



Volume 14, Issue 7

September, 2013



**Phyllis Weidman President**

## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT**

August was a wonderful month! Maybe you were able to sit back and enjoy all your hard work. Maybe you were deciding where you need more hostas. Lots of hostas are blooming now so it is time to think about hybridizing. In our yard the bees and other insects always do a good job and you will see lots of seed pods developing.

We don't have many hybridizers in our group, but there are plenty of articles on the web to teach you the basics. Get out there and pretend to be a bee and cross two fall blooming hostas and see what happens. You never know about those gene pools.

Hybridizing is one way to create new hostas, but now is a good time to divide the ones you already have. Just remember to clean your tools after dividing before you move to the next hosta so as not to spread disease. Use ten percent bleach or scrub with Dawn liquid detergent. If using bleach, oil your tools afterwards because the bleach is very hard on those shovels and knives.

Of course, another way to get hostas is to buy them. There are great sales around, but be careful. Check for disease and make sure it is labeled correctly. Most of these hostas come from tissue culture. Our speaker in September is Rob Mortko. He has set up his own tissue culture lab and can tell you the pros and cons. I think it is easier to buy a hosta from Rob.

We have great speakers in September and October and then our Holiday Party.

See you there.

*Phyllis*

## 2013 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**September 15**

**Meeting with Speaker Rob Mortko**

**“Hot Hostas for the Cool Shade”**

1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

**October 20**

**Meeting with Speaker member Ted Piekutowski**

**Bonsai Basics**

1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

**November TBA**

**Board Meeting**

TBA

**December 8**

**NOTE DATE CHANGE**

**Holiday Party**

1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center



*photo from Southern  
Maine Daylily & Hosta  
Society newsletter*

**September 15, 1:00 PM**

**Rob Mortko, the Hosta Guy**

**“Hot Hostas for the Cool Shade”**

In 2000, Rob Mortko registered his first hosta, H. ‘Heart and Soul’. The name aptly describes Rob’s passion for gardening and his favorite plant. His truly unique cultivar, H. ‘Stitch in Time’, hit the retail market in 2004 and is rapidly gaining popularity across the nation.

With wife Sheri and the help of two friendly Whippets, Niko and Levi, Rob operates a home based business named “Made in the Shade”. Located in Olathe Kansas, the nursery offers over 400 different varieties of hostas. Besides retail space, visitors can wander through three quarters of an acre of shaded woodland, extensively landscaped with the hostas that they sell. Their garden has been featured on local TV, many garden tours and in “Kansas City Homes and Gardens” magazine.

A recently retired chemical engineer, Rob can now devote most of his time to his business and his passion. Putting his profession to good use, he has now established a tissue culture lab as part of his business. He is a popular speaker at local, regional and national gardening functions. His articles regularly appear in “The Hosta Journal”. Having served in various positions with The American Hosta Association, he is currently AHS VP Member Services, AHS Newsletter Editor Coordinator and the Executive Secretary of the American Hosta Growers Association.

Rob is a knowledgeable, entertaining speaker and all round nice guy. He will be bringing plants for sale. If you have a craving for a special cultivar, check their web-site [www.hostaguy.com](http://www.hostaguy.com). Drop Rob an email at [Rob@hostaguy.com](mailto:Rob@hostaguy.com) and he will gladly bring your request with him.

## July Members' Auction

On July 21<sup>st</sup> our society's annual plant auction created an afternoon of fun as attendees vied to place the top bid for that special hosta for their garden. This auction is one of two events that fund our society's yearly activities and make the publication of this local newsletter possible. Because of the support from you our members, our society will continue to thrive.

The society thanks every person who took time to dig and pot items for this event. Without their generosity, there would be no auction. Special thanks go to Jeff Hall who chaired this event and acted as auctioneer. His plant knowledge and easy humor makes an enjoyable afternoon fly by. Thanks also to members who helped set up, cleanup, look up plant information and deliver plants to bidders. Successful events are always a group effort.



