



Show Me Hostas Newsletter

Volume 12, Issue 6

July, 2011

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Pam Wolkowitz President
Photo by Kelly Hall

Hello to Everyone,

Well, I have to say this has been a crazy year in Missouri for weather. The early heat, along with lack of shade, did a number on my early planted hostas in the new garden. The rain is great for the hostas, but again, can make working in the garden a little messy. That's why I bought those cool rubber boots.

The Missouri Botanical Plant Sale was just fabulous. Heather Anderson did a wonderful job of chairing the event and making sure everything went well. We had a great selection of hostas and plenty of volunteers. There was plenty of "hosta talk" to go around and as usual we all had a good time. Add in some new memberships and a doubling of last year's profits. It just couldn't have been any better.

I hope everyone has been potting up some of their unusual hostas for our auction. It's another event where we always have a good time. See you there...

Your President,

Pam

2011 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 7-9

Midwest Regional Hosta Society Convention

Madison, Wisconsin

For more information: <http://www.midwesthostasociety.org>

July 15

Garden Walk at home of Martha Lafata

6:00 PM until party's over

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

(Note location change)

Meeting with Speaker Mike Curran

1:00 PM, Summer Winds Garden Center

December 4

Holiday Party

1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

JULY GARDEN WALK – A VISIT WITH MARTHA LAFATA



Water feature near Martha's patio



Hosta border along Martha's side yard.

When: Friday, July 15 at 6:00 PM

Where: 433 Edgar Road, Webster Groves, MO 63119

One of our newer society members, Martha Lafata, has graciously invited us to spend an evening in her lovely Webster Groves garden. The party begins at 6:00 PM and lasts until we go home. Bring a lawn chair, your beverage of choice and a snack to share. Spend some time admiring her beautiful plantings, hear about her future plants for the garden, and enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow society members.

Directions:

- From I-44, take the Elm Avenue exit.
- Go north on Elm Ave 0.2 miles to Big Bend Blvd.
- Turn right onto Big Bend Blvd and go 0.6 miles to Catalina Ave.
- Turn right onto Catalina Ave. and go 0.2 miles to Edgar Rd.
- Turn right onto Edgar Rd. and go 0.3 miles. 433 Edgar Rd. is on the right.



**Are you ready?
Here they come!**

Member Only Hosta Auction

July 17, 1:00 PM

Now is the time. 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, load the truck and bring them with you to our Society's July 17th 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 weathered the storms (and tornados) and are beating the heat. Join your fellow society members for an afternoon of fun.



JUST TOO HOT! THEN THINK AHEAD TO CHRISTMAS



Karin Frimel, who is again chairing our end-of-the gardening season holiday banquet, is busy planning. There will be plenty of good food and lots of fish stories. Fish stories are those that grow in size with each telling. Now really, tell me again 'how big was that tree that the wind took down?', 'how high did the creek rise?', and 'how hot did it really get in May?'

Along with the food and talk comes the fun. Karen is planning some type of game which will entail exchanging gifts. She suggests that now might be a good time to browse the nurseries and garden shops for a garden item priced around \$10. Purchase it now, wrap it up and put it in a place that you will remember in December. That last bit is the hard part!

A Great Time was Had by All June ST. Louis Hosta Society Tour

On June 11 & 12, our Society welcomed the Illinois Prairie Hosta Society to St. Louis. Five members opened their garden gates to our own members and our Illinois visitors.

First stop was the mountains of North St. Louis County, aka the garden of Nancy and Arlie Tempel.



Planter boxes filled with mini and small hostas edge the Tempel's backyard patio. From this vantage point, visitors can look out over the hundreds of hostas planted down and then up the steep hills that comprise their backyard.



Tucked among the beautifully grown hostas are whimsical metal pieces such as this decorative bicycle. Arlie makes many of the metal works that grace his garden.



This view of the Tempel's garden was taken from part way up the hill behind the Tempel's home. The small figure in the upper left of the picture is Arlie at the bottom of his steep incline.

