



Shady Business

Newsletter of The Potomac Hosta Club, Inc.

Volume 28, Number 4, December 2014

www.potomachostaclub.com

Officers & Directors

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Susan Hedrick
703/866-2211

Vice President:

Karen O'Meara
703/281-4334

Secretary:

Juliana Hilt
202/546-4199

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Jim Turcol
703/293-9447

Immediate Past President:

Sandie Markland
252-441-1947

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Tom Hilt

Newsletter Editor:

Tom Hilt
(tandjhilt@verizon.net)

President's Letter

As we close out 2014 the club has many things already planned for 2015. For the latest information please check our website or facebook. But we need your help – there are four (4) openings on the board starting in 2015. Please volunteer to fill those positions. Help is needed in hosta selections, 'Hostatality' and plant sales to name a few.

With the positive responses from club members we will be hosting the 'Hostatality Suite' at the American Hosta Society's 2015 National Convention in Raleigh, NC, from the 18th through the 20th of June. It is just under 4 hours for me instead of the 10 hours I spent getting to Cedar Rapids, Iowa last year. There is great vending and even better people, from Europe, Canada and all over the US. Mark you calendars for those dates, registration usually starts in late January.

There are many to thank but I would like to give a special shout out to Tom Hilt-Newsletter Editor, Jim Turcol-Treasurer and Jim Hedrick-Hostatality.

Many Thank You's and Happy and Safe Holidays.

Susan

'Hosta Gardeners have it made in the shade'

PHC Officer and Board Member Elections

Have you ever wondered what makes the Potomac Hosta Club tick and what keeps it running? Well, it's simple: it's all of you that volunteer for activities and participate in our events. And, it's those of us who are willing to take on some of the responsibilities of the Club's officers and board members. The current slate has been willing to serve through two three-year terms and it's time for new perspectives and volunteers to step forward and answer the call "to duty!"

Starting the New Year there will be **four empty positions on the board**. Members also are always welcome to run for any of the officer positions: president, vice president, treasurer, secretary and membership secretary.

Interest and nominations for officers and board members should be sent to Susan Hedrick for a vote by the membership at the Annual Meeting, currently scheduled for Sunday, March 29th, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM at the Merrifield Garden Center, Fair Oaks, Virginia. Susan can be contacted at: hostaclub@gmail.com or by telephone at: 703-866-2211.

Senior Dues to \$5 Annually

In view of rising costs, the board recently decided to do away with the three-year Senior membership of \$12.50. **After December 29th, 2014, Senior memberships will be \$5 annually.**

Seniors whose memberships expire at the end of this year (2014) may still renew for three years for \$12.50 if you do so **before December 29th**. For those Seniors whose memberships expire at the end of 2015 or later, the new price will only come into effect when you renew at that time. However, for this latter group, if you would like to renew once for the \$12.50/three-years price, you may do so and we will add the three years to the end of your current membership. Just act before December 29th.

While the Board was reluctant to take this step, we would also like to note that for those who attend the Spring Meeting and Plant Sale, you receive \$10 off the price of the first hosta purchased, essentially paying you for remaining with the Club. Other benefits include at least four newsletters a year and the Annual Picnic, where the Club provides the soft drinks and a main dish.

Anyway, we look forward to having all of you remain with the Club for many years to come.

New members

Welcome Aboard to:

Cindy Mason, Alexandria, VA

Bill Voss, Manassas, VA

2015 Hosta Finders

If there is interest from the membership, the PHC will order copies of the 2015 *Hosta Finder* at a reduced cost. Single copies in 2015 will sell for \$20, but will be \$15 if the Club orders 10 or more. If less than 10 orders, they will be \$18. Contact **Susan Hedrick before February 28th, 2015,**

at 703-866-2211 or via e-mail at:

hostaclub@gmail.com. Pick up will be at the 2015 Spring Meeting on March 29th.

Winter Scientific Meeting

Sponsored by the Northern Illinois Hosta Society, the Winter Scientific Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, January 17th, 2015, in Naperville, Illinois. Topics for this meeting include:

- Glenn Herold: Sedges and Grasses for the Shade
- Rod Kuenster: Hybridizer's Perspective
- Tom Micheletti: Hostas on the Small Side

- Jeff Miller: When is Enough Enough?
- Bob Solberg: The State of the State in Hostas
- Mark Zilis: Hostas of the Year and Their Organizations

Location: Northern Illinois University Conference Center, 1120 East Deihl Road, Naperville, IL

Date: Saturday, January 17th, 2015; continental breakfast at 7:30 AM, concluding at 4:30 PM.

