



# Show Me Hostas Newsletter

Volume 11, Issue 7

October, 2010

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



**Pam Wolkowitz President**  
*Photo by Kelly Hall*

Hello Everyone!

What a change in the weather. I certainly am enjoying the cooler temps. The weather change also means leaf season will soon be here and the closing down of the hosta beds. Both are rather big jobs. But then we will all have some down time as winter comes. At the next meeting I will give a few ideas of how I close down my garden. This will

Be a good time for us to share what each one of us does and ask some questions.

Chester and I went shopping last Saturday...for trees for the new garden. We will need some shade quickly, so bought the biggest trees we could afford. I thought for a while that I might have to go back to work. After getting them in, it is starting to take shape and we are very hopeful for a spring planting. We will be bringing in good garden soil next and putting in berms...lots of berms. Hope to get that done in the next couple of weeks.

Hope to see everyone at the next meeting!

*Pam*

## 2010 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**October 17**

**Meeting with Speaker Dave Wanninger**

**'Plants for Success in the Shade Garden'**

1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

**November 21**

**Meeting with 'Show St. Louis Hosta Society' DVD**

1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

**December 5**

**Holiday Party**

1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

**NEXT NEWSLETTER WILL ARRIVE AT THE END OF OCTOBER**

### **Coming Event – October**

**'Plants for Success in the Shade Garden'**  
**Dave Wanninger of Beaver Creek Nursery**

**St. Louis Hosta Society**  
**October 17, 1:00 PM.**

Dave is the chief horticulturist at Beaver Creek Nursery, a Northern Illinois wholesale nursery founded in 1988 by Roy and Sarah Klehm. Klehm's Song Sparrow Farm is the retail mail order/internet sister company of Beaver Creek Nursery.

Dave has previously operated a landscaping company and was the nursery manager at a large independent garden center. He is also a longtime instructor in the Horticulture and Landscaping program at Blackhawk Technical College in his hometown of Janesville, Wisconsin. Dave frequently speaks at horticultural and garden society meetings and has been a presenter at the Midwest Hosta Society's Winter Scientific Meeting.

When not gardening, Dave says he enjoys reading, bicycling and fine wines, although not usually at the same time. Don't miss what promises to be an enjoyable and informative afternoon. For more information about the Klehm's nurseries visit: [www.songsparrow.com](http://www.songsparrow.com) and [www.beavercreeknursery.com](http://www.beavercreeknursery.com).



## **IT'S RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER**

### **THE LAST EVENT OF THE YEAR**

### **THE ST. LOUIS HOSTA SOCIETY HOLIDAY PARTY**

**Sunday, December 5 at 1:00 PM**

### **RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED**

See the flyer at the end of this newsletter (postal version) or the second e-mail attachment (e-mail version) for all the information you need to attend this fun year-ending event. Mark your calendar and send in your reservation now.

## **Keeping Your Garden FUN**

My husband and I recently attended a St. Louis Water Society event where the guest speaker was Jamie Beyer, who labeled himself as 'a guy just trying to have a good time'. That became the focus of his presentation. In his talk, Jamie presented many different ways in which gardeners can keep their hobby fun and interesting. Following are some of Jamie's tips.

**Keep it fun in whimsical ways.** Use interesting hardscape such as signs with thoughtful or smile-inducing sayings, artwork, unusual birdhouses, or maybe a unique rock or water feature. Give your beds fun names or add unusual plants which can become great conversational pieces (think Voodoo Lily).

**Keep it fun by the way you allocate your gardening time.** Relax a bit and take a moment to sit on that perfectly placed bench. Go to seminars and presentations. Visit other gardens and public parks.

**Keep it fun by how you view your garden.** If a plant dies, think of it as an opportunity – more space for another plant. Jamie said sarcastically 'if you want something that will not die, then plant Creeping Charlie'. Do not let negatives dominate the way you view your garden as visitors will not see those flaws unless you point them out. Remember the old saying 'we are our own worst critics'. Don't apologize for the way it looks or is designed. After all, this is your garden; look at the beauty of what you have created. Accept the fact that your garden is never going to be done - before you collapse of heatstroke. Embrace change rather than be depressed about it. Trees will die. Shade beds become sunny. Things wear out, we included.

**Keep it fun by how you manage your garden.** Jamie suggests 'have your spouse do the work'. Keep your garden a size that you can manage whether it's a condo deck or an acre or more. Plant cultivars that grow well, but also include some challenges. Add new plants or move them around for a new look. View those nuisance animals and plants as part of nature and find a way to live with them.

**Finally, keep it fun by sharing.** Share your garden by inviting people to tour or party. Share your time by volunteering at a public garden, your own society or helping a neighbor. Share your knowledge. Share your money by becoming a member of an arboretum or public garden.