Next stop on the tour was the beautiful Webster Groves garden of Pat Payton and Jean Hudson.



Pat and Jean's 1920s English Tutor home overlooks a front yard extensively landscaped with the hostas, ferns and shade-loving companion plants that they both dearly love. Curving beds, densely planted with trees, shrubs and of course hostas, edge the driveway, border their neighbor's yard and skirt the sidewalk.



Flagstone paths lead from the front door diverging around a huge tree. More planting beds flow around the left side of their home and along the drive leading to their backyard. The backyard is home to brightly colored sun loving plants, a relaxing screened-in porch and a newly renovated fishpond.



There's no room for grass in their backyard. Lots of pots and interesting metal and wooden pieces dot the flower beds and border the path leading to the porch.

Third stop on the tour was the spacious Crestwood garden of Dave and Joan Poos.



A series of paths weave around the various beds containing more than 700 different hosta cultivars. A large Annabelle Hydrangea anchors a portion of the woodland area border. Many varieties of epimedium, heuchera, ferns and other shade companions are planted amongst the hostas.



Adirondack chairs, built by Dave during a cold winter, command a view of the vast backyard. The stone steps, flanked by hostas and ferns, lead to several beds planted with daylilies just beginning to show their colors.

Photo by Mary Medina



The upper level of the yard displays still more hostas surrounding the old oak trees. This area also contains a large vegetable garden, a stand of bottlebrush buckeyes, azaleas and, of course, more daylilies. The birds were devouring the last of the strawberries while eyeing the next crop to ripen.

The next garden to garner 'ohs and ahs' was the shady retreat of Kelly and Jeff Hall.



Kelly and Jeff's yard seems to be carved out of the woods. The vast area in front of their home has towering trees underplanted with hostas. In one of the center beds hostas are displayed (and over-wintered) in several of the many troughs they have made.

Bordering the Hall's circular drive and anchoring a bed along the street is a portion of their wonderful collection of conifers. Scattered amongst the hostas are many varieties of ferns and heuchera.



Around to the back of their yard, past the moss hill side, is a newly expanded koi pond. All the construction was done by Kelly and Jeff. A focal point of the pond is a rock covered with moss which Kelly and Jeff found in their woods. The rock had a hole that was easily fitted with a water connection. Walla! A really neat water bubbler.

The best view of the pond is from the many large windows of their home which look out over the pond, the hosta beds and the woods beyond.



Besides hostas, the Halls have a love for Japanese maples, many of which they obtain on trips to Washington and Oregon. Kelly has planted specimens in home-made troughs which they placed on pedestals along a retaining wall at the edge of their patio.

Other Japanese maples and dwarf conifers provide focal points in the many large hosta beds which flow along the hill side beyond the patio and pond.

The final stop on this year's tour was the stunning Kirkwood garden of Phyllis and Jim Weidman.



One of the dominate features of Phyllis and Jim's garden is the sweep of hostas that flow down the hill side on the right of their home. Beautifully grown hostas vie for attention along with Japanese Maples and dwarf conifers. A very, very tall column stands as if a sentry at the top of the hill.



Phyllis and Jim were quite creative in developing a gardening plan for the very difficult terrain of their back yard. Pots of large hostas line the walkway from their deck to the sweeping beds in the side yard. A long wall retains the steep hill behind their home. In the sunny areas above the wall are many varieties of coneflowers, more maples and dwarf conifers.



Specimen hostas are given their own space in pots that grace the deck and march along the walks. One planter held an especially beautifully grown H.'Old Smokey'. Jim and Phyllis make many of their hypertufa troughs.

Troughs are an excellent way to display mini hostas. This was quite evident in the Weidman's lovely garden.

Do you have questions about your hostas? Do you just want additional information?

