blooms may be kept for ten days or so if they are cut early in the morning when not fully open. The lower leaves should be removed and the stems kept in deep cool water. The container should be kept in a cool location and the blooms and foliage misted occasionally with cool water. The vase water should be changed and the end of the stem re-cut daily. A commercial flower preservative such as Chrysal added to the water is effective or a home brew of Milton ½ teaspoon, Alum ½ teaspoon and Sugar 4 teaspoons per 2 litres can be used, in which case the water does not need to be changed.
- 3. Refrigeration. Blooms may be kept fresh at a temperature of 2 degrees.

I have had good success moving potted plants to a spare room in the house with curtains almost closed (technique 1.) and successfully held blooms for up to ten days before cutting. Maybe they were not at the peak of their perfection but good enough to show. This is especially valuable if needing an extra cultivar for a multi-bloom entry, such as a State or WACS Championship.

Pockett Cultivars

If you have read the WACS Show Schedule then you will know that we have a Pockett Championship and a prize for the Best Pockett bloom. Thomas Pockett of Victoria was Australia's foremost chrysanthemum breeder in the years 1890-1950 and, from the hundreds of thousands of seedlings which he produced in that time came some of, if not, the best Exhibition cultivars available anywhere in the world. Duke of Kent and its sports are still to be found in the

championship sets of leading UK growers. In our most recent update of the Australian Register of Chrysanthemum Cultivars, now available on our society web-page, the cultivars known to have been produced by Thomas Pockett are annotated as such. I think that there are more cultivars that were of Pockett origin and I look forward to hearing from knowledgeable growers if this is the case.

To get you keen, here are some photos that were included in the same newsletter as Merv Bloom's cultural notes (May - June 2012) along with some commentary.

The three blooms appearing throughout the cultural notes by Mervyn are three Pockett varieties all from the same seed and pollen stock. There was a fourth large exhibition white from the same cross named 'White Australia' however it lost vigour after a few years. I have included them as a little bit of history as they are still grown to a high standard by some growers. You will recall we celebrated the centenary of William Turner in 2010 while Louisa Pockett will reach that milestone around 2015 and Alice Benson was distributed by William Pockett while at Canterbury, Victoria in 1916.



Alice Benson



William Turner



Louisa Pockett

White Australia

Show Schedules

The schedules for the WACS Annual Show and Australian Championship are available on our website and Facebook page. Addresses can be found at the end of this newsletter. Do not forget that all show entries should be phoned or emailed to the Show Secretary no later than Sunday 7th May.

Show Week Activities

Sunday 7nd May

- Show Entries to the Show Secretary, Carl Slusarczyk.
- by phone **0480 188 875** between 3pm and 7 pm
- or email carl.lina.slu@gmail.com by 7pm.

Tuesday 9th May

- Fill bottles at Hawaiian Forrestfield from 6pm. (helpers needed)
- Bring in large show plants in pots and other exhibits for central display between 5.30pm 7pm. If you do not have the means to transport them then please contact the Show Secretary to arrange pick-up.

Wednesday 10th May

- Set up central display from 9am.
- Show tables set out from 2pm.
- Show blooms may be brought to vacant tenancy from 2pm for preliminary work.
- Staging of exhibits on show tables from 6pm.

Thursday 11th May

- Further show entries may be staged prior to 8.30am.
- Judges / Stewards report to Show Secretary by 8.45am
- Judging commences at 9am.
- Show open to the public at 9am (helpers needed to supervise display and sell pot plants)

Friday 12th May

- Show open shopping centre hours 8am 9pm (helpers needed to supervise display and sell pot plants)
- Official Opening of the Show and presentation of the Australian and State Championships at 11am in front of central display.

Saturday 13th May

- Show open from 8am (helpers needed to supervise display and sell pot plants)
- Sale of show plants and blooms from 2pm (As many helpers as possible needed from 2pm to finish.)

Naming of Blooms

Blooms entered in our show must be from cultivars recorded in the ACC Register. The latest ACC and WA Registers can be found on our society website. The blooms must be labelled with the cultivar name. Name tags will be available on Wednesday 10th May from the Show Secretary. Seedlings and blooms used in either Formal or Informal Floral Art do not need to be named.

