



Volume 14, Issue 9

November, 2013



Phyllis Weidman President

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Fall has arrived, time for hosta growers to think about cleaning beds and moving pots. It is a bittersweet time of the year. We look back to see which hostas did what we hoped they would; we decide which ones lost their space in our garden; and we note which ones surprised us by still looking pretty good in the garden. It is the time to promise ourselves that next year we will do the foliar fertilizer or spray for deer more regularly. Personally, I am happy to simply put the garden to bed.

Just because our gardens are going to sleep does not mean the Society is going to sleep. In the next months there are lots of activities.

We start with the Board Meeting on November 3rd. You say, "Why should I go to the Board Meeting?" This is the meeting at which next year's activities are planned. Don't you want to have a say in what we are going to be doing?

Then on December 5th or 6th, we are going as a group to the Missouri Botanical Garden for Garden Glow, followed shortly on December 8th by our Holiday Celebration. Lots of fun! Read about these activities in detail in the Newsletter.

Then you will have time until February, when the St. Louis Hosta Society springs back to life with meetings and fun for 2014.

Phyllis

2013 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| November 3 | Board Meeting
12:00 lunch, 1:00 meeting
Phyllis Weidman home
508 Essex Court
Kirkwood, MO 63122 |
| December 8 | Holiday Party
1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center |
| January 18, 2014 | MRHS Winter Scientific Meeting
Wyndham Hotel; Lisle, Illinois |
| June 11-14, 2014 | American Hosta Society National Convention
Cedar Rapids, Iowa |
| June 26-28, 2014 | Midwest Region Hosta Society Convention
Green Bay, Wisconsin |

Last newsletter of 2013
First newsletter of 2014 will be sent at the end of January
Our first meeting will occur in February

Want to try something new
Want a distraction from the snow, ice and cold of winter
Need a gardening fix in the middle of January

AHS On-line Auction

The AHS On-Line Auction raises funds for the society's publication *The Hosta Journal*. Held each winter in mid to late January, the auction offers that winter respite we all so need. Home gardeners offer pieces of their prized hostas, businesses display their new offerings, and hybridizers introduce their newest creations, all to help raise funds and draw attention to the plants we all love. Items, posted with descriptions and photos, include plants, seeds and garden related treasures. Donors and bidders from all over the country and overseas are represented.

This is strictly an on-line auction, similar to the Lily Auction (for daylilies). However, it runs for only 7 to 10 days. A live link is typically placed on the AHS Home Page near the middle of the month prior to the auction beginning (December). News is distributed via email notices and on the AHS website.

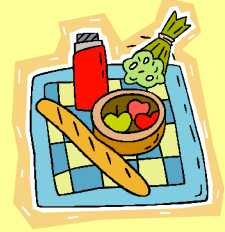
Enter the AHS website, www.americanhostasociety.org, click on the AUCTIONS tab on the left. There is an explanation of how the auction works and how to register. Click on "How It Works (pdf)". To see items offered for auction last January, click on "2013 Summary".

IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

Fall Board Meeting



**November 3, 2013
12:00 noon lunch; 1:00 PM meeting**



**Home of President Phyllis Weidman
508 Pointe Essex Court, Kirkwood, MO 63122
RSVP - 314-965-7027 or Pow1031@gmail.com.**

All members are invited to join our Board members for a delicious lunch, a fabulous dessert and a spirited meeting. The agenda includes such items as setting 2014 meeting dates, establishing the 2014 budget, brain-storming about possible speakers and scheduling other interesting events. Let the Board know what you want for your Society in 2014. What did you like or not like in 2013? Get to know your Board members - they're really a lot of fun to be around, are enthusiastic about gardening, hostas and your Society, and are quite generous with their time and expertise. Don't worry; they won't assign you a task if you come.

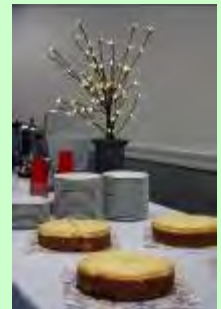
Call or email Phyllis to reserve your place at the table.



