



# Show Me Hostas Newsletter

Volume 12, Issue 4

May, 2011

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



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

Hello Everyone,

I sure hope some of you have been able to get into their gardens despite the rain. The patio in our new hosta garden looks like a reflection pond. We aren't able to bring in dirt to finish the garden because of the rain, so we must be patient until things dry out. I am taking this time to make new garden markers to replace the

ones that have worn out. I love the markers from Kincaid Gardens at [www.KincaidGardens.com](http://www.KincaidGardens.com)

Vendor's day was once again a success. How can a day not be fun when we get to take hostas home? Thanks again to Rick and Joan for getting our Club Plants ready to take home. And thanks for the vendor's sharing with us what they think is "hot" on the market.

See you at the next meeting when our speaker will tell us about ferns, one of the best companion plants for our hostas.

Your President,

*Pam*

## 2011 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- May 15**                                      **Meeting with Speaker David Robson on Ferns**  
1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center
- May 20**                                      **Garden Walk at Home of Barb Moreland**  
6:00 PM
- May 21**                                      **Work Day at Missouri Botanical Garden**  
8:00 AM - Noon, Missouri Botanical Garden
- June 4**                                        **Plant Sale at the Missouri Botanical Garden**  
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Missouri Botanical Garden  
(7:00 – 9:00 AM Plant drop off and sale set up time)
- June 11**                                      **Club Garden Tour – 5 member gardens**  
Times and directions in the June newsletter
- June 18 (Saturday)**                      **Tour of Chesterfield Valley Nursery**  
(Note location change)                      Meeting location and time to be announced
- June 22-25**                                   **American Hosta Society National Convention**  
Marlborough, Massachusetts  
For more information: <http://www.hosta2011.com>
- July 7-9**                                      **Midwest Regional Hosta Society Convention**  
Madison, Wisconsin  
For more information: <http://www.midwesthostasociety.org>
- July 17**                                        **Member Plant Auction**  
1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center
- September 18**                              **Meeting with Speaker Don Dean**  
1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center
- October 16**                                   **Meeting with Speaker Mike Curran**  
(Note location change)                      1:00 PM, Summer Winds Garden Center
- December 4**                                   **Holiday Party**  
1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

## APRIL 17, 2011 MEETING

### VENDOR DAY and CLUB PLANT PICK-UP



**Rick & Joan distribute club plants.**

It was too beautiful a day to be indoors. We longed to be outside with our hands in the dirt. Our vendors came prepared with everything needed to satisfy that urge.

Denny Ricketts of Avalon Acres, Ron Vitoux of Homestead Farms and Terry Fiebig of Meadow Sweet Gardens filled their tables with hostas, hostas and more hostas. There was a wide selection of every size and color. Need something in your landscape besides hosta (really now!)? Also available were many types of companion plants, herbs and even pots of blooming petunias.



**Denny Ricketts of Avalon Acres**

Gregg Wesche of Overland Hardware supplied everything we needed to supplement our soil and control those pesty slugs. Don't want dirt under your fingernails; Gregg had sturdy gloves to handle that problem.

Rick Clarkson chaired our Club Plant event. In December Rick obtained price lists from Naylor Creek Nursery, then selected twelve hostas that might be of interest to our members. When the plants arrived in April, Rick and his wife Joan bundled together our member's orders for pick-up during Vendor Day. Thanks for giving of your time for this popular society event.



**Terry Fiebig is open for business.**

Our vendors graciously shared with us what is 'hot' in their nursery trade this year. Ron cannot keep h.'*Empress Wu*' in stock, last year quickly selling all 20 he had. This year he's already sold 15 of the 40 he ordered. H.'*Blue Angel*' and the sports of h.'*Sagae*' continue to be popular. Both Denny and Terry report that the mini craze continues. Dish gardens are very popular. Gregg sells a lot of different types of birdseed and pots and pots of petunias.