Some of Jamie's thoughts resonated with us as I am sure they do with you too.



Bill Ruppert making a point

## September 19 meeting

### Bill Ruppert discusses the trials, the tribulations, the selected plants in St. Louis' new *Citygarden*.



Answering questions from Jim Weidman,  
Pam Wolkowitz and Phyllis Weidman.

Bill Ruppert, a commercial landscape designer, worked with June Hutson of the Missouri Botanical Garden to review and revise the plant lists submitted by the principle developer to be used in St. Louis' new downtown *Citygarden*. Bill has noticed that big changes are taking place. Plant lists are leaning more toward the use of native plants. The environmental side of plants is more important now. The challenge is to bring and maintain these types of plants in the landscape.

*Citygarden*, like most of our own gardens, has a BIG rabbit problem. They love to nest in the lawn area inside the Serra sculpture. Rabbits have completely devoured the Baptisia and Coneflower. Trapping and relocating is an on-going operation, but so far the rabbits are winning the battle.

Another problem encountered is waiting for the shade trees to grow. The large ones cost \$25,000 apiece and arrived on semis. Tree types include Swamp White Oak and Kentucky Yellowwood. Plants under the trees were hard hit by this summer's long stretches of high temperatures and humidity.

The third large problem plaguing the area is drainage. The area receives rain run-off from numerous concrete surfaces in the area. Some grading was done to funnel the excess water into a more boggy location populated with plants more accustomed to wet feet.

Following are some of the plants Bill and June recommended for *Citygarden* that would fit in our own gardens. Of course, hosta and daylily were on Bill's list.

Amsonia hubrichtii and Amsonia 'Blue Ice' – hold soil, resistant to rabbits, drought tolerant, fall color

Aster – the Wood series (short), 'Purple Dome' (midsize) and Aster ericoides for dry semi-shade

Geranium – 'Bevan's Variety', 'Biokovo', 'Karmina', but NOT 'Rozanne'

Rudbeckia fulgida – this native is best, NOT 'Goldstrum' which gets black spot.

Solidago (Goldenrod) 'Fireworks' – note that ragweed causes hay fever, not goldenrod

Nepeta (Catmint) – deer and rabbit resistant, likes dry soil

Ferns – athyrium 'Pictum' and 'Ghost'; dryopteris 'Brilliance'

Astilbe chinensis – the Visions series and 'Pumila'

Brunnera 'Jack Frost' and 'King's Ransom' – deer resistant

Helleborus 'Royal Heritage', 'Ivory Prince' – total deer resistance

Schizachyrium (Little Blue Stem) – 'The Blues', 'Prairie Blues', 'Blue Heaven'

Sporobolus (Prairie Dropseed) 'Tara' – the lirope of the prairie

Carex 'Blue Zinzer', 'Bunny Blue', Carex pensylvanica for dry shade, good color, texture

Shasta Daisy 'Becky'

Panicum virgatum (native switch grass) - 'Cheyenne Sky', 'Northwind', 'Haense Herms'

Iris siberica (Siberian Iris) 'Caesar's Brother'

Eupatorium (Joe Pye Weed) 'Little Joe'

For more, visit Bill's web site [www.NNPSTL.com](http://www.NNPSTL.com)



*Picture taken from the Hosta Library,  
(Photographer unknown)*

## **Is this pest in your garden?**

**Check your plants in fall and start planning for battle**

### **Foliar nematodes: another hosta plague**

At the September meeting of our hosta society, Phyllis Weidman brought samples of leaves showing evidence of various diseases. One disease that makes its presence known in the fall is foliar nematodes. Scientists seem to agree on the name of the pest and its path of destruction, but not on sure methods of eradication.

Symptoms begin to appear in the Midwest in August and September. Leaf damage initially appears as stripes of yellow turning to tan tissue running parallel to and bordered by the leaf's major veins, often forming a V-shaped pattern. Typically, the damage shows up first on older, lower leaves. Over time the tissue dies and may drop out or tear giving the leaf a tattered appearance. It's usually not fatal, just ugly.

The cause of this destruction is a microscopic worm that swims in thin layers of water that form on stems and leaves. The foliar nematode enters the leaf through its pores or wounds or by puncturing the surface with its stylet, a needle like organ used for piercing and feeding. Once inside, the worm moves between cells, feeding and reproducing within the leaf tissue. The female lays 20 to 40 eggs that go through several larval stages before becoming adults. The process takes 10 to 14 days. Once the eggs hatch, the nematode exits the damaged leaf and moves on to new feeding areas.

To confirm nematode existence, remove small pieces of the damaged tissue and place in a clear glass dish. Add enough water so that the edges are submersed. After a few hours, examine the water by holding the dish over a light. The nematodes will be actively moving, glistening white threads. My grandson would love seeing this.