Mary Jones and Susan Hanratty chat before the start of the auction. Other members examine plants waiting for their turn on the auction block.



BEFORE - Phil and Carol Brammer arrange the donations in alphabetical order before the start of the auction. Hope they're also making their list.



AFTER - Jeanne Yochim happily surveys her pile of successful bids. Jeanne and Jim seem to have a bit of everything - large & small, gold & green.



Rose Hall checks *The Hosta Finder* for plant descriptions and current average retail prices.



Jeff Hall, in action as auctioneer, kept the afternoon sale lively.



Kelly Hall helps Rose with plant prices while Spence Sorenson delivers hostas to high bidders.



## Open Garden Day - June 9

### The garden of Karen Frey

Another garden that was open for visitors on the June Open Garden Day was that of new member Karen Frey. Karen grew up in a family of plant lovers. Her parents ran a plant nursery and her brother is still in the business. Karen's yard is a riot of color. Brick-edged wood chip paths meander through both the front and back spaces. Everywhere large splashes of color. Karen mixes annuals with perennials in her borders and numerous beds. Unusual plants and pots overflowing with blooms dot her landscape. Thank you Karen for sharing your space!



A large bed of purple cone flowers greets visitors to Karen Frey's home in St. Peters. Beyond the cone flowers are clumps of black-eyed susans, daylilies, roses and more colorful beds.



Shaded by a large Oakleaf Hydrangea, young hosta plants flourish. Interspersed are other shade lovers such as heuchera, golden grass and bleeding hearts. This bed will soon fill out.



A turtle sits on the surround of Karen's exquisite pond. Golden fish dart among the leaves of water lilies, water hyacinths and Lotus plants. A bubbler provides the sound of splashing water.



One side of the raised pond features a mosaic depicting colorful koi romping in a bright blue sea. The patio is edged with clumps of orange and yellow daylilies, a crimson hibiscus and pots filled with vibrant annuals.



A fat bird sits in one of the many artistically arranged borders running along her pathways. The progression starts with a row of dainty white alyssum, then green edged coleus, followed by bright red salvia. A pot of purple petunias anchors the far end.



Sheltered by the enormous leaves of a banana tree, a water feature depicts two children playing with a pitcher. Large blue pots are filled with many different varieties of coleus. Earlier in the spring colorful iris blooms brightened this side of Karen's house.

## Did You See!

### Post-Dispatch Garden Contest

**WOW - All three winners are members of the St. Louis Hosta Society**



#### First Place – Terry and Steve Metzler

The view Terry submitted to the contest showcases their beautifully landscaped koi pond. Two streams with several waterfalls flow into the pond which is situated immediately behind their backyard patio. The clock which sits on an island between the streams is a great accent piece.

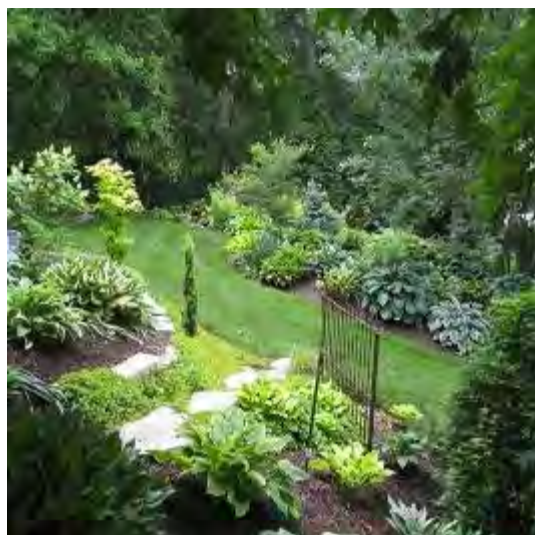
Terry has a collection of about 250 hostas. Besides being nestled amongst the pond rocks, many fill the shade border around the grassy yard to the right. Interesting conifers, large heuchera, grasses, and other companions compliment the hostas in her shade border. Daylilies and roses add color to sunnier sites.



