



Show Me Hostas Newsletter

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July, 2009

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Jeff Hall President
Photo by Kelly Hall

Wow, it's hot! What better time to walk around shade gardens with a cold drink and visit with friends. The gardens are in great shape this year with all the rain and, up until now, cool weather. Be sure to attend the garden walks, they are always a good time. Thank you to the Tempels, the Cammaratas, and Jean Hudson/Pat Payton (July 5) for opening their gardens to us. If you would like to host a garden walk this summer or fall, please let us know.

Well, it's that time again; the end of the current officers' two year term is nearing. We need to establish a nominating committee. The nominating committee selects individuals in the society who would be a good fit for an officer position and presents the names to the society for vote. If you would like to be on the nominating committee, please let me know. If you are interested in holding an officer position, please contact any of the current officers, and we will pass your name along to the nominating committee chairperson (to be named). I, for one, can honestly say that being an officer of the St. Louis Hosta Society has opened many doors to new gardens, new friends, and, of course, new plants. I highly recommend you hold one term as an officer at some point. You won't regret it. It has been a great experience for me.

It's not too late to dig a few plants for the auction on July 19. Last year we had a good selection of plants and some real bargains. Join us (in the air conditioning) at the auction. Bring year checkbook and some friends too.

Now get back out there, the sprinkler needs to be moved again!

Jeff Hall

2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- July 5** **Garden Walk, 5 PM**
Jean Hudson and Pat Payton, Webster Groves, MO
- July 19** **Member plant auction**
1 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center
- September 13** **Meeting and guest speaker Mike Shadrack**
1 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center
- October 18** **Field trip to weather center with Melissa Byrd**
- November/December** **Holiday Party – date and location to be announced**

UPCOMING GARDEN WALK



photo by Kelly Hall

Sunday, July 5, 5 PM.

Pat Payton and Jean Hudson
361 S. Maple Avenue
Webster Groves, MO 63119

Finish your 4th of July weekend celebrating with fellow hosta lovers in Pat's and Jean's beautiful garden. Whether you love it on the sunny or shady side of the path, you don't want to miss this opportunity. Come share their love of ferns, hosta and shade-loving companions. Bask in the riot of color in their sunny back yard. Bring your beverage of choice, a snack to share and a lawn chair.

Going, going gone! Sold to the man in the green hosta shirt!

**JULY 19, 2009 MEETING
MEMBER PLANT AUCTION**

1:00 PM. at Creve Coeur Government Center

Now that the weather has abated a bit, check out the plants in your garden. Divide that large hosta clump and dig out part of those ever expanding perennials. Pot a piece, insert a label and bring it with you to the Society's July 19th auction. No plant is turned away and they will all find a loving home.

The annual auction is one of two events that fund our society's yearly activities and make the publication of this newsletter possible. So...bring your checkbook and be ready to outbid your fellow hostaholics. That plant that you've been dying to have your whole life may be there waiting for you. Come swap stories about how you've beat the heat and rode out the storms. Join your fellow society members for an afternoon of fun.

MoBot Hosta Bed Enhancements – Update



Malus

Orange Crush

Malus

Royal Raindrops



At the May meeting Phyllis Weidman reported that the crabapple trees donated by our Society to the St. Louis Botanical Garden to replace trees lost during recent ice storms have been planted. The next step is to obtain diagrams of the existing beds and their contents. The Society hopes to work with Darmon Williams and Jon Sweeney of MoBot to develop a long range plan to improve both the layout of the beds and the variety of the plants within these beds.

St. Louis Hosta Society Successful Plant Sale at MoBot – June 6



The Society's banner and a beautiful plant arrangement by Rick Clarkson greeted potential buyers.

Inside hundreds of hosta and companion plants were awaiting new homes.



Martha Karlovetz and Barb Moreland set up a sample leaf show exhibit displaying the wide variety of hosta leaf size, color and form



Arlie Tempel shares his vast store of knowledge with people interested in learning more about hosta.