According to research done by Dr. Grewal at Ohio State University, nematodes can survive on soil fungi and over winter in the soil as well as in plant crowns and debris. Cold temperatures do not eliminate this worm. As hosta leaves dry in the fall, nematodes dry along with them. If the leaves aren't removed, they can spread infection to new areas when blown about by the wind. Moisture and warm weather starts their life cycle over again.

Now here's the crux of the problem. Once a plant shows symptoms, how do we eradicate the cause? There seem to be several approaches.

AHS suggests removing all plants, hostas and others that show symptoms from the garden and relegate to a landfill, NOT the compost heap. Also remove the plants' neighbors up to a 6 foot radius. AHS states "In two to three years your garden could be virtually nematode free". While this might work, it seems pretty drastic and impractical to me. Imagine a garden with six-foot circles scattered about in it.

A second method suggested by AHS and Dr. Grewal involves 'cooking' the hosta clump. Both sources recommend submerging dormant plants in a hot water bath for 20-25 minutes at 120 degrees or ten minutes at 130 degrees (Dr. Grewal says 10 minutes at 124 degrees). Phyllis' source stated that only the

*Continued on next page*

crown need be subjected to the heat. Heat kills both the worms and their eggs. The treated crowns should be replanted in fresh soil, not in the same site unless the soil has been saturated with 141 degree hot water. Beware! AHS states that 'the lethal temps and times for hostas are very close to these "recommended" ones, thus you will kill all the roots on the hostas and maybe the whole plant'.

The Hoosier Hosta Herald in its February 2006 issue offered this approach given by hosta grower and breeder Ran Lydell:

SPRING. First application. – Disyston as in Bayer (brand) Advanced Rose and Flower Care, with fertilizer at 12-18-6. It's a granular systemic product that he gets from Home Depot.

MID and LATE SUMMER. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> applications - Zerotel (1T. per gallon of water).

FALL. 4<sup>th</sup> application - Household bleach at 25% concentration.

Ran says he is not sure which product is more effective or if any one treatment is sufficient, but after this treatment, the affected hostas show no noticeable damage.

Finally, the last suggestion is to choose to live with them. This choice obviously depends upon how many and how badly your plants are infected. Just be a good gardener and make sure you don't pass your problem on to someone else. Don't donate infected plants to a society sale or auction.

The best control of all is to be a proactive gardener. Buy clean plants. This isn't always easy as many of the hosta diseases do not appear until late in the growing season. Buying from reputable nurseries gives you a fighting chance. Water carefully. Drip irrigation is best, but not always practical. Finally develop good sanitation practices. Remove and destroy heavily infested plants. Pick off and destroy infested leaves. Keep your garden clean of old plant debris.

For more information, visit the following web-sites: [www.extension.iastate.edu](http://www.extension.iastate.edu) (select Publication, then type 'hosta diseases' in the Search box; AHS site [www.americanhostasociety.org](http://www.americanhostasociety.org); Dr. Grewal research at Ohio State University [www.ag.ohio-state.edu](http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu).

## **Welcome new members**

The Society is delighted to welcome new members:

**Karla Abel of Pacific, MO**

**Kevin & Mara Redecker of Crestwood, MO**

Look for them at future meetings and introduce yourselves. Show them how welcoming and friendly we all are. We hope all our members, new and old alike, will attend October's meeting and listen to our guest speaker Dave Wanninger.

## St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

**Pam Wolkowitz** - President  
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**Joan Poos** - Newsletter Editor  
314-821-1622  
[dpoos@juno.com](mailto:dpoos@juno.com)

## Membership Information

### The American Hosta Society

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

### Midwest Regional Hosta Society

Contact: Barb Schroeder  
1819 Coventry Drive  
Champaign, IL 61822  
[mrhs.treasurer@midwesthostasociety.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://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>



# St. Louis Hosta Society Holiday Party



**Sunday, December 5 at 1:00 p.m.**

at the Creve Coeur Government Center  
300 N. New Ballas, St. Louis, MO 63141  
(between Ladue Rd. and Olive)

**Join us for a FUN afternoon with all your friends  
in the St. Louis Hosta Society! We will enjoy a  
catered lunch and a cash bar will be available.**

Reservations are required. Price is \$10.00 each for  
members and significant other. Non-members \$10.00  
each. Please RSVP by mailing your check made  
payable to the St. Louis Hosta Society to:

Dave Poos  
9904 Crestwood Dr.  
Crestwood, MO 63126

Deadline for reservations is Nov. 21.

**Don't miss out, make your reservations now!**



Contact Karen Frimel with any questions at [cckmf@aol.com](mailto:cckmf@aol.com) or call 314-993-6222.