



Show Me Hostas Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 7

October, 2008

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



President Jeff Hall
Photo by Kelly Hall

Wow, fall arrived quickly! What a year – could not have asked for much better weather for hostas. Now we move onto the fall cleanup.

Speaking of fall clean up... I get a ton of questions about what to do with the leaves. If you are like us, we have a healthy population of voles. We have found that leaving the leaves down just makes it more convenient for those little buggers to tunnel around and gorge themselves on hosta roots. So I believe in

cleaning up the leaves as best as possible so as not to make the voles feel welcome.

Pam has really been busy setting up meetings and arranging the Christmas Party; read more later in the newsletter. We are going to try something new so let us know what you think.

We have been receiving a bunch of ideas for trips, future meetings, and all kinds of ideas to make our society more fun. Keep those ideas flowing!

Also, remember to bring your biggest ugly slug photo to the October meeting. We will be judging them during the meeting on Oct 12. The winner gets a gift certificate to Avalon Acres nursery!

Well, get out there and get dirty while you can. It won't be long and you will be shoveling snow and wishing it was warm enough to work the soil.

Jeff Hall

2008 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- October 12** **Meeting.** Author and radio personality **Mike Miller**
1:00 PM at the Creve Coeur Community Center
- December 7** **Holiday Party –** Catered lunch
1:00 PM at the Creve Coeur Community Center

October 12, 2008 Meeting

1:00 PM at Creve Coeur Community Center

Our October meeting will feature guest speaker Mike Miller, host of KMOX radio's Garden Hotline. Mixing humor and often sympathy with practical information, Mike Miller answers callers' questions on topics covering a wide range of gardening subjects. He has been a staff member of the Missouri Botanical Garden and an instructor at Meramac Community College, is the author of four gardening books and currently runs a landscape planning and consulting firm.

Mr. Miller will speak about the Missouri Botanical Garden's Climatron – its history and construction. Also included will be seasonal gardening information followed by a question and answer period.

Bring your garden questions – your troubles, your problems, your failures or just plain curiosity. Mr. Miller will have an answer for you.

Most of all, bring a friend to what will certainly be an entertaining afternoon.

Mark December 7 on your calendar

The last event of the year, the St. Louis Hosta Society's holiday party, has been scheduled for **Sunday, December 7, 1:00 PM at the Creve Coeur Community Center**. This year the Society is trying something different. Instead of in the evening, this year's event will be held at our regular meeting location, day of the week and time. A dinner will be catered by *At Your Fingertips Catering*.

Since this will be a catered meal, the Society must have an accurate count of members and guests who plan to attend. Reservations are required. The cost is \$5.00 for members and significant other. Non-members cost is \$10.00 each. There will be a sign-up sheet at the October meeting. If you are unable to attend the meeting, an **RSVP** with a check for the appropriate amount of money must be mailed to Pam Wolkowitz by November 14:

**Pam Wolkowitz
6434 Oak Crest
Hillsboro, MO 63050**

For further information see the enclosed/attached Christmas party flyer.

It's not too late!

The '**Meet Me in St. Louis**' DVD containing a photographic tour of the events and gardens featured during the American Hosta Society 2008 National Convention has been recently completed and distributed to attendees and members who ordered the keepsake.

The St. Louis Hosta Society has **extended the deadline** for ordering a copy of this DVD to **October 15**. Please note that no orders will be accepted after this date. If you receive your newsletter by email, the DVD order form is in an attachment. If you receive a postal copy of the newsletter, the DVD order form will be on a special inserted sheet. The order form is also available on the Society's web site. Mail the completed order form along with a check for \$10 to:

**Dave Poos
9904 Crestwood Drive
Crestwood, MO 63126**

***** DON'T FORGET *****

GROSS GARDEN CONTEST instigated by Jeff Hall

Well they say if you can't beat them join them, or at least take their picture and profit from them.

Kelly and I like to visit the Pacific Northwest and while we are hiking there we always come across gigantic slugs. We have seen them exceed 6 inches in length. Thank goodness we do not have those here. But I started to wonder, just how big do they get in this area? This gave me an idea. We should have a ***SLUG PHOTO CONTEST!***

The next time you come across a large slug in your garden, take its photo next to a ruler before you dispose of it (our koi love that part). Bring your best picture to the October 12th meeting, where, as a group, we will vote on the largest slug. Pictures must be from your garden only. Winner gets a **\$25.00 gift certificate** to Avalon Acres in Effingham, IL. See sample photo below.