Pam Wolkowitz and Dave Poos man the check out table.



Thanks to plant sale chair Pam Wolkowitz and all who donated plants and time

May 31 found a large number of Society members browsing the beautiful St. Peters garden of Jolly Ann Whitener. Spacious lawns were punctuated with hosta beds neatly rimmed with concrete edging. A walk bordered by sun-loving plants led to the back yard.

Kelly and Jeff Hall demonstrated how easy it is to make attractive and serviceable hypertufa troughs. Jeff mixed and Kelly applied their recipe to a box shaped mold. See page 7 for complete instructions.

Thank you Jolly Ann, Kelly and Jeff



On June 20, Nancy and Arlie Tempel graciously opened their garden for our Society's enjoyment. Two vast hillsides were filled with a multitude of beautifully grown hosta, ferns, and other companion plants. The top of the hill was blazing with the color of daylilies just entering their peak blooming season. The conversation was lively and the snack table overflowing with dips, cookies and fruit.

Thank you Nancy and Arlie



Gail and Wally Cammarata welcomed Society members to their West County garden on June 25. Situated on a corner, the West and North sides of the house contain beds of hosta, astilbe, begonia and other shade loving plants. The loss of a huge tree allowed the pergola to be built outside their sunroom. Colorful stepping stones lead from one bed to another. The patio was backed by a large wagon filled with pots of begonias and vegetables. Hanging from the pergola was an upside-down tomato plant, its fruit soon to turn red. We hope Gail and Wally enjoyed meeting us as much as we enjoyed meeting them.



June 11-13 Champaign, Illinois

Twelve members from the St. Louis Hosta Society enjoyed the warm hospitality of the Illinois Prairie Hosta Society at the 2009 Midwest Regional Convention. The event began with a relaxing welcoming party that showcased a yard filled front and back with a large collection of hosta, dwarf conifers, ornamental grasses and beautifully designed containers. Whether nibbling hor d'oeuvres, watching the flower arranging presentation, wandering the gardens or just sitting on the low deck chatting with friends, this was a great way to begin a great convention.

A day of educational seminars that ranged from being introduced to ideas and tools that could make our gardening less stressful to body and mind to a serious presentation on Virus X and other viral plant diseases followed. We came to love the tree peonies of Mary Ann Metz and Glenn Herold's twenty-five favorite plants. Imagine trying to compose a list of only 25 that included trees, shrubs and perennials, not just hosta! Both sides of the world were represented as James Bier walked us through the principles of Japanese garden design and Mike Shadrack guided us on a humorous but informative tour of English gardens.

Below are snapshots from the seven inspiring gardens opened for attendee's enjoyment:



Larch nestled among the hosta in the Guardia garden



Bust flanked by Sum and Substance in the Thoma garden



Train rounding the corner of a hosta bed in the Schroeder garden



Hosta under the canopy of mature trees in the 1 ½ acre Meyer garden



Mack the Knife lives happily under a Japanese maple in the Weber garden



Hollow sphere holding clear water and tumbled glass in Metz garden

MAKING A HYPERTUFA TROUGH

KELLY AND JEFF HALL

Hypertufa is a mix of Portland cement, peat moss and vermiculite, which when it's dry looks like weathered, crumbly stone. You'll need a trough-shaped mold, such as a plastic dishpan or a heavy cardboard box, to work with. Wear rubber gloves to protect your hands and a dust mask to prevent particle inhalation. Choose a flat work space where you can leave the completed trough undisturbed while the cement cures. Cover the work surface with a sheet of plastic.

3 parts Peat Moss
3 parts Vermiculite
2 parts Portland Cement

Use whatever measuring device you want (bucket, coffee can, etc.), but use the same device for measuring all the parts.

Remember do not use concrete! Use Portland Cement (cement is an ingredient in concrete). Concrete contains gravel; Portland Cement is a very fine powder with no gravel.