St. Louis Hosta Society Holiday Party

**Sunday December 8
1:00 PM**

Creve Coeur Government Center



The leaves are falling; soon snow will follow. It's time to end the gardening season. How else but with a party featuring good food, maybe a game or two, lively chatter and lots of laughter. The holiday party is one of the most popular events of the year. Don't miss it.

Reservations are required. November 23 is the deadline.

Price for this catered lunch is \$12.00 for each person attending. **Non-member spouses and friends are welcome at the same \$12.00 charge.** A cash bar will be available. Please RSVP by mailing your check to:

**Cindy Michniok
14300 Quiet Meadow Ct.
Chesterfield, MO 63017**

Bon Sai - Tree in a Tray



At our October meeting, member Ted Piekutowski told us that Bonsai translates to “tree in a tray”. The art form originated in China. Scrolls that date back to the fourth century depict Bonsai. The Japanese perfected the techniques and tools that are still used today. The art was brought to the U.S. after WW II.

Bonsai imitates nature. There are two types – Indoor Bonsai, which must be brought inside when night temperatures dip below 50 degrees, and Outdoor Bonsai, which need a cold period of time and thus remain outside year round.

Several elements are needed to grow Bonsai successfully.

- The right pot – The pot needs to be in scale with the tree and have a drainage hole in the bottom.
- Well drained soil – Good drainage is a must. The mix Ted uses includes pumice and pine bark.
- Water – Bonsai should be watered every day. Water until it flows out the drainage hole. Their roots are shallow. Lack of water spells death.
- Fertilizer – Apply every two weeks.
- Wiring – Copper or aluminum wire is used to train tree to grow in a particular direction. The wires stay in place only about six months.
- Winter protections – If an Indoor Bonsai, bring inside and place under lights when night temperatures fall below 50 degrees.
- Commitment – Bonsai require every day care!



There are several styles of Bonsai: upright, informal upright, literiti, semi cascade and cascade. Bonsai imitate nature. Think of trees growing up a mountain side. The upright form is at the bottom, with its branches reaching for the sky, while the cascade forms reside at the top where gravity pulls the branches down.



Bonsai are traditionally displayed on a platform. In addition, there might be an accent plant to the side and perhaps an inanimate object such as a screen or a scroll mounted on an adjacent wall. Hostas are excellent accent plants. Ones that Ted uses are H. 'Pandora's Box', H. 'Blue Mouse Ears' and H. 'Remember Me'. Any type of tree, deciduous or evergreen can be used. They will stay small if kept in a small pot. Once planted in the ground, Bonsai will revert to their normal size.

Ted then demonstrated how to create a Bonsai from an Alberta Spruce. The form started as Upright, then changed to Cascade. The first picture shows the original spruce and the last picture the resultant Bonsai. Ted will keep the plant for a year, then return next fall to show us how to root prune the Bonsai. The top and roots are not pruned in the same year. Mary Lou Farrow was the lucky winner of this specimen.



It was an amazing transformation. We look forward to seeing this plant next year with the wires removed and its eventual form taking shape.

Thanks Ted for a fascinating demonstration. Hope you had a scary Halloween!

DID YOU SEE!

American Hosta Society 2012 PHOTO CONTEST

Winner: Bruce Buehrig

Featured in the last issue of **The Hosta Journal** were the winners of last year's contest. Member Bruce Buehrig submitted this photo, taken in his fabulous yard, in the "LANDSCAPE Involving Hostas" category. Perhaps you remember walking past this scene at the Buehrig's Garden Walk. The article praised Bruce's composition stating "The semicircular line of the lawn edge and the curve of the stairs suggest movement through the space. The fern, rocks and varied green colors of the conifers provide texture. Finally the water feature draws your eye right into the photo."

Congratulations Bruce!



Photo, provided by Bruce Buehrig, was taken with a Nikon D70 SLR camera.