**Products displayed by Overland Hardware**



**Homestead Farms is a very busy place.**

**Thanks  
to all our  
vendors  
and our  
members  
for their  
support.**



**David Robson**

*photo from www.sj-r.com*

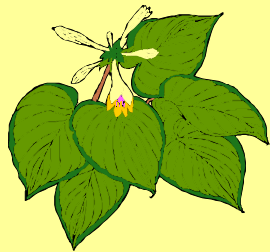
**May 15 Meeting**  
**1:00 PM. Creve Coeur Government Center**

**David Robson**  
**Ferns and Companion Plants**

As the fronds of a fern begin to unfurl, they resemble a question mark. To many, ferns elicit lots of questions. Having had as many failures as successes, I wonder which cultivars are hardy in the St. Louis area and which are impossible to grow? Am I satisfying their normal needs or stressing them to the brink of death? Is my site too dry or too wet? Is there too little or too much shade? Am I feeding them too much or too little? Do deer consider them a salad course?

David Robson, our May meeting speaker, will introduce us to the wonderful world of ferns. A native Illinoisan, David earned a BS degree in Horticulture from Iowa State University and a Masters from the University of Illinois. He has spent 31 years with the University of Illinois Extension Service as a regional horticulturist. He writes a weekly gardening article for the *Springfield Journal-Register* in addition to hosting a weekly TV call-in gardening program.

Join your fellow society members for an enjoyable and informative afternoon.



**Garden Walk**  
**May 20, 6:00 PM.**

**Garden of Barb Moreland**  
**433 S. Maple Avenue, Webster Groves, MO 63119**

We've all admired the beautiful refreshment table set up at each Society meeting by our hospitality chairwoman Barb Moreland. Now we have the opportunity to view her garden. Barb has graciously invited Society members to an informal get together Friday evening May 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM. Bring a lawn chair, your beverage of choice and a snack to share. Spend the evening walking through a beautiful garden and enjoying the camaraderie of fellow hosta lovers.

Directions from I-270.

- Merge onto I-44 E/US-50 E toward St. Louis. Continue to follow I-44 E for 4.6 miles.
- Take exit 280 for ELM Avenue. Turn LEFT onto S. Elm Avenue. Travel for 0.2 miles.
- Turn RIGHT onto Big Bend Blvd. Travel 0.1 miles.
- Turn RIGHT onto S. Maple Avenue. The destination is 433 S. Maple Avenue.



## **May 21, 2011 Work Day at Missouri Botanical Garden 8:00 AM until about noon**



### **Many hands make light the work!**

Last year Society members spent a Saturday morning transforming one of MoBot's under-utilized hosta beds into a real hosta display area. Hostas purchased by our Society were planted using a design created by MoBot project chairwoman Phyllis Weidman. Eventually, we would like the Missouri Botanical Garden to house a designated AHS National Display Garden. Currently there are only 15 such gardens. But we've just begun. There's much work to be done before that can happen.



Saturday May 21 will be our next work day. There are about 60 more plants to put in the ground. Phyllis says not only the new bed but older hosta beds need weeding and some plants need pruning. There's no shortage of tasks. This is a great time to get to know other members. The work isn't that hard and the time goes fast when talking and laughing with other volunteers.

Society members will meet in front of Ridgeway Center at 8:00 AM and proceed from there to the hosta beds. Bring only gloves as the Garden will supply any needed tools.



Notify Phyllis if you think you might want to participate in this very rewarding event. The Garden requires, in advance, a list of all persons working in their facility.

**Phyllis Weidman**

**314-965-7027**

**[Pow1031@gmail.com](mailto:Pow1031@gmail.com)**

## **Save the date - Member Garden Tour Saturday, June 11**

The Illinois Prairie Hosta Society of Champaign Illinois will be visiting the St. Louis area on June 11-12. They have asked our Society if they might visit some of our 2008 convention gardens while they are here. The Board decided to schedule a St. Louis member garden tour to coincide with that of the Champaign group.

On Saturday June 11, the following five gardens will be open for viewing:

Arlie and Nancy Tempel  
Jeff and Kelly Hall

Jim and Phyllis Weidman  
Jean Hudson and Pat Payton

Dave and Joan Poos

More information and directions to each garden will be included in your June newsletter.

