



Volume 15, Issue 7

September, 2014



Phyllis Weidman President
Photo by Kelly Hall

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

We have had a break from all the hosta activities, but it is time to get back in the swing. We are starting the fall with a bang! We have a guest speaker, Mark Zilis, author, nurseryman, hybridizer and all around expert in the field of hosta. If you come to only one meeting to learn about hosta, this is the one. Mark your calendars now to hear Mark.

Also mark your calendars for the rest of the year. We will have Janie Bedwell speak about trees and shrubs in October, our Board Meeting in November and our Holiday Party in December.

A word about the Board Meeting: it is important that you feel part of the Society. We have an annual Board Meeting in November,

usually at my house. We have supper (every one brings something to share) and then we get down to business. You are all welcome to come to this meeting. We need all of your ideas for programs and activities; how best to make and spend money; when and where to have meetings. One subject of great importance will be the upcoming 2016 AHS Convention.

I hope by now you have big red circles around the dates and you are as excited to see everyone again as I am. It will be fun to hear what has worked in your garden this year and what you want to do next year. Planning your garden is part of the fun of having one.

See you on the 21st.

Phyllis

Phyllis' Hosta Tip of the Month

Have you ever noticed how lush and big a hosta is in the fall and then next year it does not come back as big - no voles involved or other problem you can think of? Well the reason is probably lack of moisture. During the year the rhizome or crown has been creating reserves or energy for next spring. In August and September these reserves may need to be used to maintain the plant during hot dry periods. When spring comes, the rhizome has already used some of the reserve so the plant may be smaller or not at all. The answer is water. WATER, WATER, WATER! - at least one inch per week.

2014 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 21

Meeting with Speaker Mark Zilis

1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

October 19

Meeting with Speaker Janie Bedwell

“Trees and Shrubs, what do I need to do, especially in times of drought”

1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

November TBA

Board Meeting

TBA

December 7

Holiday Party

1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

September 21

Mark Zilis

**Nurseryman, Hybridizer, Speaker, Author
Authority on all things hosta!**

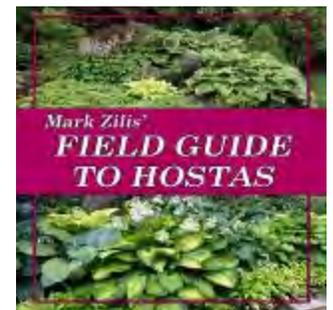
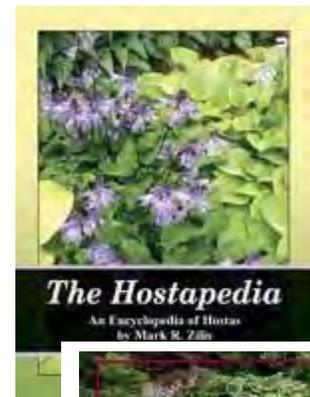
Mark earned both a B.S. and M.S. in horticulture from the University of Illinois where he became involved in the beginnings of the tissue culture revolution. In 1978 he developed the first tissue culture lab at Walters Gardens in Zeeland, Michigan. His job was to develop new ways to TC hostas for introduction to the gardening public.

In 1981 Mark co-founded the T&Z Nursery in Winfield, Illinois. Then in 1992, he established his own nursery and TC lab, [Q & Z Nursery](#) in Rochelle, Illinois. Some of the many cultivars coming from his TC lab that probably reside in your own gardens are *H.* ‘Afternoon Delight’, *H.* ‘Midwest Magic’, *H.* ‘Pineapple Upsidedown Cake’, *H.* ‘Radiant Edger’ and *H.* ‘Sugar and Cream’.

In addition to his nursery work, Mark has written three important hosta books, *The Hosta Handbook* (2000), *The Hostapedia* (2009) and just released in 2014 *Field Guide to Hostas*. He has traveled extensively in Japan, in Europe and throughout the United States doing research for his books. Besides giving detailed descriptions of thousands of hosta cultivars, the books contain information pertaining to growing hostas, hosta history, species, hosta anomalies, pests, diseases and other problems.