AMERICAN HOSTA SOCIETY DISPLAY GARDEN CHAIR

Phyllis Weidman

AHS, through the work of the Display Garden Chair, encourages local societies to support public gardens. The more people see hostas and how hostas can be used in a landscape, the more they will come to love and appreciate them. AHS has established criteria which assure that a public garden attain a certain quality level before granting its official display garden designations. Phyllis was instrumental in gaining an AHS Display Garden designation for the Missouri Botanical Garden.



Each spring Phyllis organizes a work day in which St. Louis Hosta Society members help Missouri Botanical Garden staff in rejuvenating and renovating its numerous hosta beds. In her new position, Phyllis will guide other societies located throughout the nation through the process of obtaining the AHS Display Garden designation for their own public gardens.

Congratulations Phyllis!



photo from MoBot web site

Missouri Botanical Garden – Garden Glow

At the October meeting, Phyllis announced that member Mike Schmitt had suggested we attend the Garden Glow event as a group. For six weeks, starting November 23, many of MoBot's structures and locations, such as the Climatron, the maze, the Linnean House, and some of the pathways will be illuminated by hundreds of thousands of lights.

Groups of 15 or more can obtain discount tickets of \$11 for MoBot members, \$15 for non-members. To avoid the later December crowds, members decided to attend either Thursday December 5 or Friday December 6. The group could go out for dinner afterwards. If you are interested in going, please contact Mike Schmitt at 314-719-9305 or mike636@aol.com by Nov 10 and let him know which date you would prefer.

Coming Soon --- Winter Scientific Meeting

The Midwest Regional Hosta Society is once again sponsoring the Winter Scientific Meeting. This popular winter event will be held **Saturday, January 18, 2014** at the Wyndham Hotel, 3000 Warrenville Road, Lisle, IL. The hotel has given us a \$79.00 room rate. Please make your own reservations by calling 877-999-3223, and mention the "Midwest Regional Hosta Society Winter Scientific Meeting" to guarantee the rate.

Speakers scheduled for 2014 include:

- Bob Olson – A history of the Midwest Hosta Society and its Newsletter
- Glenn Herold – The Genus Lilium (exact topic TBA)
- Jeff Miller – Hosta Sports – When is Enough, Enough?
- Bob Solberg – Hostas of In-Distinction
- Rick Goodenough – Hybridizer's Perspective
- Dave Wanniger – (Horticulturist in Charge, Boerner Botanic Gardens) – Topic TBA
- Mark Zilis – Hostas of Distinction

The program will include a series of three concurrent breakout sessions. Again this year, there will be a hosta seed silent auction, proceeds of which will be used to help underwrite the cost of the meeting.

The cost of this winter extravaganza is only \$55 per person for Midwest Regional Hosta Society members and \$65 for non-members, and includes a continental breakfast and a deli buffet lunch. At their option, non-members can apply the \$10 difference in the registration fee to a one-year membership in the MRHS.

Please make checks payable to **MRHS**, and mail with the registration form to:

Kristine James
523 E. Calhoun Street
Woodstock, IL 60098

Registrations postmarked after January 6 require a \$10 late registration fee per person.

For your convenience, the registration form appears on page 10 of this newsletter. For more information, see the MRHS web-site www.midwesthostasociety.org or talk with members that have attended in the past – the Weidmans, Poos, Tempels, Mary Lou Farrow and Shirley Suntrup.

This Hypertufa Planter Project is a Slam Dunk By Mike Chambers

At a Memphis garden sale in March 2006 I saw a group selling round cement balls to place in the garden as unique garden art. I asked the ladies how they made them and they said using basketballs that they bought in yard sells and junk shops. Then during the June 2006 AHS convention I saw a very large cement ball planter with a wonderful clump of H. 'Praying Hands' standing proud in one of the tour gardens. I knew I could make one of these using hypertufa if I could find a mold of some kind.

Since my next door teenager and his entire family are basketball crazy and I knew they had many basketballs in the garage, I asked if I could have an old worn out ball. He said "Mom has been bugging me to get rid of these old balls". Well that afternoon they brought me five and said I could have more.