Accommodations: Hilton Hotel, 3003 Corporate West Drive, Lisle, IL 60532, phone: 630-505-0900; \$79 per night for Friday/Saturday nights, 16/17 January; **Reservation deadline is 26 December 2014;** the hotel's website can be found through: www.hilton.com.

Note: The hotel will provide a hospitality suite on Friday and Saturday evening for attendees to socialize. A silent auction of hosta seeds will also be held at the WSM to raise funds to help offset the program costs. Successful bidders will receive from some of the regions outstanding hybridizers.

For more information and registration, see the NIHS's website at: www.midwesthostasociety.org or contact Mark Rekoske at: marekoske@gmail.com.

Topics at the Winter Scientific Meeting cover a wide variety of issues, and we are lucky that many are summarized and recorded by attendees for the benefit of hosta lovers throughout the country. The following two articles include Mark Zilis's take on giant hostas, presented at the 2010 meeting, and Glenn Herold's 2013 talk about the eight hosta species that originated on the Korean peninsula. I hope you enjoy them both. *The Editor*

The World of Hosta Giants, According to Zilis 2010

by Randy Goodwin

(This article is courtesy of the Indianapolis Hosta Society's Late Winter 2010 newsletter, via the

Central Illinois Hosta Society's newsletter, Great Expectations, Volume 20, Issue 8, October 2014.)

The yearly Plants of Distinction series was again presented by Mark Zilis during the January Winter Scientific Meeting of the American Hosta Society in suburban Chicago. This 2010 presentation focused on which hostas were the largest of the giant hostas. Measurements of clump height, width, and leaf size were the criteria for his rankings. For a cultivar to be considered a giant, a height of 36 inches and 120 square inches in leaf size was the minimum requirement. In total 226 plants qualified as giants. Mark eliminated 155 of these since he had not personally measured those.

Mark also listed which plant had the greatest measurements in each category. Tallest plant was 'Sum and Substance'. *H.* 'Solar Flare' was widest, while *H.* 'Sum it Up' had the largest surface area. Surprisingly, *H.* 'Big John' did not make the top 25 although it had the longest measured leaf blade. Considering the newness of both 'Big John' and 'Empress Wu', maturity may find Mark with enlarged measurements on these two cultivars with significant changes coming in future size-rankings.

A footnote on the largest plant *H.* 'Sum and Substance' can be noted. The story goes that this largest of all hosta cultivars was taken in Van Wade's garden where the original planting consisted of three separate plants which eventually grew together creating a very wide and tall plant.

For those wanting to consider trying to hybridize an even larger hosta, Mark listed those plants he considered the best in this effort. The following are those cultivars: *Hosta* 'Big John', *H.* 'Elatior', *H. montana f. macrophylla*, *H.* 'Sagae', *H.* 'High Noon', *H.* 'Sum and Substance', *H.* 'Elegans', *H. sieboldiana* 'Mira', *H.* 'Green Piecrust' and *H. montana* 'Aureomarginata'.

The following list is the totaled averages used to determine the rankings. This list starts with the 25th largest plant and ends with the largest cultivar.

25. *H.* 'Winter Snow', a 'Sum and Substance' sport
24. *H.* 'Birchwood Elegance'
23. *H. Montana f. macrophylla* (formerly 'Praeflorens')
22. *H.* 'Empress Wu' (from 'Big John')
21. *H.* 'Roderick' (with 'Elatior' parentage)
20. *H.* 'Behemoth' (a *montana* seedling)
19. *H.* 'Friar Tuck' (a 'Sum and Substance' sport)
18. *H.* 'Lady Isobel Barnett' ('Sum and Substance' sport)
17. *H.* 'Borsch I', (*montana* background)
16. *H.* 'Key West'
15. *H.* 'Mikado' (*montana* x 'Big Sam')
14. *H.* 'Steve Moldovan' ('Blue Vision' x 'Fantastic')
13. *H.* 'Canadian Foreign Affairs'
12. *H.* 'Green Dragonet'
11. *H.* 'Mountain Man' (*montana* parentage)
10. *H.* 'Corduroy' ('Green Acres' seedling)
9. *H.* 'Lakeside Ripples'
8. *H.* 'Russ O'Harra' ('Elatior' parentage)
7. *H.* 'Victory' ('Elatior' sport)
6. *H.* 'Solar Flare' ('Francis Williams' x 'Tokudama Aureonebulosa' x 'Fortunei Aurea')
5. *H.* 'Millennium' ('Herb Benedict' x 'Sagae')
4. *H.* 'T Rex' ('Big John' x *Montana f. macrophylla*)
3. *H.* 'Sum It Up' ('Sum and Substance' sport)
2. *H.* 'Elatior' (formerly 'Nigrescens Elatior')
1. *H.* 'Sum and Substance'