Mark often speaks at National and Regional conventions and is a regular presenter at the Midwest Region’s Winter Scientific Meeting. In 2001 Mark received the *Alex J. Summers Distinguished Merit Award*, the highest award bestowed by The American Hosta Society.

Don’t miss an afternoon that promises to be entertaining as well as educational.



Garden Walks are the Highlights of Summer!

Karen and Greg Frimel



Karen's garden is about the unexpected, about the clever use of household items as garden art, about the juxtaposition of form, texture and color.

For example, in the venue at left, the form and texture of the ferns, Solomon seal, astilbe, and well-grown hostas compliment each other. Then, for just a dash of color, begonias perch in a pot on a tall florist stand. In a sunnier portion of her yard, Karen filled old kitchen cabinet drawers with bright hued begonias which pick up the colors of her daylilies.



One mustn't walk too fast or you will miss her little touches such as the rock holding a mini hosta and a spoon etched with the word 'hosta'. A fern bed studded with stakes mounted with ornamental glass door knobs was unique as well as beautiful. Containers of unusual succulents filled the patio. Inspiring!



Pam and Chester Wolkowitz



A Dawn Redwood shades one corner.

What a delight to return to the Wolkowitz's beautiful garden. In three short years, the beds have filled to overflowing.

The wide range of color, texture and size exhibited by hostas is evident in Pam's and Chester's plantings. The size of the clumps is testimony to all the TLC given to each.



H. 'George Smith' borders Pam's pond.

Pam's newest love is the brood of chickens that live outside the walls of the hosta garden. The brown ones are her special "babies" and like to be held and petted. However, they must all earn their keep. A cheery cluck announces the laying of another egg.



Pam shows Dave Poos her babies



A small hosta snuggles inside an old birdhouse.



A shade border wraps around the hillside.



Path above the koi pond



Terry and Steve Metzler

It is easy to see why Terry won 1st place in the 2013 Post-Dispatch Garden Contest. A border of hostas, heuchera, ferns, grasses, hydrangea and other shade lovers rims the back yard. A pergola calls visitors to climb up along side the stream which flows down over the hosta studded rocks into the large koi pond below.

Hints of color, both in the hardscape and in flower blooms dot the various beds. A red Adirondack chair invites us to stay. How could anyone store tools in that cute shed!



A frog with an attitude finds respite from the sun under the spreading leaves of a vase-shaped hosta.



The newly constructed shed adds color and whimsy as well as being useful.



Ted's "greeter"!



Kim's roses in bloom

Ted and Kim Piekutowski

Many of Ted's hobbies are evident in his garden. Visitors were greeted by one of the characters from Ted's extensive Halloween collection. Other ghouls made their homes in the back yard.

A large bench displays Ted's bonsai collection. Numerous hostas resided in pots along the back of the house. Besides hostas, his shade garden was planted with many ferns, heuchera, brunnera and a large goatsbeard. Kim's roses, which reside along the sunny back fence, add dashes of color to the landscape.

The garden hardscape gives glimpses of Ted's and Kim's many interests – concrete stepping stones, a stained glass screen, painted balls, funny birds and many gnomes. What fun!



The shady corner of the yard



A ghoul keeps watch over Ted's Bonsais.



The entrance to JoAnn's home beckons with its wonderful plantings of grasses and conifers.

JoAnn and Mike Rawson

It takes but one look at the front of JoAnn's home to know her passions – conifers, grasses and unusual plants. Resting in a pot along the walk is a beautiful Larch which over-wintered in that location. Immediately in front of it, a blue pot contains a burgundy-leaf perilla. Other conifers and many, many grasses complete the picture.



A sunny bed in the backyard is home to larger evergreens. Green and gold conifers contrast with the blue grass.



Shade lovers dwell along the back fence – hostas, heuchera, brunnera, hardy begonia and grasses.

JoAnn's backyard borders have a mix of hostas and plants more suited to the shade, including grasses. A sunny berm displays larger conifers such as an Alaskan cedar. Spiky blue lyme grass provides a change of color and texture.



JoAnn uses an iron fence section to hold large sprawling grasses back from the walking paths.

Thanks JoAnn for introducing us to new plants and new ways to handle old favorites.



A touch of orange contrasts with *H.* 'St. Paul' and *H.* 'El Nino' in their sloping side yard.