After a little planning I used a six inch pot saucer to draw a circle on the ball. I drilled a hole inside of the circle and then cut it out with scissors. I learned to cut the opening out where the air valve is located. There is a large rubber stem inside the ball and if you leave this part in the ball you will have a big dimple in the side of your planter. Then to keep the ball from rolling around while I worked on it I put it in the opening of a two gallon nursery pot which had some gravel in the bottom to keep it stable.

I then mixed my hypertufa using the simple method of 1/3 Portland cement, 1/3 perlite, and 1/3 peat moss. Mix in the water slowly until you have the right texture. It needs to be just wet enough so a fist full will stay clumped together. I learned when making my second ball that if you sift the peat moss with a ¼ screen you get out all the sticks and large pieces and the remaining fine particles makes a much smoother ball surface. You can always add cement coloring to your water and have a red or terra cotta ball planter.

I filled the ball about half way with mix and used my fist to force it to the sides of the ball. I kept the bottom at least 2 inches thick for the weight to prevent rolling. I kept adding mix until I could get the sides a little over 1 inch thick and you have to taper it a bit as you reach the opening. I was afraid it would not hold to the inside of the ball, but it did. The basketball has a rubber lining and the mix held to it ok. I actually tried to make one by inflating the ball with air and putting the mix on the outside, like I would for a normal hypertufa planter. However the mix just kept sliding off the curved ball surface.

When finished I covered the entire ball with a plastic bag so it would dry and cure slowly. The next day, while the hypertufa was still a little soft I drilled a ¾ drainage hole down through the center of the ball. I did not want to turn it over to drill from the bottom. After three full days of drying I used a sharp knife and cut the basket ball along the seams and peeled it off like an orange. I bet if you made good lean cuts you could tape the ball back together and use it over again. If you cut the ball off any sooner it will leave cut lines on your finished ball. Please trust ole impatient me on this one. I used a file to clean up the edges around the opening. Just to add a little insurance that the planter would not go rolling down the street I sat the finished pot on my belt sander to just flatten the bottom a little. It sits very solidly on the deck but if you sit it on the ground in the garden the weight will hold it in place. I then set it outside for a couple of weeks to cure. I think you are supposed to allow it to age for a month before planting in the container. I think the lime in the cement might cause the plants pH to go crazy. The finished planter will hold about as much potting soil as a tall six inch pot.

When I showed the neighbors how I used the basketballs the mother asked if I would make one for them and leave the basketball on the outside. They now have a leather "basketball planter" on the deck, next to the basketball goal. I now have a hypertufa basketball planter with a huge clump of H. 'Praying Hands' and another with a clump of H. 'Corkscrew'.

(Reprinted from the Newsletter Editors section of the AHS web-site)

Building an Anti-Vole Device

By John Smead

The number of creatures that seek to ravage a garden amazes me. When I stop to think about it, there are so many herbaceous plant-ingesting organisms that I wonder, at times, if it's worth trying to maintain a garden. Sometimes it's so exasperating.

*Picture it. You're taking a walk through your garden on a sunny, fresh, spring morning with a cup of coffee in hand. Suddenly, your peaceful trek ends in disgust because you've discovered that an uninvited guest has helped themselves to your backyard pantry of hosta leaves, **Aaargh!***

If it's not supra-soil mammals and mollusks such as deer, rabbits, and slugs, it's stealthy underground rodents and insectivores such as chipmunks, mice, voles, and moles. What a lineup. Did you ever notice that they seem to be able to zero in on your most prized plants?

After a long, hard winter, it's a blessing to see your hosta finally waking up and poking their noses out from under their soil blanket.

Unfortunately, on a few occasions, in my garden, a waking hosta stops growing. The horns start to grow, but suspiciously stop expanding. Upon closer inspection and a slight pull on the shoots, the whole crown easily dislodges and I'm left with a spiky hosta pancake. The roots and some of the crown material have been gnawed away. Obviously, my hosta has been someone's extended winter meal.

All is not lost though. Hostas never cease to amaze me with their ability to survive. By placing the de-rooted crowns in a moist pot of soil-less potting medium and keeping them in a well lighted spot in the house, they, every time, have reestablished themselves and have eventually returned to my garden.