#### Second Place – Karen and Greg Frimel

Karen's photo depicts one of the many paths that meander through their artistically designed backyard. Dozens of ornamental under story trees such as dogwood, redbud, Japanese maples, a tri-color beech and a wolf-eye dogwood supply "bones" to the garden space.

Karen's own words best describe the design technique she uses when selecting plants and hardscape for inclusion in her garden. "Additional plantings were added in visual layers, paying attention to height, color, texture and bloom time. Found objects and repurposed items add to the hardscape. Finally, annuals in the same color are used to create a unifying feel as you walk down the many paths."



#### Third Place – Phyllis and Jim Weidman

Phyllis' photo entry is a spectacular view of their garden taken from the top of the steep sloop that is part of their backyard. Clumps of huge, beautifully grown hostas dominate their landscape vying for attention with their Japanese maples and dwarf conifers.

One of the dominant features of Phyllis' and Jim's yard is the sweep of hostas that flow down the hillside at the right of their home. A dry creek provides landscaping interest as well as solving a drainage problem. Smaller hostas, equally well grown, reside in troughs which they make during the winter. What a beautiful vista!

**Congratulations all!**



## Welcome new members

The Society is delighted to welcome new members:

**Beth Harper of O'Fallon, MO**  
**Judy Joerding of Webster Groves, MO**  
**Betty Luaders of Fenton, MO**  
**Diane Mallow of Frontenac, MO**  
**Judith Merrick of Hillsboro, MO**

Look for them at future meetings and introduce yourselves. Show them how welcoming and friendly we all are. We hope all our members, new and old alike, will attend September's meeting to hear our guest speaker Rob Mortko.

## How late is too late to Plant Hostas in the Fall?

**By Bob Solberg of Green Hill Farm**

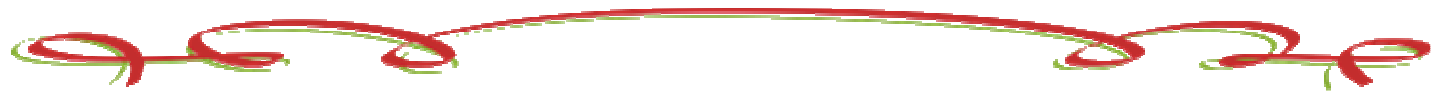
(Reprinted from Central Illinois Hosta Society August 2013 newsletter)

August is a great time to plant hostas almost anywhere in the country. You can safely plant them all month in the Midwest and North and the latter half of the month in the South. My standard rule is you want to get them in the ground 4-6 weeks before the first frost. This allows them to make some new roots while the soil is still warm and then have some time to prepare for winter.

Most of us, though, have planted hostas in the ground later than that with good success. I have planted them as late as the first week of November without any noticeable ill effects. You do run a risk with late planting however. Hostas are completely dormant during the winter, and they will not produce new roots until after they have made new foliage in the spring. They literally sleep through the winter.

Late planted hostas may rot over the winter if 1) the ground is frozen and stays frozen shortly after they are planted, 2) they are very dry when the ground freezes, 3) the soil stays too wet because of poor winter drainage or 4) heaving occurs during cycles of the soil freezing and thawing. Snow cover or a covering of mulch will help with all these situations. Remember, blue hostas, as well as many gold hostas, with *H. sieboldiana* and *H. 'Tokudama'* parents as well as some *H. longipes* types are the most susceptible to winter kill. Miniature hostas may also completely heave out of the ground, resulting in cold damage to the crown.

So, with late hosta planting, first make sure the plants are full of water when the first hard frost hits. Then try a little mulch to protect the hosta crowns and moderate soil temperatures. (Beware! Deep mulches may entice mice and voles to make their winter homes in your hosta garden.) With a little luck from the winter weather you can probably extend your planting season another month or so, even after the first frost.