**It's hard to believe, but June 4<sup>th</sup> is right around the corner!  
What's happening on June 4<sup>th</sup> you ask.  
Hosta Plant Sale at the Missouri Botanical Garden**



**Set up time: 7:00 – 9:00 AM**

**Sale time: 9:00 – 5:00 PM**

**Location: Orthwein Room at the Missouri Botanical Garden**

For a successful MoBot plant sale, the Society needs your donations and your help. Dig and pot now while the weather is mild and the hostas are just emerging from their winter sleep. Mini and large hostas were especially in demand last year. Any kind of variegated hosta sells well. Please keep in mind that monies from this sale and the member auction in July pay the costs associated with meeting room rental, speakers, the website, the newsletter publication, the holiday banquet and many more events held throughout the year.

If you need help dividing those large clumps in your yard, digging crews are available. Other members will help dig, label, transport your plants or just supply moral support. Contact MoBot Sale chairwoman Heather Anderson if you need help or can help.

Plants can be dropped off at the Botanical Garden during set-up time or ahead of time at any of the following member's homes. Just call to make arrangements and obtain directions.

Jeff and Kelly Hall – Sunset Hills - [skyridgegarden@earthlink.net](mailto:skyridgegarden@earthlink.net)

Dave and Joan Poos – Crestwood – 314-821-1622 or [david.poos@att.net](mailto:david.poos@att.net)

Phyllis and Jim Weidman – Kirkwood - 314/965-7027 or [pow1031@gmail.com](mailto:pow1031@gmail.com)

Heather Anderson – Wildwood - 636-273-6860 or [maple\\_leaf\\_to@yahoo.com](mailto:maple_leaf_to@yahoo.com)

Workers are needed to help set up and price plants for sale. This occurs from 7:00 to 9:00 AM on June 4. Workers are also needed to man the sales tables throughout the day. Donate an hour or two of your time to talk spread the word about that great plant the hosta.

Please bring extra plastic grocery bags to the next meeting.

To volunteer, contact Heather:

**Heather Anderson**  
636-273-6860 or [maple\\_leaf\\_to@yahoo.com](mailto:maple_leaf_to@yahoo.com)

## Companion Corner

### Tiareella, the Foamflower

Family: Saxifragaceae

Zone: 4-9

These beauties, native to the woodlands of North America and eastern Asia, are small plants with slightly hairy heart-shaped or deeply lobed leaves that form clumps or spread by runners to make patches. In spring the plants sport spikes of dainty, feathery white or pink flowers which bloom from the bottom up. The native species spread by runners, while the newer hybrids form large clumps which can be divided early in the spring before flowering or later in the summer.

Tiareellas are easily grown in average, medium moisture, well-drained soils in part to full shade. They prefer humusy, organically rich, moisture-retentive soils, but will tolerate some drought once established. However, wet soils, particularly in winter, can be fatal. If the crown becomes buried, the plant will rot. The foliage is semi-evergreen in the St. Louis area where the amount of foliage color in winter depends up on the severity of the temperatures. Tiareellas are one of the few plants that can be grown under Black Walnut trees because they are resistant to the toxin these trees emit from their roots.

'Crow Feather', pictured above, is a rhizomatous, clump-forming foamflower hybrid that is primarily noted for its attractive variegated foliage that develops bright and showy colors in fall and winter. The deeply cut leaves emerge in spring in mounds rising to 6-12" tall with a spread of 6-12". Each leaf is bright green with prominent black feathering along the mid-rib and center veins. Its leaves develop a combination of pink, red, purple and black colors in fall. This cultivar is readily found in area nurseries.

Tiareellas are valuable plants that can be used to bring variety to the shade garden, complementing the textures of ferns, heucheras, hostas and other shade lovers.



**Tiareella 'Crow Feathers'**



**Tiareella 'Crow Feathers' flower stalks**



**Tiareella 'Lace Carpet'**



## In memoriam – Mildred Seaver

A tribute written by Larry Tucker  
Reprinted from the Mid-South  
Hosta Society April Newsletter



Few people are recognized as royalty. Even fewer are truly deserving of accolades. However, one such person, who won the respect of gardeners coast-to-coast, was worthy of the title Queen of Hostas. Shari and I were privileged to have known Mildred Seaver, who died this past month at the age of 98. She was a treasure and, quite frankly, a pip!