Naming of Plants

Have you found any plants with name tags that are different to the blooms? I have and I also have one plant, the white Kokka Shi Shi, that has half sported pink. Make sure that you check all your labels against the blooms and correct any errors that you find. If you cannot be bothered to check then when you take cuttings next season from any of these mislabelled plants you will have the same problem again. If you only take cuttings from one pot of a cultivar it may be the wrong one and then you risk losing it forever. Maybe someone else will have it but maybe not.

Editor's Notes

Welcome, trendsetters, to another serving of the Notes. The photo that graces the first page of this edition shows everybody's favourite Mexican songstress, Natalia Lafourcade, in deep contemplation of the beauty of a bunch of golden flowers. Part of text accompanying the original publication includes, loosely translated from the original Spanish, reads: *I send you all my love and I leave you some yellow flowers of love*. You will remember Natalia from multiple recommendations in earlier editions; 0% vulgaridad 0% desnudos 100% talentos. Close inspection suggests that the flowers are probably Mexican marigolds rather than chrysanthemums. However, some uncertainty remains and, as advised previously, chrysanthemums and marigolds are like cousins. If you are in New York on 20th July you can see her live in concert.

Here is a pleasant collaboration that I have not previously recommended.

Natalia Lafourcade: NPR Music Tiny Desk Concert <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JODaYjDyjyQ</u>

The President writes: *The Annual Show and Australian and State Championships are nigh. What more can I say?* Ask a stupid question and get a stupid answer. So, on that happy note, let us begin.

If you grow chrysanthemums then you will have been putting many hours of work into your plants, often at the expense of your other interests and obligations. If you are the non-participant partner of a chrysanthemum grower then you may well have reprised the lyrics from a "4 Non Blondes" hit tune that I featured in an earlier edition.

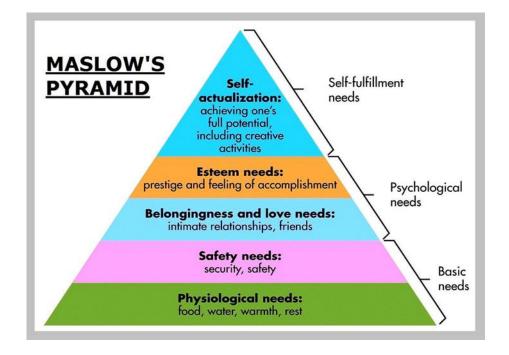
What's Up https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6NXnxTNIWkc

And so I wake in the morning	What's going on?
And I step outside	And I say, hey hey hey hey
and I see my partner staking and disbudding,	I said hey, what's going on?
muttering about the weather, the timing of	Ooh, ooh ooh
the blooms and chilli thrips and there is junk	And I try, oh my god do I try
all around the yard, the lawn is half dead and	I try all the time, in this institution
littered with dog poop	And I pray, oh my god do I pray
littered with dog poop	And I pray, oh my god do I pray
And I take a deep breath and I get real high	I pray every single day
And I scream at the top of my lungs	For a revolution

Looking on the positive side, non-participant partners now have plenty of time on their own to meditate, watching the orderly unfolding of the petals of a multitude of chrysanthemum blooms. (The Incurved Decoratives are best for this purpose.) Chrysanthemums initially evolved in China and so this Yang of feverish activity in an attempt to change the natural order to our whim on one side is finely balanced by the Yin of quiet contemplation that leads to an acceptance of life despite all of its vicissitudes on the other. Additionally, we see that within the problem lies the solution.

Lord, grant me the strength to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

I was re-reading some old chrysanthemum publications and came across an article written by Ivor Mace, doyen of UK chrysie growers, in the NCS (UK) 2008 Yearbook where he reports that after giving a lecture on chrysanthemums to a local group, he was described by one lady as being eccentric. After consulting the dictionary and discussing it with his wife he decided to wear the label proudly as a badge of honour. You will recall that some of my friends refer to our favourite flower as "chrysanthemum-mum-mummum or whatever they are". It is unfortunate that while chrysanthemum growers are engaged in an admittedly atypical but nevertheless socially acceptable activity they are viewed as being a bit odd. This had me looking up Maslow's hierarchy of needs. The hierarchy is summarised in the following diagram.



Maslow believed that we progress up the pyramid from one hierarchy to another as our needs are satisfied at each level. This ascent occurs according to our experiences and reactions to them. The three basal hierarchies correspond to Herzberg's "hygienic needs" and the upper two to his "motivators".