If you haven't done so, check out the American Hosta Society web-site, www.americanhostasociety.org. On its home page, look in the left hand column and under the category "Horticulture", click on the title "About Hostas". This link is packed with informative articles and answers to common questions about all phases of hosta gardening.

Look under the tab "Establishing Hostas" to find information about soil preparation, amount of sun light, water and fertilizer needed for good growth. Learn about mulching, planting and dividing hostas. Click on the "Growth Habits" tab for information about some of the idiosyncrasies you might experience with certain types of hostas. Access the "Pests", "Diseases" and "Environmental Issues" tabs for articles relating to common hosta problems. There is even a "Dictionary of Hosta Terms".

Take a moment to check out this wonderfully crafted and very informative web site.



Heather Anderson was chairwoman of the event. Her organization added to the success of the sale.

It Was a Hosta-riffic Success

Thank you Heather and your crew of Society members who:

took the time to do the three big 'Ds' – dig, divide and donate plants

transported plants to MoBot at 7 AM then stayed to help set up tables and organize plants

manned the sales tables sharing their knowledge of hostas with people who stopped to see what we were all about

stayed until 5 PM to help box unsold items and clean up the sales room



Katie Byrd headed up the cleanup detail, while her mother Melissa helped box the leftovers.



Pat Payton places the member-donated plants in alphabetical order. In the background Phyllis Weidman sorts plants dug from the Missouri Botanical Garden's hosta beds.



Jim Weidman sets up the leaf display which was a popular stopping point for would-be buyers. Phyllis and Jim supplied leaves showing the variety of hosta types, colors and textures.



Catherine Mayer arrived bright and early to help set up the sale tables, then stayed to help customers with their selections.



Martha Lafata and Kelly Hall help bag purchases while Nancy Tempel and Dave Poos collect money. Karen Frimel, in the background, donated plants and helped with setup and sales.



Chester Wolkowitz collects money while Nancy Tempel, Jean Hudson, Barb Moreland and Kelly Hall help bag purchases. Jeff Hall and Arlie Tempel answer customer questions.

Summer Alert – Beware of the Drought

By Rob Mortko

Most reference books on hosta will report that they are quite adaptable to dry shade conditions once they have become established. While this may be true, there is also a practical limit to most generalizations.

During the growing season the hosta rhizome or crown is building reserves that will be used the following spring. Large amounts of water are also required to replace the natural transpiration that occurs with the large leaves. If (as we typically do in the Midwest) encounter a prolonged spell of hot, dry weather, the rhizome will spend reserves to support the plant.

Ever wonder why a hosta appears OK at the end of the year, but appears much smaller and/or less vigorous the following spring, or (even worse) fails to reappear altogether the following spring? This is most likely the result of a decline in the crown mass the previous summer.

So what to do if we do encounter a typical Kansas City summer with day upon day of hot temperatures and extended dry spells? Avoid the stress by watering deeply at least once a week during the summer if we don't receive any help from Mother Nature. Optimum moisture is reported between one and one and a half inches of water per week during the growing season. This is especially important if your hostas receive significant levels of direct sun exposure.

Watering time is also important. Watering in the morning will help discourage both slugs and fungal activity. Use of soaker hoses works well. When watering blue leafed hostas, avoid overhead watering of the leaves which can slowly destroy the glaucous bloom (i.e. the waxy covering that makes a green hosta appear blue). Residual water droplets on any leaf which is followed by sun exposure can also result in leaf burn.

Article reprinted from the Central Illinois Hosta Society August 2010 newsletter.

Note:

Since there is no meeting scheduled for August, your next newsletter will appear around September 1.

How does your garden grow?

**Kind Thoughts are the Roots
Kind Words are the Blossoms
Kind Deeds are the Fruits
Kind Hearts are the Garden**

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

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Membership Information

The American Hosta Society

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Lorton, VA 22079-3029
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
Dues: Individual \$20 for two years

St. Louis Hosta Society

Contact: Dave Poos
9904 Crestwood Drive
Crestwood, MO 63126
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

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>