If you had ever met Mildred, you would have relished her quick wit and shared knowledge. (She is pictured above on the left.) Several years ago, Charlie Seaver spoke to the Mid-South Hosta Society about his mother's love of life and passion for plants and people. The program was an enlightening look into what made Mildred a legend in the hosta world. She was the only living person to have been featured on the cover of *The Hosta Journal*. Though her pest control solutions were simple (she spread lettuce leaves around her garden every night to collect slugs), her hybridizing success was exceptional (she created 90-some hostas, many with her 'Sea' signature).

Mildred, who gardened in Needham, Mass., was a recipient of the American Hosta Society's most prestigious honor, the Alex J. Summers Distinguished Merit Award. She also was the first to receive the Eunice Fisher Distinguished Hybridizer Merit Award.

As hosta neophytes in the mid-1990s, Shari and I attended our first AHS convention and were welcomed over lunch by Mildred Seaver and Bruce Banyai, whose mother was a founder of the national organization. After subsequent visits with Herb Benedict and Warren Pollock, we understood why hosta is the "Friendship Plant." You join societies for the plants, but you stay for the people. Mildred, incidentally, won Best of Show at that convention for her frosty-blue, heart-shaped, crimped-edge 'Queen of the Seas'.

Shari and I crossed paths with Mildred at several conventions, and were entertained by her keen observations and pithy remarks, but the 2006 AHS assembly in Philadelphia was special. It turned into a Mildred Seaver celebration. Her 'Spilt Milk' was judged a garden tour winner and a division of her enormous 'Humpbacked Whale' went for a near-record \$3,600 at the auction. Later, in accepting the distinguished hybridizing award, Mildred singled out 'Sea Fire' as her special merit hosta. Then she introduced her two best hybrids – twins Charlie and Muriel. Charlie followed his mother into hybridizing (one introduction was 'Deep Blue Sea'), but Muriel's interests were distinctly different. When bidding for her mother's hosta shot past \$2,000, Muriel gasped: "It's only a plant!"

In Mildred's obituary, Charlie captured her spirit perfectly: "She was a lover of nature, plants, flowers, cats, butterflies and moths, color, art and people. Mildred was creative, unorthodox, irreverent, artistic, outspoken, incorrigible, flamboyant, funny and eager to help people whether they wanted help or not. She was famous," he said, "for sitting with new AHS members and sharing stories, pictures, gardening tips and other show-and-tell, and for interjecting humorous banter into the lecture, auction or conversation at hand, even if unsolicited."

Hosta colleagues tell how Mildred would place "wake up calls" in the middle of the night to set them straight on one thing or another. Even at odd hours, her friendly advice was appreciated. How could you not answer a call from the Queen?

Charlie, whose wife Carolyn is native to Memphis, said Mildred attributed her longevity to gardening, blueberries and her many friends. May we all be so lucky.



## St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

**Pam Wolkowitz** - President  
636-285-3114  
[lovehostas@msn.com](mailto:lovehostas@msn.com)

**Phyllis Weidman** – Vice-President  
314-965-7027  
[Pow1031@gmail.com](mailto:Pow1031@gmail.com)

**Dave Poos** - Treasurer  
314-821-1622  
[david.poos@att.net](mailto:david.poos@att.net)

**Joan Hummel** - Secretary  
636-405-2584  
[HummelJFam@sbcglobal.net](mailto:HummelJFam@sbcglobal.net)

**Kelly Hall** - Webmaster  
[skyridgegarden@earthlink.net](mailto:skyridgegarden@earthlink.net)

**Karen Frimel** – Membership  
[cckmf@aol.com](mailto:cckmf@aol.com)

**Barb Moreland** – Hospitality  
314-961-4191  
[Bmore433@aol.com](mailto:Bmore433@aol.com)

**Joan Poos** - Newsletter Editor  
314-821-1622  
[david.poos@att.net](mailto:david.poos@att.net)

## 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  
[david.poos@att.net](mailto:david.poos@att.net)  
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>