



# Show Me Hostas Newsletter

Volume 9, Issue 3

April, 2008

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



**President Jeff Hall**

Wow - what a crazy start to spring, rain, rain, and more rain! Just wish and hope we have enough rain to keep us nice and moist until the day before the National Convention. Keep your fingers crossed. As I write this the hostas are still sleeping but with close investigation you can start to see them stirring. Kelly and I have been collecting hostas seriously for 14 years and still every spring we stare at the soil wondering, did it survive the winter? Did it get eaten by voles? Did it heave out of the ground and turn to mush? But it seems like the little guys finally come up just fine. Out of all the hostas we have purchased or that have been given to us by friends, we have lost very few over the winters. You got to love this plant!

Now is a great time to get out there and clean up last year's leaves, spread compost or mulch, and give your hostas a good well balanced slow release fertilizer. I use Osmocote which lasts about 5 months. Now also is a great time to think about dividing your hostas. Dividing and sharing your hostas not only helps the hostas, it also helps you get more friends, and donating a few to the society helps the society gain more friends.

Speaking of new friends, our new membership tri-fold brochure and application is ready. My lovely wife Kelly has done a fantastic job putting this together. Within this newsletter you will find a copy that you can give to a friend or make additional copies to leave at your favorite nursery.

I hate to sound like a broken record, but we encourage everyone to get more active in the society. There are many opportunities such as garden walks, MoBot plant sale (May 3rd), sitting in on board meetings, donating plants, and helping with the National Convention. Please don't be shy. I promise you will have fun!

Shake the dust off those boots, get out there, and dig in. Hope to see everyone at the Vendors Day event on Sunday, April 13th.

*Jeff Hall*

## ***2008 CALENDAR OF EVENTS***

<b>April 13</b>	<b>Vendor Day and distribution of Club plants at Creve Coeur Government Center</b>
<b>May 3</b>	<b>MBG plant sale with Horticultural Club</b>
<b>June 11-14</b>	<b>Show Time! AHS National Convention in St. Louis</b>
<b>July 10-12</b>	<b>Midwest Regional Hosta Convention</b>
<b>July 27</b>	<b>Member plant auction</b>
<b>September 21</b>	<b>Meeting and Guest speaker</b>
<b>October 12</b>	<b>Meeting, program to be announced</b>
<b>November/December</b>	<b>Holiday Party – date and location to be announced</b>

### **Did you See?**

Rummage through your recycle bin and retrieve the **LIFESTYLE** section of the Saturday, March 29 issue of the **St. Louis Post Dispatch**. Featured on pages 16-17 is the wondrous garden of club members Nancy and Arlie Tempel. According to Arlie, what started as ‘dabbling’ with hosta and daylily plants has grown into a collection of more than 800 cultivars. Several photos reveal but a portion of their hillside retreat. The Tempel’s garden will be among those on tour during the June 11-14 2008 American Hosta Society Convention.

**“What is a weed? A plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered”**

*Ralph Waldo Emerson*

## **APRIL 13, 2008 MEETING**

1:00 PM. at Creve Coeur Government Center

### **VENDOR DAY and CLUB PLANT PICK-UP**

The April meeting gives members an opportunity to purchase quality hostas, companion plants, garden art, convention T-shirts and Hosta Journals. This is also the time to pick up plants ordered in February. If you are unable to attend the meeting, please designate another club member to pick up your order. In addition to the flurry of early season buying will be a business meeting and a question and answer period. Club members and the vendors present will answer all of your gardening questions.

Following the club meeting will be a convention planning meeting. All members are invited to stay.

Vendors scheduled to be in attendance are:

#### **HOMESTEAD FARMS NUSERY**

Homestead Farms is a family owned perennial flower nursery located near Owensville Missouri, which specializes in field grown daylilies, hostas, peonies & Siberian iris. They also have a nice selection of clematis & hardy ferns. The nursery, run by Ron Vitoux and his family, has been in business since 1987. They offer over 1200 varieties of daylilies, 350 varieties of hosta, 100 different peony cultivars and 50 varieties of iris. During the winter months they hand make beautiful plant markers and birdhouses. To learn more, visit their informative web site [www.homesteadfarms.com](http://www.homesteadfarms.com).