The Korean Species Hosta

by Glenn Herold, Cedarburg, WI

(This article is Bob Olsen's summation of a presentation given by Glenn Herold at the 2013 Winter Scientific Meeting sponsored by the Northern Illinois Hosta Society. It is provided courtesy of the NIHS via their newsletter, Hosta Leaves, Issue Number 74, Spring 2013.)

When you think of the origin of hostas Japan comes first to mind, and rightly so, for of the approximately 40 recognized species the vast majority originated there. In fact, only three countries can claim hostas as being native to their borders: Japan, China, and Korea .

Eight hosta species are native to Korea-

1. *Hosta capitata*
2. *Hosta clausa*
3. *Hosta jonesii*
4. *Hosta laevigata*
5. *Hosta minor*
6. *Hosta tsushimensis*
7. *Hosta venusta*
8. *Hosta yingeri*

These species have been carefully analyzed for morphology and for the enzymes they produce (DNA determines which enzymes are made by a plant and closely related hostas will produce similar enzymes). The conclusion of these studies indicate that:

- *Hosta laevigata* is closely related to *Hosta yingeri*
- *Hosta minor* is closely related to *Hosta venusta*
- *Hosta tsushimensis* is closely related to *Hosta jonesii*
- *Hosta capitata* and *Hosta clausa* are not closely related to any of the others.

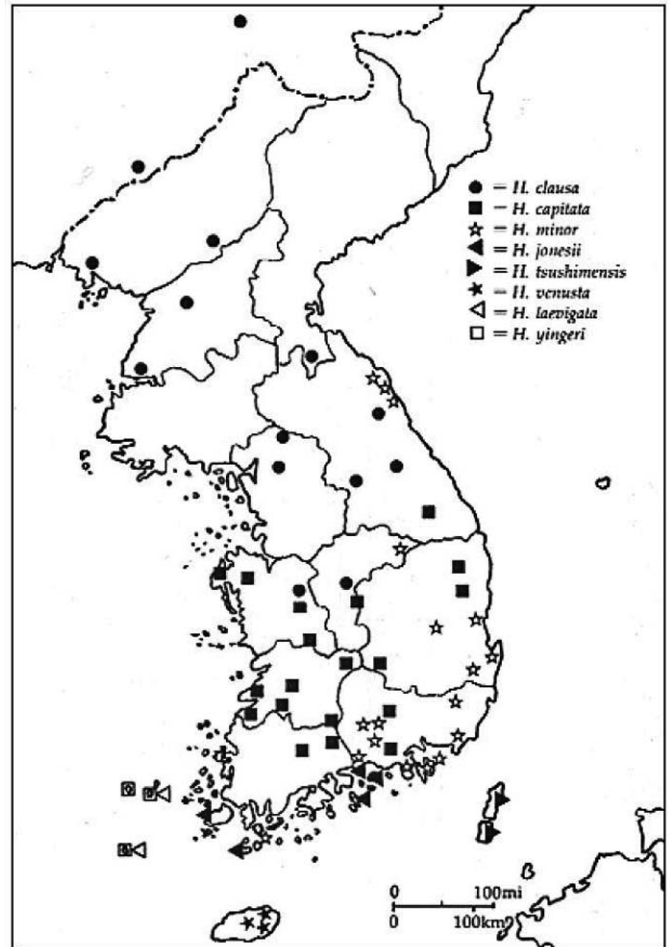
This is of more interest to hybridizers than to most home gardeners. The Korean species plants are small and green and would not likely make anyone's top ten list. BUT, their DNA is a unique source of genetic material – different from the Japanese and Chinese hostas. Desirable characteristics seen in these plants can be bred into the existing hosta cultivars.