We see that chrysanthemum growers, like Ivor, have a feeling of accomplishment having achieved our full potential placing us firmly at the apex of the hierarchical pyramid. The eccentricity that some others see in chrysanthemum growers is simply the ultimate expression of our "self-actualisation" which they do not recognise as it is, most assuredly, a hierarchy that they have not yet achieved themselves.

An unfortunate few who have never experienced the pleasure of growing chrysanthemums and, in consequence, deride the pastime may never progress far beyond the third tier of hygienic needs. Some of our critics may actually be "anal retentive". This is a Freudian concept which is occasionally but erroneously taken to mean "full of sh.." However, as you know, languages continue to evolve as new meanings for existing words and phrases become part of common usage and the meaning is apt. In proper Freudian theory it correctly suggests that they are locked in the "Anal Stage",

just above the "Oral Stage", both of which correspond to Maslow's first tier.



It is a fact that chrysanthemum growing requires almost a full year of devotion to the task and is a stern test of a person's grit, determination and emotional maturity.

In the 1960s, a Stanford professor named Walter Mischel began conducting a series of important psychological studies.

During his experiments, Mischel and his team tested hundreds of children — most of them around the ages of 4 and 5 years old — and revealed what is now believed to be one of the most important characteristics for success in health, work, and life.

One experiment began by bringing each child into a private room, sitting them down in a chair, and placing a marshmallow on the table in front of them. At this point, the researcher offered a deal to the child. The researcher told the child that he was going to leave the room and that if the child did not eat the marshmallow while he was away, then they would be rewarded with a second marshmallow. However, if the child decided to eat the first one before the researcher came back, then they would not get a second marshmallow.

So the choice was simple: one treat right now or two treats later. The researcher left the room for 15 minutes. As you can imagine, the footage of the children waiting alone in the room was rather entertaining. Some kids jumped up and ate the first marshmallow as soon as the researcher closed the door. Others wiggled and bounced and scooted in their chairs as they tried to restrain themselves, but eventually gave in to temptation a few minutes later. And finally, a few of the children did manage to wait the entire time.

Published in 1972, this popular study became known as The Marshmallow Experiment, but it wasn't the treat that made it famous. The interesting part came years later.

The Power of Delayed Gratification

As the years rolled on and the children grew up, the researchers conducted follow up studies and tracked each child's progress in a number of areas. What they found was surprising. The children who were willing to delay gratification and waited to receive the second marshmallow ended up having higher SAT scores, lower levels of substance abuse, lower likelihood of obesity, better responses to stress, better social skills as reported by their parents, and generally better scores in a range of other life measures. The researchers followed each child for more than 40 years and over and over again, the group who waited patiently for the second marshmallow succeed in whatever capacity they were measuring. In other words, this series of experiments proved that the ability to delay gratification was critical for success in life.

The ability of chrysanthemum growers to delay the immediate gratification of their hygienic needs for a full year in exchange for the promise of future rewards at the end of the growing season is another indicator of our high "emotional intelligence" and the attainment of the pinnacle of Maslow's hierarchies. The ability to succeed at chrysanthemum growing clearly requires a higher measure of emotional intelligence (high EQ) than our critics possess and is the reason why they cannot understand our motivations. Growers who have a season's work wiped out by chilli thrips but resume growing the following year are an exemplar to all. My wife says that the blooms of Mount Shasta look like giant marshmallows, so next time you flower one of those two up you can give yourself a well-earned pat on the back.

Enough of this self-adulation.

A man walks into a bar with his dog. The bouncer stops him and says "You can't bring your dog in here mate." The man replies "This is no ordinary dog. This dog can talk!" Pull the other one." says the bouncer. "OK, I will prove it" says the man. He says to the dog "What is on top of a house?" "Roof" says the dog. The man says "What is on the branches of a tree?" "Bark" says the dog. "What type of bird has huge eyes? asks the man. "Owl" says the dog. The bouncer has been having a hard day and is fed up with people "taking the piss" and so he grabs the man and his dog by the scruffs of their necks and throws them into the street. There they are, lying in the gutter and the dog turns to the man and asks "Which one did I get wrong?"