#### **AVALON ACRES HOSTAS**

Avalon Acres is a 10 acre hill nestled among hundreds of large red and white oak trees in south central Illinois. The family owned and operated nursery's mission is to bring you the highest quality plants at the lowest possible prices. Denny and Alicia Ricketts state on their web site that they 'don't just sell Hostas, but are avid collectors as well. If you don't see the Hosta that you are looking for, drop us an e-mail. We have over a thousand varieties in our collection and some are rare or in limited quantities'. 'We can not be held responsible should you become hopelessly addicted to Hostas, but would love to hear from you if you have discovered a cure!' Visit their web site [www.aahosta.com](http://www.aahosta.com) for more information.

#### **GEORGE REGENNITTER GARDEN ART**

George Regennitter handcrafts garden art and birdhouses in red cedar and metal at his place in northeast Missouri. Each item is an original and is priced based on the work and materials used.

#### **2008 ST. LOUIS AMERICAN HOSTA SOCIETY CONVENTION T-SHIRTS**

Phyllis Weidmann and Pam Wolkowitz will be selling T-shirts and Hosta Journals.

## COMPANION CORNER



**Azaleas in Poos Garden**

Article written by Dave Poos

After a long winter, walking through local nurseries creates visions of brilliant colors of the various Azalea cultivars backing the perfect leaves of our favorite hostas. We can even imagine robust evergreen azaleas giving us the much needed “bones” necessary for distinctive winter landscapes. After succumbing to our impulse to buy these flowering beauties, we put them into the ground just like the other perennials that have been successful in our garden, and then are mystified why they don’t perform. They just sit there, year after year, and then slowly start to fade away. Finally we decide that we just can’t grow azaleas.

But take heart. Azaleas will perform wonderfully in St. Louis. The secret: insure their cultural requirements are satisfied and they will respond. The natural conditions of the St. Louis area include a neutral ph and soil that is typically clay or rock or combinations of the two. To start a new azalea or invigorate an existing plant in an environment in which it will prosper (ph of 4.5 to 5.5 with loose, organically rich soil), just follow the recommendations of the late Sam Coffin, the “Johnny Appleseed of St. Louis azaleas”. Mr. Coffin, hybridizer, propagator, and owner of **Green Thumb Nursery**, is personally responsible for most of the well grown azaleas in Webster Groves and the surrounding area. After years of experimentation, he recommended a simple process that will make your azaleas the envy of the neighborhood. Follow his instructions and you’ll have a hosta backdrop that will fulfill your most optimistic visions.

(continued on page 5)

### **Sam Coffin's Planting Instructions:**

1. Dig a hole twice as wide as the pot and 1-1/2 times as deep. Mix soil removed with equal amount of Canadian Spagham Peat Moss®.
2. Loosen the bottom 4 inches of soil. Mix in a spade full of Canadian Spagham Peat Moss® and tamp down.
3. Place top of root ball 1 inch above the ground level.
4. Fill hole ¾ full with the soil/peat mixture and tamp. Fill hole with water and allow to completely drain.
5. When drained, fill hole with mixture and tamp.
6. Sprinkle a handful of azalea food and ½ handful of ferrous sulphate (Copperas®) around the base of the plant. Water thoroughly until all fertilizer is dissolved. Best to water several times over a period of two days, but make sure all fertilizer is dissolved.

7. Spread 2 inches of shredded oak bark mulch around the plant, but avoid piling more than ½ inch of mulch around the center of the plant.

### **Care:**

1. Water azaleas once a week in dry weather. Azaleas want about 1 inch of water per week. Like hostas, the more sun, the more water that should be used
2. Fertilize your azaleas each year after they have bloomed. Follow the instructions in Step 6.
3. Trim your plants after they have bloomed. Remember, azaleas set their buds in the fall. Late pruning will diminish spring flowering.
4. When transplanting, be generous with water before and after the transplant.

## **St. Louis Hosta Society and St. Louis Horticultural Society Plant Sale**

**MAY 3 from 9 AM to 5 PM**

**ORTHWEIN FLORAL DISPLAY HALL  
MISSOURI BOTANICAL GARDENS**

Set up for the sale is Friday, May 2 from 4 to 7 PM. [Pat Payton](#) is chairing the sale event. Please bring your plant donations to the Botanical Garden or make other arrangements with Pat. Club members will be on hand during the sale to give plant care advice and share information about our organization. To volunteer to help during the sale or donate plants contact Pat Payton (314-962-7456 or [ppayton@swbell.net](mailto:ppayton@swbell.net)).