Hosta capitata is found in the southern part of the Korean peninsula and isolated from the other hosta species. It is characterized by:

- tall scapes
- rippled leaf margins
- purple flowers arranged in tight clusters.

It has not been widely used in hybridization – and when so mainly for its fine flowers. *H.* ‘Amanua’

and ‘Show Piece’ have outstanding flowers. *Hosta capitata* ‘Alboflora’ is a white flowered form of the species.



Hosta clausa has the broadest geographic range of the Korean species, and it also shows the most species variation:

- *Hosta clausa* var. *clausa* is a triploid rarely found in the wilds. Its flowers do not open (consequently it never sets seed); it spreads by rhizomes.
- *Hosta clausa* var. *ensata* has narrow lance-shaped leaves; it is seldom encountered.
- *Hosta clausa* var. *stolonifera* is also a rarity. It never produces scapes or flowers.
- *Hosta clausa* var. *normalis* is the common form; it is diploid and has been used often by

hybridizers. It has green oval leaves (a yellow-leaved variant has been called ‘Golden Arrow’) and red petioles.

- *H.* ‘Purple Lady Fingers’ (*Hosta clausa* var. *normalis* x *H. longissima*) has prolific purple flowers. Bob Solberg started with *Hosta clausa* var. *normalis* and after several crosses got ‘Mango Salsa’ with its yellow foliage and red petioles.

Hosta yingeri is found on remote islands off the southern coast of Korea. It is noted for good substance, shiny leaves and most unusual spider-like flowers. *H.* ‘Lily Pad’ is a selection of the species with blunt leaves, typical of those found in

the wild. *H.* ‘Treasure Island’ is another selection – it has puckering between the veins. A white-margined sport was found in tissue culture by Mark Zilis and named ‘Gentle Spirit’.

Some hybrids:

- *H.* ‘Old Coot’ and ‘Jaz’ (*Hosta yingeri* x ‘Sum and Substance’) good substance/ shiny leaves
- *H.* ‘Get Nekkid’ (*Hosta yingeri* x ‘Treasure Island’ x ‘Elvis Lives’) fine spider-like flowers
- *H.* ‘Harpoon’ (*Hosta yingeri* x ‘Swoosh’) yellow margin
- *H.* ‘Korean Snow’ (*Hosta yingeri* x ?)

Hosta laevigata is found off the south coast of Korea on the same islands as *Hosta yingeri*, and is closely related to *Hosta yingeri*. It has proved very difficult to breed with. Only a few variants and hybrids are known.

H. ‘Roller Coaster Ride’ is a tissue culture sport (found by Mark Zilis) of the naturally occurring heavily streaked form of *Hosta laevigata* named ‘Ray of Hope’. George Schmid crossed pollen from *Hosta laevigata* onto *Hosta longipes* f. *Sparta* and one of the resultant seedlings was used to get ‘Gosan Leather Strap’.

Hosta venusta is among the smallest of host a species and is found growing wild only on Cheju Island off Korea's south coast. Because it makes a clump six inches high, forms tight clumps, grows fast, and its leaves remain small in maturity it has been very popular with hybridizers seeking to produce miniature hybrid cultivars. There is much variation in the wild, but until 1990 there was only one form in America. So it is not surprising that the hybrids produced by “selfing” *venusta* are look-alikes – all closely resembling the parent:

- ‘Minuta’
- ‘Rock Princess’
- ‘Thumbnail’
- ‘Tiny Tears’

When *Hosta venusta* was used as the pod parent some distinctive petite cultivars resulted:

- *H.* ‘Masquerade’ (*Hosta venusta* x *H. sieboldii* sport) forms an attractive white centered green-edged small clump. Unfortunately it is quite prone to sporting to an all green form. A fine white-edged sport is ‘Little White Lines’.

– *H.* ‘Lakeside Neat Petite’ (*Hosta venusta* x ‘Blue Cadet’) forms a small clump with fine purple flowers.

– *H.* ‘Gemstone’ (*Hosta venusta* x ‘Dorset Blue’) a very nice mound of small blue green foliage.