Phyllis and Jim Weidman

The dominate beds in Phyllis' and Jim's garden cascade down the right side yard. Touches of orange, pots, balls and flowers, beckon from amidst mounds of mature hostas. Japanese maples and conifers add structure.



Two of the Phyllis' and Jim's other interests – growing agave and making hypertufa containers

Huge hostas line both sides of the back walk. Large cultivars *H.* 'Paul's Glory' and *H.* 'Edge of Night', on the left, compete with equally large clumps of *H.* 'Blue Ridge' and *H.* 'Liberty' on the right.



Marauding deer beware! At a glance, the coyote guarding these magnificent hostas is a bit unnerving. Initial reports say it's doing its job. Stay tuned!



This two-dimensional cutout is the latest weapon in the Weidman's constant war on deer! It looks so real – its eyes seem to follow you.

July Members' Auction



Auctioneer Pam Wolkowitz with helpers Mike Schmitt and Phyllis Weidman.

The plants kept pouring in – all sizes and descriptions. There were hostas, hostas and more hostas, plus a nice selection of companion plants for both sun and shade. New cultivars were available in addition to many old favorites. All had been placed in alphabetical order waiting their turn to shine on the auction block. Our members were very generous with their donations.



Auctioneer Basil Honaker, Jr. with helpers Kim Piekutowski and Catherine Mayer.

By one o'clock the room was filled both with plants and people waiting for the action to begin. Pam Wolkowitz presided over the first portion of the auction. Mike Schmitt and Phyllis Weidman acted as runners bringing items to Pam and then delivering the plants to successful bidders. Kim Piekutowski and Catherine Mayer looked up plant descriptions and suggested prices in *The Hosta Finder*.

Basil Honaker was so knowledgeable about the selections that Pam teasingly suggested he take a turn at auctioneering. Basil accepted the challenge and did an outstanding job, even if he teasingly tried to ignore his wife when she raised their paddle to bid. Maybe we can coerce him to do a repeat performance next year. Thanks Pam and Basil!

There was lots of friendly banter and some fierce bidding as one of a kind selections came up for bid. As you all know this is one of two fund raisers for our society. We thank each person who took the time to dig, pot and donate their plants. We thank each of you for coming and supporting your society.



Chester Wolkowitz was one of several members who helped set plants, hostas and their companions, in alphabetical order.



Members check out the plant offerings before the auction begins. Basil Honaker, Jr. is ready with bidding card in hand.



photo by Susan Hanratty

**Congratulations
Sharon and Mike!**

Did you see!!

There's a reason that frog's smiling. Sharon and Mike Schmitt won first place for best amateur garden in the 2014 Post-Dispatch Great Garden Contest. Those of you who visited the Schmitt's garden back in June certainly agree that this honor is well deserved.

Contest judge June Hutson, horticulturalist at the Missouri Botanical Garden, stated "Terraced walls provide a good solution for landscaping on a slope. The rocky water feature tumbles down a slope in a pleasing culmination pool. The arbor is well-placed, practically next to the house and blends well into the setting. All of the various elements fit the overall garden setting."

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Grace Isaacson-Schmid of Webster Groves, MO
Rick and Denise Lutz of St. Charles, MO
Christine Morgan of Kirkwood, MO
Sharon Reilly of St. Louis, MO
Gerry Tevlin of House Springs, MO

We hope that you all join us at the September meeting with speaker Mark Zilis. He is a nationally known authority on all things hosta. It's the perfect time to enhance your knowledge of our favorite shade plant and get to know your fellow members.

Pam and Martha are looking for you!

The co-chairs for the Garden Selection Committee for the 2016 AHS Convention are looking for tour gardens. There are not many requirements – basically a nice garden that you would enjoy visiting. AHS requests that the garden have 200 or more hostas. The plants do not have to be labeled, but it would be helpful. Location and travel time are considerations for selection. Choosing gardens as soon as possible gives the hosts two years to prepare their space.

This is a great opportunity to show off your garden to fellow hostaholics from across the country. There are usually a few international registrants as well. You might even meet the hybridizer of your favorite hosta.

Not quite sure if you qualify? Let Pam and Martha decide.