**Northern Illinois Hosta Society**  
**Hosts**  
**The Chi-Town Classic**  
**Midwest Regional Hosta Convention**  
**July 10 - 12, 2008**  
**Schaumburg, Illinois**

## TIPS FOR SELECTING THE RIGHT HOSTA FOR YOUR GARDEN

The use of blue hostas next to light yellow hostas adds contrast. Planting one specimen hosta in an unexpected site provides a unique touch. Warm colors, such as gold and yellows are thought of as coming forward, while cool colors such as green and blue recede. Thereby, placing yellow and gold cultivars in front of blue hostas create an illusion of greater depth.

Yellow hostas are used to brighten up a dark corner or area of your garden. They are used to draw the visitor's attention to that spot. Hostas can solve that bare spot or eyesore in the shady part of your yard or next to the deck that gets very little sun.

The use of bolder variegated hostas at the back of the garden seems to bring that area closer. Hostas offer continuity to the garden by being planted with and among ferns, Siberian iris, astilbe, etc. Hostas perform better (more pest resistant and sun tolerant) and become more beautiful each year. Hostas make great container plants on the patio. Place deeply variegated and highly fragrant hostas close to the viewer so that they can appreciate those characteristics more acutely. Generally, hostas grown in shade have fewer but larger leaves. Hostas are a perfect addition to the rock garden. In time their roots search out available soil. Just give them a little help the first year with some extra watering.

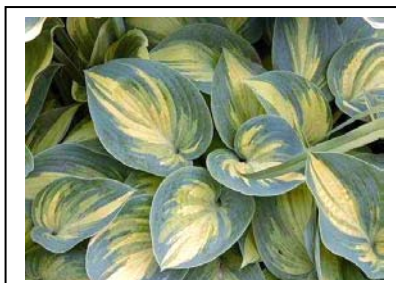
In choosing green hostas, keep in mind that green shades blend well with all other colors and are considered a 'cool' color. You'll find greens with leaves that are shiny, powdery, light and dark green, round, lance shaped, heart shaped, oval, etc.

The blue hostas are also considered as 'cool' shades and are easy to blend with most any color. They add a good contrast when placed next to yellow hostas. To hold their deep blue color they need to be planted in shady areas. A blue hosta planted in a sunny area will tend to turn green by late summer.

Yellow to gold shades will really brighten up a dark area of your garden. In fact it will draw your garden visitor's eye to that spot. Don't overdo the use of yellow though, as too many seem to clutter up and confuse an otherwise beautiful garden. The yellow cultivars blend in well with all colors especially the blues and gold margined types.

Both the gold and white margined hostas produce variety when planted with the solid colors. The combinations and patterns of the variegated types planted with solid colors are subject to no limitations. Finally we have a grouping with unique variegations such as leaves with dark margins and lighter centers, or those with variegations in the spring turning to solid green by summer.

*(Reprinted from the Miami Valley Hosta Society Newsletter 'Hosta News Scapes', Vol. 10 Issue 3, August 2007. Pictures below from Hosta Library))*



## St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

**Jeff Hall** - President

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**Phyllis Weidman** - Membership

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[jpweidman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jpweidman@sbcglobal.net)

**Rick Clarkson** - Hospitality

618-462-2540  
[hostaluv92@yahoo.com](mailto:hostaluv92@yahoo.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: Pete Postlewaite  
21172 Andover Road  
Kildeer, IL 60047  
[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>

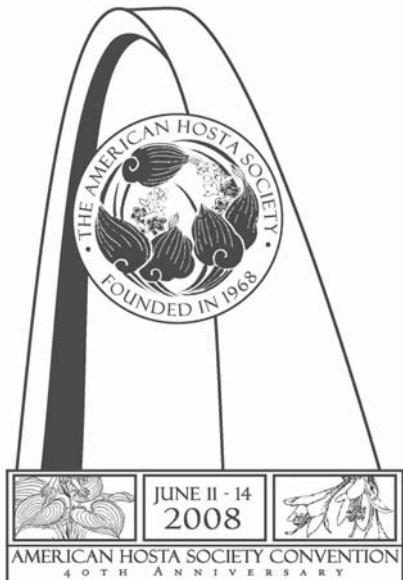
## “Meet Me in St. Louis”

The St. Louis Hosta Society is honored and excited to be the host of the American Hosta Society 2008 National Convention. The National convention of the American Hosta Society will be held in St. Louis on June 11 to June 14, 2008. The convention hotel is the Sheraton Westport Chalet Hotel St. Louis.