Of course, it would be better to try and stop this subterranean soiree from occurring in the first place. Of late, I'm very interested in trying to stop this from happening. I've started to collect more hosta varieties and want to protect them, especially the more expensive ones, as much as possible. One deterrent that I've tried is a "hosta-root cage". Basically, it's a large basket made out of hardware cloth.

Hardware cloth can usually be found at hardware and home improvement stores. It comes in different lengths, widths, and square-opening sizes. I use the hardware cloth that has ½" square openings.

It's fairly easy to make a basket. You'll need some easy to use wire cutters, needle-nose pliers and leather gloves. So you can cut multiple wires at a time, try using wire cutters that act like a scissors. The needle-nose pliers will be used to join the cut pieces together. The cut wire of the hardware cloth can be very sharp so wear leather gloves.

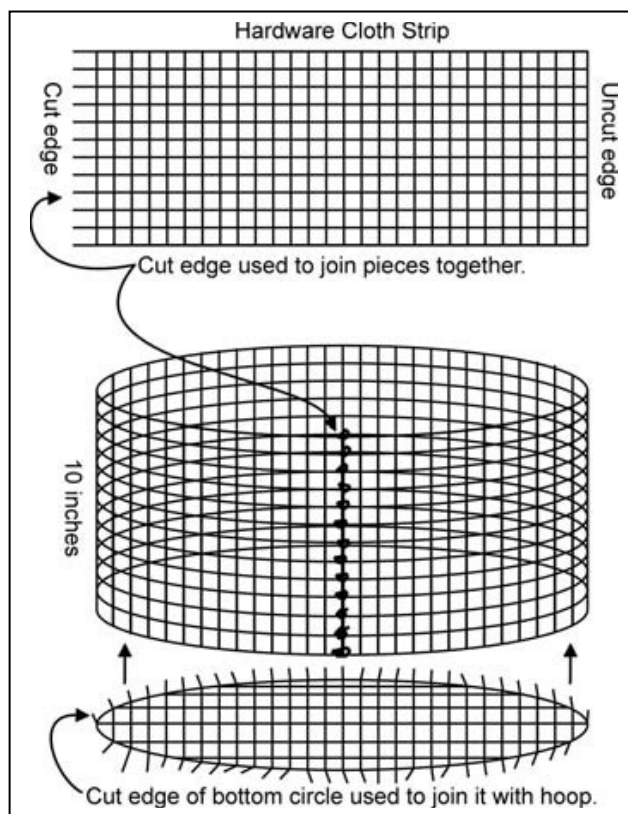
Cut a strip of hardware cloth about 10" wide in a length that will make a hoop with a diameter about 1 and ½ times that of the hosta root ball. I don't think you need to make it any larger since the hosta roots will eventually grow beyond the cage. You may have to join a couple strips to obtain a needed diameter. To join the pieces together, the needle-nosed pliers are used to twist the cut- edge wires around the uncut edge.

Next, you have to make a bottom for the hoop. Flatten a section of the hardware cloth and place the hoop on top and, using a permanent marker, trace out a circle the diameter of the hoop. You'll use the cut edges of the circle to join it to the hoop. It doesn't have to be perfect.

Once the basket is made, you need to excavate a hole big enough to sink the basket so its rim is at ground level. This takes some work. I put the excavated soil in a wheelbarrow. Before I put the soil back in the sunken basket, I mix it with compost, fertilizer, and other amendments.

You're now ready to plant your hosta in its new protected home

This article appeared in the Western New York Hosta Society Newsletter 'Hosta la Vista' in November, 2007.



Clever Creature Solution

Are you tired of those pesky squirrels persistently trying to rob your bird feeders? Cindy Hughes, the newsletter editor of the North Coast Hosta Society, displayed this ingenious device in her October 2013 newsletter. Cindy had seen it in one of the gardens at their Great Lakes Region Tailgate party.