Do you have a friend (member or non-member) whose garden should be considered?
Would you be willing to have your garden open before or after the actual convention?

Contact Martha Lafata at 314-961-7163 or Pam Wolkowitz at 636-285-3114

Hostas more than just pretty leaves; look at the flowers!

By Jim Wilkins

(Reprinted from the Mid-South Hosta Society August 2001 newsletter.)

With each passing season, I notice more and more the difference among hostas. Part of that skill has been acquired by looking at more than just the leaf.

Don't misunderstand me. The most dramatic and significant impact of hostas comes from the leaves. However, by emphasizing only the foliage, we may miss the subtle beauty and some fun. As a hosta society (AHS), we honor the leaves. If one of our hybridizers were to create a hosta with a yellow or red flower, all of us would likely want such a plant. But if its leaf was not unique, it would not win an award in the seedling class at the cut-leaf show.

Consider the flower scapes. Some are rigid and some arch. Some have orderly ridges. Some are very tall compared to the plant's height. Others may be so short as to have all or part of the blooming under the plant's foliage. Some plants have several flower scapes per division. The color of the flower scape often mirrors the color of the central part of the leaf and petiole.

Some hosta leaves have a waxy coat called "bloom", which is what makes blue leaves blue, and which, after time, may melt off and create dark-green leaves. Have you noticed that flower scapes and even seed pods also have a "bloom"? The bloom on the scape persists long after the bloom on the leaf is gone.

Flower scapes can also have red pigment. This may vary from a light stippling to an intense uniform color such as seen on *H. 'Sparkling Burgundy'*. In some cases the purple color also extends to the seed pods. This is the case with *H. 'Purple Passion'*, making it a very striking plant when the seed pods are left on the scape. Several of my seedlings from *H. kikutii* var. *caput-avis* have purple flower scapes. One of them has a very unusual modification: development of the purple appears to be photo (light) dependent. The portion of the scape below the foliage is green and that above the foliage is purple.

Some flower scapes have leaves arising from them. These vestigial leaves or scape foliations can be very striking. They often mimic leaves that arise from the crown. Herb Benedict has commented that they are often seen in young, vigorous plants, and become insignificant in established clumps. Splashed vestigial leaves can be a useful guide as to which flowers are apt to produce variegated progeny.

We regularly talk about flower color, shape, size and fragrance. Other flower attributes may distinguish one hosta from another. Do most of the flowers arise from one side of the scape or are they regularly distributed around the scape? Do spent flowers readily drop off the scape or are they retained until they shrivel and desiccate? Are the flowers closed? This can be very beautiful because the flowers are not pollinated and seem to be retained longer before dropping off. Orientation of the individual flowers has great influence on the beauty of the bloom. Some flowers droop with their open end facing down, while others face straight out or even face up, making a more dramatic presentation.

Some hosta growers remove their flower scapes, just after they emerge, and miss most of the interest. Many hostaphiles remove their flower scapes as the last few flowers are spent. This, it is felt, puts more energy into the plant and promotes more rapid growth. It is also good to remove the scape unless you want to grow the seeds, before the seed pods ripen and the seeds are spread all over the garden. It can be difficult discriminating between a volunteer seedling and one of your prized hostas.

By cutting flower scapes early, you may miss some beauty and interest in the seed pods. Some are a lovely dark purple, some are striped, some are gold, some are large, and some may have a waxy coat or "bloom".

You don't have to be a hybridizer to understand this wonder and wonder-filled plant.

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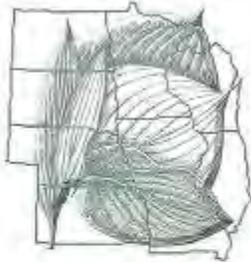
St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

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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



Midwest Regional Hosta Society

The Midwest Regional Hosta Society represents Region 5 of the American Hosta Society that includes 9 states.

Membership in the society is \$20.00 for 2 years, which includes two issues per year of the newsletter.

Please mail a check made payable to **MRHS** to:

Barbara Schroeder,
Treasurer
1819 Coventry Dr.
Champaign, IL 61822

along with Name, Address, phone, and email (Most correspondence is by email). For questions email 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/>