Register now to join us for this special event. Registration includes:

- Chartered bus transportation to seven lovely gardens.
- Banquet dinners and lunches
- Access to the hosta show and vendors
- Admission to hear several key speakers
- Live auction and silent auction
- Optional tours to Missouri Wine Country or the Missouri Botanical Garden

Visit [www.stlouishosta.org](http://www.stlouishosta.org) for more convention and registration information.



[www.stlouishosta.org](http://www.stlouishosta.org)



### Benefits of membership include:

- Newsletters
- Invitation to the Annual Hosta Auction
- Club plant offers
- Garden tours
- E-mail notification about impromptu garden tours and evening walks
- Well-known visiting speakers
- Midwest & National hosta society events
- Information about other local clubs

Our meetings are usually held at the Creve Coeur Government Center at 300 N. New Ballas, 63141 (between Ladue and Olive). Some meetings are held at the Missouri Botanical Garden. Check our Events calendar on our website for specifics.



# What are hostas?

Hostas are easy to grow, shade tolerant, herbaceous perennials. Hostas are grown mainly for their beautiful foliage. Hosta leaves come in a wide range of shapes, colors, sizes, and textures. One common name for Hosta still used in some garden centers is "Plantain Lily". Hostas are sometimes still referred to as Funkia. But the real name for hosta is Hosta.

Hostas are native to Japan, Korea, and China. They were first imported and grown in Europe in the late 1700's. By the mid-1800's hosta were growing in the United States. Today, there are hundreds of species and thousands of cultivars available to the home gardener as a result of hybridizing and tissue culture propagation.

Hostas were originally propagated by dividing crowns. This is a slow process if large numbers are desired. Tissue culture is the preferred process to meet today's needs of large numbers of hosta and hosta cultivars entering the market.

## Hostas of the Year

- 1996 So Sweet
- 1997 Patriot
- 1998 Fragrant Bouquet
- 1999 Paul's Glory
- 2000 Sagae
- 2001 June
- 2002 Guacamole
- 2003 Regal Splendor
- 2004 Sum and Substance
- 2005 Striptease
- 2006 Stained Glass
- 2007 Paradigm
- 2008 Blue Mouse Ears
- 2009 Earth Angel



# Care of Hostas

## How do I care for my hostas?

After they are planted, your hostas will require very little care. Because hostas are usually grown under trees that compete for moisture make sure that your plants get enough water during the growing season. A layer of mulch will help keep the roots at an even temperature and prevent competition from weeds. An annual feeding of slow release fertilizer will keep your hostas happy.

## How should I prepare the soil before planting my hosta?

The answer to this question can depend upon where you live, how long it has been since the land was cleared, and the manner in which it was cleared prior to construction, as well as a number of other variables. It appears that a majority of persons rototill the soil down 12-18 inches and amend it with peat humus, larger size organic material and some coarse sand. In clay soil, sand alone actually will make the soil harder than it already is, stunting root development. A mixture that seems quite common is:

- 1/3 native soil (the stuff already in the hole)
- 1/3 peat humus (or ProMix as an alternative to peat humus)
- 1/3 pine bark fines (or other larger material)

The purpose of the larger organic material is to improve aeration of the soil; the peat humus aids in water retention.

Visit [www.americanhostasociety.org](http://www.americanhostasociety.org) for more information.



# Membership Application

Name(s) (Please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, state, zip \_\_\_\_\_

Area code & Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to receive our club newsletters via e-mail? (circle) Yes or No

Do you want to receive other hosta club newsletters via e-mail? (circle) Yes or No

Size of your garden \_\_\_\_\_

Hosta beginner or Hosta addict or Somewhere in Between (circle one)

Your occupation is/was \_\_\_\_\_

Other areas of interest \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like your garden to be open for a St. Louis Hosta Society garden tour? (circle) Yes or Maybe or No

Would you like to volunteer for an activity in our club? (circle) Yes or Maybe or No

Annual dues for family or individual are \$7.00 per year or \$18.00 for 3 years. Membership is based on a calendar year.

Detach and mail application and check payable to St. Louis Hosta Society to:

Dave Poos  
9904 Crestwood Dr.  
Crestwood, MO 63126  
Phone 314-821-1622

Your canceled check is your receipt. Thank you!