It's a simple slinky on the pole! Cindy writes "We tried this on two of our shepherd hook poles and it works. When we first put them on, we were entertained for quite a time as squirrels and chipmunks would try to climb and the slinky would spring up and down. The squirrels tried different attacks, jumping sideways and trying to grab the pole, but eventually the slinky won. The birds occasionally land on a slinky coil and bounce as if on a trampoline, (more entertainment) but they are not deterred by the action.

"As you can see, we did have to tie the slinky (metal) on at a couple of points to keep it from fully spreading, but our seed has been safe."

What do you think – worth a try?



Photo taken from the North Coast Hosta Society October, 2013 newsletter.

2014 WINTER SCIENTIFIC MEETING REGISTRATION FORM

Make a copy of this registration form for your records.
If you would like confirmation of your registration, enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY. Fill out registration form completely.

Note that MRHS memberships are family memberships, so individuals in the member's household are also MRHS members.

ATTENDEE 1:

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____
STATE _____
ZIP _____
PHONE _____
EMAIL _____

MRHS member Non-MRHS member

If a non-MRHS member, would you like
your \$10 surcharge applied to a
1 year FAMILY membership in the
Midwest Regional Hosta Society?

YES NO

ATTENDEE 2: Address same as Attendee 1

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
CITY _____
STATE _____
ZIP _____
PHONE _____
EMAIL _____

MRHS member Non-MRHS member

If a non-MRHS member, would you like
your \$10 surcharge applied to a
1 year FAMILY membership in the
Midwest Regional Hosta Society?

YES NO

Registrations postmarked after January 6, 2014 require a \$10 late registration fee per person.

Cancellations before January 6, 2014 will be sent a full refund.

We will be unable to issue refunds after January 6, 2014.

Number of members _____ X55 = _____
Number of non-members _____ X65= _____
Number of late registrations _____ X10= _____
TOTAL _____

PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO **MRHS**

Mail your registration and check to:

Kristine James
523 E Calhoun Street
Woodstock IL 60098

Questions about registration? Contact Kristine at MRHS.HOSTA@gmail.com or phone: 815-337-4621

St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

Phyllis Weidman – President
314-965-7027
Pow1031@gmail.com

Kelly Hall – Secretary
skyridgegarden@att.net

Barb Moreland – Hospitality
314-961-4191
Bmore433@aol.com

Dave Poos – Vice-President
314-821-1622
david.poos@att.net

Cindy Michniok – Treasurer
314-434-0946
Cmichniok@gmail.com

Kelly Hall – Webmaster
skyridgegarden@att.net

Joan Poos – Newsletter Editor
314-821-1622
david.poos@att.net

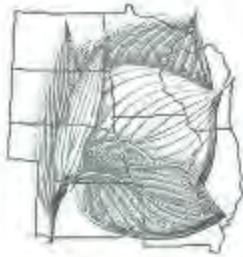
St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

Contact: Cindy Michniok
14300 Quiet Meadow Ct.
Chesterfield, MO 63017
Cmichniok@gmail.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



Midwest Regional Hosta Society

The Midwest Regional Hosta Society represents Region 5 of the American Hosta Society that includes 9 states. Our mission is to promote education, research, development and enjoyment of Hosta.

Membership in the society is \$20.00 for 2 years, which includes two issues per year of the newsletter. This publication reports on events and information on Hostas in general.

Please mail a check made payable to MRHS to:

Kristine James
523 E Calhoun St.
Woodstock, IL 60098

along with Name, Address, phone, and email (Most correspondence is by email). For questions email MRHS.Hosta@gmail.com.



AMERICAN HOSTA SOCIETY

Members receive three issues per year of The Hosta Journal, which includes color photographs of hostas, reports on national conventions, scientific information concerning current research pertaining to hostas, and advertisements of interest to hosta families.

Membership checks should be made out to "AHS," and mailed to:

Sandie Markland, AHS Membership Secretary
P O Box 7539
Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

Dues for one year are \$30 for an individual and \$34 for a family. For more information, visit the AHS website: <http://www.americanhostasociety.org/>