## ***Holiday Celebration***

**December 8, 1 o'clock  
Creve Coeur Government Center**

**New Caterer  
New Game  
Same Great Price \$12**



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Number Attending \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Sign up at the September 15<sup>th</sup> meeting

or

Send reservation to:

Cindy Michinok  
14300 Quiet Meadow Ct.  
Chesterfield, MO 63017

**All reservations and money must be to Cindy by November 23, 2013**

# Visions of Midwest Regional Hosta Convention "Hosta Mania" – Lisle, IL – July 11-13



Woolly pocket wall at *The Gardens at Ball*



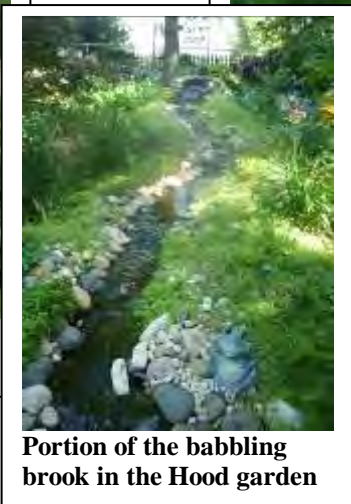
Phyllis and Jim Weidman in Childress garden



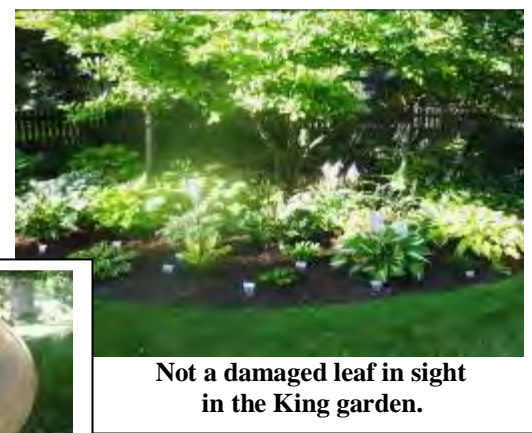
Lou Horton grows huge hostas!



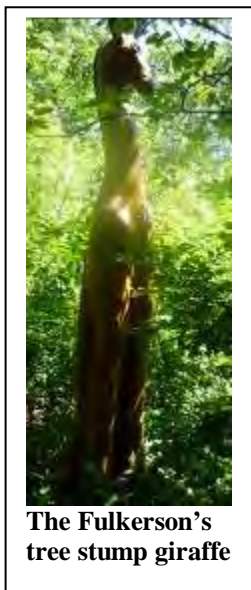
Painted window in the Childress garden



Portion of the babbling brook in the Hood garden



Not a damaged leaf in sight in the King garden.



The Fulkerson's tree stump giraffe



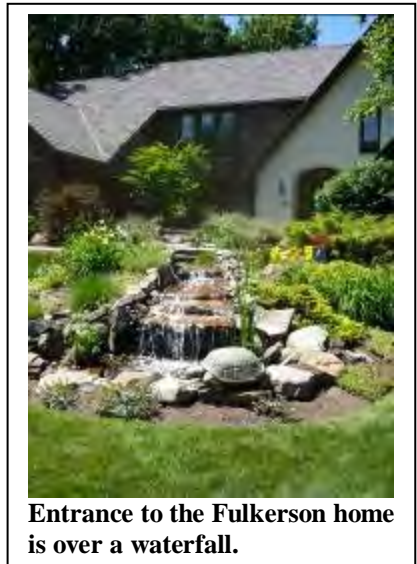
Soap on a pole keeps deer out of Asselborn yard.



Carved wooden ball



A seat of impatiens



Entrance to the Fulkerson home is over a waterfall.



## St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

**Phyllis Weidman** – President  
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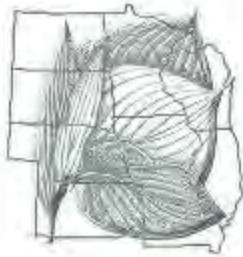
## St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

**Contact:** Cindy Michniok  
14300 Quiet Meadow Ct.  
Chesterfield, MO 63017  
[Cmichniok@gmail.com](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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/>