When *Hosta venusta* was used as the pollen parent:

- *H.* ‘Cody’ (‘Shining Tot’ x *Hosta venusta*)
- *H.* ‘Leather Sheen’ (‘Sum and Substance’ x *Hosta venusta*)

And the offspring of these *Hosta venusta* hybrids have taken the genetic material of *Hosta venusta* into contact with more and more diverse *hosta* cultivars:

- Example: *H.* ‘Riveria Sunset’ (‘Leather Sheen’ x ‘Beatrix’)
- And: *H.* ‘Imp’ [(‘Yellow Splash’ x *H. tibae*) x *Hosta venusta*] x (*Hosta venusta* x ‘Shining Tot’)

Hosta minor is taxonomically similar (closely related) to *Hosta venusta*. It comes from South and East areas of the Korean Peninsula. *Hosta minor* can be distinguished from *Hosta venusta* by distinctive ridges along the scape. It also is a very small *hosta* – making a mound about eight inches tall.

It has not been used much for breeding because most of the *hostas* labeled as *Hosta minor* in the U.S. are not the true *Hosta minor*. It has regularly been confused with *Hosta venusta*, *Hosta sieboldii*, and *Hosta nakaiana*. George Schmid has a selection of the true form of *Hosta minor* and named it “Gosan” – which is not a valid cultivar name.

One of the only known hybrids is *H.* ‘Mrs. Minky’ (*Hosta minor* x ‘Piedmont Gold’). It is a small plant with rippled margins.

Hosta tsushimensis is found only on Tsushima Island in the Korean Strait that runs between Korea and Kyushu (the Southernmost of the Japanese Islands). It is quite small (forms a mound about 12 inches high) but otherwise quite variable. It can have straight leaves or wavy leaves; branched inflorescence or not branched; white flowers or purple flowers – and even a rare yellow flowered form.

A cultivar with yellow leaves ('Ogan Tsushima') has been crossed with *Hosta yingeri* and resulted in 'Whiskey Sour'. A second generation of this was crossed with *Hosta clausa* var. *normalis* and produced 'Beet Salad' – with red petioles.

Hosta jonesii closely related to *Hosta tsushimensis* and also is found on island(s) off the Southeast coast of Korea. It differs from *Hosta tsushimensis*

in having creeping rhizomes and reddish-purple flower scapes. It is not commonly seen in America and most so-labeled hostas are not the true *Hosta jonesii*.

To date the Korean species hosta have not been widely used in hybridization, but look for that to change as breeders become more interested in purple/red scapes and yellow flowers.

“Garden Strolls” in Place of Garden Tours?

One of the activities our members look forward to is the Club’s annual garden tours, which unfortunately, is also the hardest to get volunteers to show their gardens. We know it’s a lot of work to get your garden into shape to exhibit on the tour, but then they look great for the rest of the summer and then you really do want to show them off. We also know family plans are such that sometimes you just can’t be there that particular weekend.

So, for 2015 we’re changing the name of our garden tours to **“Garden Strolls”** to emphasize a more relaxed pace with the individual tours and give members a chance to socialize at the gardens. In the past there have been times that gardens have been spread out all over the DC metropolitan area, so this year we’ll group Virginia gardens on one Saturday and Maryland and DC gardens on the other weekend, which will give you a chance to spend more time in each location without having to rush off to the next. **We’re looking for volunteers** to assist with the “Strolls,” currently scheduled for **Saturday, May 30th**, and **Saturday, June 13th**. And if volunteers are willing to show their gardens to members later in the summer by appointment, we would also publicize this.

In 2015 we’re not looking for any more excuses to opt out (i.e., another disasterous winter/spring like this year) and expect to hear from many of you to “show your gardens.” Volunteers can contact Susan Hedrick at hostaclub@gmail.com or Tom Hilt at tandjhilt@verizon.net.

2015 Hosta of the Year: ‘Victory’



The American Hosta Growers Association announced *H. 'Victory'* (Zilis/Solberg 2003) to be their 2015 Hosta of the Year. 'Victory' is a sport of *H. 'Elatior'* and has a shiny green center with a margin that changes from greenish-yellow to creamy white by the end of the summer. It is classified as a giant with leaves 9-to-12 inches wide and 14 inches long, and a mound of up to 70 inches in width and a height of 30 inches. It has shiny, heart-shaped leaves with thick substance that provide good resistance against sun and slugs. It has very tall scapes with white flowers in mid summer. It also has vigorous growth.