Future Regional and National Events

Winter Scientific Meeting – Jan 17, 2009 – Shaumburg, Illinois

Midwest Regional Hosta Society Convention – June 11-13, 2009 – Champaign, Illinois

American Hosta Society Convention – June 24-27, 2009 – Lansing, Michigan

Oh, what a beautiful day !

On a perfectly beautiful fall afternoon in September, society members gathered at the Missouri Botanical Garden. After a short business meeting, Vice-president Pam Wolkowitz introduced our host Mr. Daman Williams.



Before going ‘backstage’ to the green houses and potting area and then on to the hosta beds themselves, Mr. Williams talked a bit about the composition and care of the hosta garden. Mr. Williams, a thirty year employee of the garden, has spent the last six years overseeing the hosta and Spink Pavilion areas besides pruning all the Garden’s many hedges.



The Marie Schaeffer Shelds Hosta Garden was established in 1982 in an area previously allocated to an orchard. The area currently contains 230 different cultivars plus sixteen different species. Mr. Williams purchases cultivars in the spring of each year usually from Green Hill Farms (his favorite source), www.hostahosta.com, or Plant Delights Nursery, www.plantdelights.com.



The newly arrived plants are potted using FAFARD 52 MIX potting soil about the first week in April. After spending a month in pots the new plants are transferred to their permanent place in the hosta beds. Once a year, Mr. Williams applies a 20-20-20 fertilizer. He waters each bed once a week. Mulching with one inch of wood chips each fall helps keep the weeds at bay and moisture in the soil. While some parts of the Botanical Garden are troubled by moles and voles, so far the hosta areas have been spared. Mr. Williams does do constant battle with the hosta’s nemesis – slugs. Southern Blight is controlled through the use of SYSSTAR.



Mr. Williams was a well informed and gracious host. What better way to spend a mild, sunny day than wandering through a hosta bed with fellow hosta friends.

Thank you Mr. Williams.

Thank you Rick, Joan and Barb

After five years of service as hospitality chairmen, Rick and Joan Clarkson would like to serve the Society in another capacity. In January they will hand over the reigns to Barb Moreland. The Society members thank Rick and Joan for their dedication – we were never without nibbles and drinks, all served from a nicely decorated table.

We also thank Barb for graciously volunteering to take this position. There's a lot more to this job than meets the eye. Next time you see Rick, Joan and Barb give them a big **THANK YOU** and give Barb a helping hand.

COMPANION CORNER



BEGONIA GRANDIS – hearty begonia

When other plants are looking tired and ragged, Begonia Grandis starts putting on its show. A delicate looking plant, it is amazingly hearty. Its foliage is slow to appear in the spring so don't distress that winter cold has killed it. Delicate pink bloom spikes held loosely above the leaves appear in August and continue until frost.

The true beauty of this plant is not its flowers but its wonderful foliage. Approximately 18 to 24 inches tall, the plant's leaves have green fuzzy tops with red veins and striking mahogany colored undersides. This combination is particularly attractive when the leaves flutter in fall breezes.

Plant this hearty begonia in light shade in normal garden soil – well-drained, average water requirements preferred. Propagation is from seed or from the bulblets that form in late fall at the leaf axils of the plant. These bulblets can be left to root in the ground or placed in pots.

Give this plant a second look when searching for a shade lover to compliment your hostas.

St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

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618-462-2540
hostaluv92@yahoo.com

Membership Information

The American Hosta Society

Contact: Sandie Markland
8702 Pinnacle Rock Ct.
Lorton, VA 22079-3029
AHSMembershipSecretary@earthlink.net
Dues: Individual \$30 per year, Family \$34 per year

Midwest Regional Hosta Society

Contact: Pete Postlewaite
21172 Andover Road
Kildeer, IL 60047
mrhs.treasurer@midwesthostasociety.org
Dues: Individual \$20 for two years

St. Louis Hosta Society

Contact: Dave Poos
9904 Crestwood Drive
Crestwood, MO 63126
dpoos@juno.com
Dues: \$7 per year, \$18 for three years
Family or Individual

Meetings held at **1:00 PM** at the **Creve Coeur Government Center, 300 N. New Ballas, 63141** (between Ladue Road and Olive), unless otherwise noted.

Visit our Web site

www.stlouishosta.org

Other Hosta and Garden Web Sites

American Hosta Society – <http://www.hosta.org/>

Midwest Hosta Society – <http://www.midwesthostasociety.org>

Hosta Library – <http://www.hostalibrary.org>

Hosta Forum – questions/answers – <http://forums.gardenweb.com/forums/hosta/>

Mini Hosta forum – <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/minihosta>