As you know, from previous Notes, I like to talk to my dog Louis. He follows me everywhere he can, so there are plenty of opportunities for conversation. Given my current status as a retired medico I regard myself as a bit of a Doctor Dolittle and so I feel that I really am able to have meaningful conversations with him. When we took Louis to the clinic for his annual vaccinations and check-up the vet told us, in front of Louis, that "he is not a young dog any more". This has had Louis asking the deep questions including, what happens after death? I gave him a rundown of the possibilities, according to scientists, philosophers and the teachings of major religions. He was most dismayed with the idea that humans could go to heaven whereas dogs cannot. Louis is sure that I will go to heaven, as in his eyes I am perfect. I should say at this point that dogs are not known as dumb animals solely because they cannot talk.

Louis has now converted to Buddhism in the hope that he will be reborn as a human and then he can go to heaven as well and we may spend eternity together. We discussed the likelihood that there might be a few lifetimes between dog and human. After recovering from the gratuitous insult and consulting a zoology text Louis has mapped out the "journey" as follows: Dog > Embrace Buddhism > Lemur > Baboon > Gibbon > Bonobo > Human > Baptism > Heaven. Now that he has become a Buddhist, I asked Louis what he thought the savage Doberman that we pass by on our

daily walks might come back in the next life as and he suggested a chilli thrips. With my social worker hat on I pointed out that there was no indication that his humans had ever taken him for a walk, let him inside the house or shown him any love. Louis was aghast at the realisation that a human's best friend could ever be treated so badly and suggested that the owners should come back as E. coli so that they would be where they belong.

Many dog owners are not only dismayed that their pet will not go to heaven with them but also that their best friend will likely perish before they do. As a result, there has been some interest in cloning dogs. The first dog was successfully cloned in 2005. Since then, over 1500 dogs have been cloned. You can read all about it here.

Insights from one thousand cloned dogs <u>https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-022-15097-7</u>

I mentioned previously that dogs can teach us mindfulness. Louis explained it to me thus:

Mindfulness is paying attention to the present moment with openness, curiosity and without judgement.

He was discussing the concept at the local park with 永乐 the Shih Poo (a.k.a. Pooshie or Shoodle, a Shih Tzu / Poodle cross breed; not to be confused with a Poo Shi, which is a cross between a poodle and a Shiba Inu) who reminded him of a poem by Tao Yuanming, the famous Chinese poet and chrysanthemum wine drinker and grower who has been featured in previous Editor's Notes.

The myriad transformations unravel one another And human life how should it not be hard? From ancient times there was none but had to die, Remembering this scorches my very heart. What is there I can do to assuage this mood? Only enjoy myself drinking my unstrained wine. I do not know about a thousand years, Rather let me make this morning last forever.

I asked Louis his opinion on the remarks of my friends and Ivor's lady.

He said, "Let me put it this way."

I built my home in a zone of heritage protection, Yet near me there sounds no noise of horse or coach. Would you know how that is possible? Trees that are near create a shaded wilderness round them. I pluck tennis balls falling from the roof of the shade house, Then gaze long at the ball thrower, Who is now preoccupied, Tending his chrysanthemums; In these things there lies a deep meaning; Yet when we would express it, words suddenly fail us.

Ah, Louis, always the diplomat!

Now is a propitious time for another haiku.

The chrysanthemum house; A golden retriever walks in. Water sound.

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Forthcoming Meetings & Events

Annual Flower Show	Thursday 11 th to Saturday 13th May 2023 Hawaiian Forrestfield Shopping Centre	
Awards Luncheon	11:30 - 3:00 pm Tuesday 23 rd May 2023 John McGrath Pavilion, 97 Hensman Street, South Perth.	
WAHC Garden Clubs' & Societies' Plant Fair	9 th & 10 th September 2023 South Perth Community Centre	
AGM & General Meeting	Noon, Tuesday 12 th September John McGrath Pavilion, 97 Hensman Street, South Perth.	
Distribution Day	1:30 pm Sunday 29 th October 2023 John McGrath Pavilion, 97 Hensman Street, South Perth.	
General Meeting	Noon, Tuesday 14 November 2023 John McGrath Pavilion, 97 Hensman Street, South Perth.	

Facebook Page

https://www.facebook.com/groups/chrysanthemumwa/

Website

www.chrysanthemumwa.com

Mentors

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... and now for something completely different (and very good).