Avoiding Spring Frost Damage

by Ray Rodgers

(This article is provided courtesy of the North Coast Hosta Society from their newsletter of Spring 2012.)

The anticipation and excitement of early spring -

Spring is a joyous time for gardeners, a time of great anticipation as we start wandering around our gardens looking for signs of new beginnings. Such excitement must be tempered with the realization that freezing temperatures are always a possibility until approx. mid-May in Central Illinois. The average last frost date for Peoria is May 8. Every year, I hope spring will come in gracefully, without the major temperature swings we have come to expect. Unfortunately, this rarely has happened.

Last year was a prime example. After efforts to protect my rapidly unfurling hosta leaves on a couple of occasions, I thought those days were once again behind us when we reached the month of May, only to be surprised by an unexpected (to me) frost, that damaged gardens throughout the area on the night of May 2 /May 3.

Every spring, I give credit to *H. 'On Stage'* as being the smartest hosta in my garden: as it is the last hosta to emerge from winter dormancy, making it much less susceptible to frost damage.

When hostas should be protected - It is important to realize that hostas, even completely leafed out, can withstand temperatures below freezing (32° F). I have repeatedly read that hostas can handle temperatures down to 28° F for short times with minimal or no damage.

During winter, if I find exposed hosta buds, I scrape a little mulch or soil mix from the surrounding area over them for protection. In very early spring, if shoots are starting to emerge, I often cover them in the same manner, in an attempt to slow their progress and provide additional protection.

If shoots are a few inches or more tall, yet leaves have not started to unfurl or are still in the early stages, and temperatures below 30° F are forecasted, I suggest providing additional protection via a choice of mulch or dried leaves piled around and over the emerging shoots. Alternatively, one of the protective methods described below can be utilized.

The more leafed-out hostas are, the more susceptible they are to frost damage. In these cases, covering via one of the methods described below is the best alternative.

One must consider the uniqueness of their gardens and plant placements when determining whether to protect or not. Of course, part of the decision process is how much trust one has in the accuracy of the forecast. Isn't that a scary thought!

Plant protection - If one decides to protect, there are many options. Basically almost anything that can cover a hosta will help. It is important not to let the leaves touch the covering material as they are more likely to sustain freeze damage at that contact, if the temperature gets low enough.

There are many methods for protecting your plants via covering. Materials include:

- Plastic pots (crumpled newspaper covering drainage holes improves protection)
- Newspapers
- Cardboard boxes
- Frost Cloth* (fabric material available through nursery supply companies. Search the Internet for options.)
- Bed sheets*
- Bath towels*
- Light blankets*
- Burlap*
- Garbage cans
- Bushel baskets

- Wheelbarrows turned upside down
(* Need to be propped up and anchored down. I try to keep a bundle of sticks or stakes around for props. I have also used covered sawhorses over larger hostas. Bricks and rocks are good anchors and also work well to hold down plastic pots during windy conditions.)

Polyethylene film or similar materials, including plastic bags, should be avoided as condensation buildup on the inside can increase the likelihood of damage to hosta leaves. These materials are also a danger once the sun comes out.

Another method is to keep a continuous spray of water on plants when the temperature is below 28° F, as water is warmer than the air.

The morning after - After all the chosen plants are protected from the impending freezing temperature (usually during the night), one must address the uncovering task the following morning. Keeping the plants covered until the temperature climbs back above freezing is the best option. But, if one has to go to work, family or neighbors may have to be called upon for help. If the forecast calls for temperatures to remain in the danger zone, keep the plants covered.

How cold is too cold - This somewhat depends on the number of hostas one has to protect. If hostas are completely leafed out and the temperature dips into the low 20°s F, protective measures may reduce the severity, but it is unlikely that they will prevent freeze damage.

What should be done to frost damaged hostas – If hostas are hit by damaging frosts it is best to cut off and discard the most significantly damaged leaf tissue (sanitizing the cutting tool between plants), keeping as many of the undamaged leaves and petioles as possible to allow the continuation of the plant's food making process. At some point, if enough leaves are removed, hostas will force a second flush of leaves from smaller and previously dormant buds. This flush will likely produce smaller leaves.