In a wheelbarrow or other large container, mix together 3 parts peat moss, 3 parts vermiculite and 2 parts Portland Cement. Add just enough water to make the ingredients malleable. Mix them together well. An approximation would be if you use a quart size container to measure, the mixture will make enough to cover a 14" pot.

You can shape the trough using either the inside or the outside of the mold. For a rough exterior and a smooth interior, use the outside of the mold. For a smooth exterior and a rough interior, pat the mixture into the mold's interior.

Place the mold upside down (for a rough exterior) or right side up (for a smooth exterior) on the plastic-covered work surface. Cover the mold with a sheet of plastic, tucking the edges firmly around or underneath the mold. This is an important step because if you do not line your mold with plastic, the mixture will adhere to your mold and it WILL NOT, I repeat WILL NOT be removable (without destroying either your mold or the trough or both!) Just speaking from experience.

Scoop up a handful of moistened mixture, and starting at the bottom and working toward the top, press it firmly to the mold, building up a layer about 1 1/2 to 2 inches thick.

Wet your gloves and pat the exposed surface to smooth it. To create drainage holes, insert two or three wood dowel pieces, 1/4 - 1/2 inches in diameter and a few inches long, into the trough bottom and leave them until the trough is cured. Loosely cover the mold with another sheet of plastic and allow the mixture to cure for a week or longer. The slower the cure, the stronger the trough; to slow the curing process, mist the mixture. Twist the dowels occasionally so they don't stick when you remove them.

After the cement has hardened, remove the plastic cover and carefully slip the trough off the mold. If desired, gently scuff the edges with a whisk broom or wire brush for a natural look. Allow it to set for another week or two to dry completely. Spray the trough with a hose to remove any white lime deposits on the surface. Allow the trough to cure thoroughly for a month before planting as the lime may leach into the soil.

If desired, brush the trough with buttermilk, or yogurt thinned with water to the consistency of buttermilk, to encourage the growth of algae and moss.

COMPANION CORNER



photo taken in Poos garden

Oakleaf Hydrangea

Family: Hydrangeaceae

Genus: Hydrangea

Species: Quercifolia

Size: 6 to 8 feet high and wide

The Oakleaf Hydrangea is a stunning plant and, because of its four season interest, a great addition to the landscape. A dramatic, showy shrub, it is a prolific white-flowered bloomer requiring pruning only if it gets too large for its space. One of the few hydrangeas native to the United States, it was first discovered in Georgia and named by John Bartram in the latter half of the 1700s.

The ‘oakleaf’ part of its name reflects the shape of its large leaves which resemble those of the red oak. The leaves are yellowish green on top and downy-white underneath. The leaves turn colors of red, orange, bronze and burgundy in the fall and remain on the shrub through most of winter.

The Oakleaf Hydrangea sprouts shoots from underground stolons. The young stems are covered in a felt-like light brown bark, while the older stems have attractive cinnamon-tan-orange bark that shreds and peels in thin flakes.

The large ice cream cone shaped blossoms open white then acquire a pink tint in middle summer and remain attractive even after they turn golden brown in winter. Unlike *Hydrangea macrophylla*, the flower color does not vary with the soil pH. The Oakleaf can be purchased in two forms: single blossom types such as the native variety or cultivar ‘Snow Queen’ or the double blossom types such as cultivar ‘Snowflake’ or ‘Harmony’. The blossoms make attractive arrangements in both summer and winter.

The Oakleaf tolerates more sun than other types of hydrangea – morning sun with afternoon shade is best. However, the shrub does not tolerate ‘wet feet’. Good drainage is needed so root rot does not develop. Plant in early summer or late fall; transplant when dormant and leaves have mostly dropped.

Oakleaf hydrangea blooms on old wood. Prune, if necessary to maintain size, in summer before August as bloom buds for next year set during June and July.

Consider placing this care free shrub among your hosta and enjoy its eye appeal all year long.

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Membership Information

The American Hosta Society

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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>