Even worse than hosta leaves turning to mush, is the possibility of the crown being damaged, which if not attended to, typically allows rot to set in. The crown of the hosta is the base where the roots and shoots join. Crown rot can happen in early spring

when water stands around the crown or by the plant freezing after it breaks dormancy. If hostas sustain significant leaf damage, be sure to check the crown for soft areas. If discovered, this tissue should be removed back to solid tissue to prevent further rot and possibly the death of the plant.

Which hostas are most frost sensitive - Late freezes can be a problem with any variety, especially the ones that break dormancy early. The species *H. plantaginea* and its sports have the reputation of being the most frost sensitive. It is widely believed all fragrant hostas have *H. plantaginea* in their lineage, making them candidates for protection. *H. plantaginea* is one of the only species that will continue to produce new leaves all summer long. This is an advantage when the original spring foliage becomes damaged. Contrarily, I have read that hostas in the Sieboldiana Group and Tokudama Group are slow to recover from frost damage, as they tend to push only one good flush of growth in a season, also making hostas with these lineages, good candidates for protection. A few other of the more sensitive hostas include *H. montana* 'Aureomarginata', 'Sagae', 'Lancifolia', and 'Chinese Sunrise'.

New purchases – If hostas are purchased prior to mid-May, I suggest leaving them in pots so they can easily be moved to a protected area when frost warnings occur.

Is it worth the effort - Protecting hostas from freezing temperatures is certainly a hassle. Each of us has to determine for ourselves whether it is worth the effort and when to take protective measures. In my opinion, we must always be aware of the possibility of freezing temperatures and react accordingly to preserve the beauty of our gardens.

[For all you hostaholics, Dan McConnell makes a good case for feeding your hosta addiction in the article below, so take heed and never be embarrassed. He also explains why it is healthy to participate in hosta auctions, an early lead into the PHC's annual picnic and auction in the fall! *The Editor*]

Feeding Your Addiction!

by Dan McConnell

(This article is courtesy of the Central Illinois Hosta Society from their newsletter, Great Expectations, Volume 20, Issue 6, August 2014.)

"I'm not crazy, my mother had me tested" - Dr. Sheldon Cooper

We as hosta enthusiasts tend to go a little overboard on our purchases. If we see something we like, we buy it. If we see a hosta with a cute name, we buy it. If we see something that we might need, we buy it. If we are on a bus trip, we visit gardens, eat donuts and of course, buy stuff. Anything and everything related to gardening, we buy it.

I too have this behavior and highly encourage it. The purpose of this article is to help you buy more stuff, be it hostas, be it garden hardscape, be it anything you need to feed your addiction. To this end the CIHS is having its biannual auction August 19.

It was a long, long, cold winter and I lost several plants and had others that were medium to large hostas return as minis. So the auction is an ideal event to replace what Mother Nature has taken away.

A wealthy man was asked, "How much is enough?" He replied, "Just a little bit more". I think he was talking about money, but it could have been hostas.

If you need to rationalize or justify the purchases made at the auction, try the following:

- I'm thinking of being on the 2015 Hosta Garden Walk and/or host a monthly meeting, and need to fill several areas in my garden.
- Plants take carbon dioxide out of the air and replace it with oxygen, so I am helping the environment, slowing down global warming and making the world a better, healthier place to live for this and future generations. Why, the more I plant the better chance I have of getting a Nobel Prize.
- The more I buy, the more I have to plant and working in the garden burns 300 calories per hour, so I will save money by not having to join a gym while still getting exercise. Me and my garden will look great.

Auctions are fun. Who doesn't like to watch the bidding on Baggage Battles and Storage Wars. Or to see what something is worth on Antiques Road show and watch them barter on American Pickers.

We will have friendly competition for plants and garden accessories with the money going to a good organization. Bring a friend, your checkbook and plan on having a fun evening. We are meeting inside, where the light is plentiful, the temperature controllable, the bugs nonexistent and the bathrooms close. Life is good.

Collecting hostas is a healthy addiction, a good obsession and a productive passion. Don't fight it, just give in and go with the flow. You will feel better and live longer because your stress levels will decrease

Enjoy your garden and the auction.

[No hosta gardener ever wants to contemplate downsizing their garden, but, as with many things in life, there may come a time. However, as Larry Tucker explains below, it has happened to him – several times – and he has made the most of it, so if that time comes, you can too. *The Editor*]

For a Hostaholic, Downsizing Can Be Downright Daunting

By Larry Tucker

(This article is courtesy of the Mid-South Hosta Society from their newsletter, Hosta Hotline, Volume 17, Number 7, October 2014.)

Old gardeners never die, they just spade away...

Apologies to Gen. Douglas MacArthur, whose "old soldier" farewell is fading into history. As an editor/gardener, I much prefer the play on words that were set into stone in my former Southaven digs. After nine years, that hosta garden is past tense. Most of my collection was willed to family, friends and the Hosta Trail at Memphis Botanic Garden. This past summer, Shari and I moved to a Memphis townhouse, where I'm now tending fewer than 50 patio pots and we're enjoying a more relaxed retirement.

If you count yourself as a hostaholic, welcome to the club! This addiction may not seem life-threatening, but it's a growing concern that may someday require downsizing. It's not easy. I should know. I've downsized twice.

Hostaholics never give up. Even after confessing their “sins” and promising to cut back, they're prone to cheat. Shari and I uprooted ourselves from the drudgeries of yard slavery. Three months into a much-reduced hosta garden, I've found myself adding trinkets to the treasures I couldn't surrender.

When MSHS meets in October, don't miss the society's Kaleidoscope of Gardens. I contributed a few pictures on how to downsize a hosta collection and make it seem just as big. With Shari's vision and my attention to detail, we employed several techniques. Most important was optical illusion. Since space was severely limited, we concentrated most of the potted hostas within a few feet of our tiny back-door patio, creating a panorama of plants. Get the drift? Picture in your mind a river of hostas flowing across the property, progressing from waterfalls and cascades to rapids and rivulets. To reinforce this concept, I positioned *H.* ‘Queen of the Seas’ and *H.* ‘Little Darling’ in blue-pottery boat and fish planters at the mouth of this imaginary river.

Our landscaping scheme was conceived as more than visual. It was equally essential to safety. We wanted to construct a more spacious sitting area on the other side of the stream. But to get there, we would have to wade across a tangle of exposed tree roots, risking injury with all those ankle-turners. Rather than build a bridge, we opted to cover the roots with lotsa hosta, follow a mossy trail and portage around the troubled waters to our primary patio.



(Photo by Larry Tucker.)

Now that we're comfortable in our new confines, with maintenance and irrigation the responsibility of

our gated community, we're able to sit back and contemplate what's really important in life ... with less emphasis on hostas. That doesn't mean the garden gate has been closed to newcomers. I've already rolled out the welcome mat for ‘Compadre’, ‘Smoke Signals’, ‘Cheesehead’, ‘Bachelor Party’ and ‘Jet Stream’. But I know my limits, particularly when my first love furrows her brow and gives me that “you've been cut off” stare.

2015 AHS Convention



The American Hosta Society's 2015 convention will be held in Raleigh, North Carolina, from Thursday-Saturday, June 18th through June 20th, hosted by Bob and Nancy Solberg of Green Hill Farm, Franklinton, NC. The theme of the convention is “Back to the Future.” Since it's only four or five hours down the road from the DC area, this will be a great opportunity for Club members to experience an AHS annual convention without the need to travel very far. So, keep it in your appointment book and sign up when the time comes! Details should be forthcoming via a link on the American Hosta Society's website at: www.americanhostasociety.org.

The program will start on Thursday afternoon with a “Scientific Session” in lieu of the usual lectures, followed by an evening trip to Tony Avent's Plant Delights Nursery and Juniper Level Botanical Gardens. Friday features tours of five local gardens with a lunch stop at the North Carolina State Farmers Market in Raleigh. Saturday's schedule includes a bus tour to the Solberg's Green Hill Farm, an auction of new, rare and large hostas and hosta-related items, with the day capped by the annual Awards Banquet in the evening. Throughout the convention there will also be the usual hosta-leaf show, judging clinics, various business

meetings and a host of vendors selling hostas, other companion plants and items and decorations for the home and garden.

The convention will be held at the **Hilton North Raleigh/Midtown Hotel**, 3415 Wake Forest Road, Raleigh, NC 27609, phone: 919-872-2323. Special double room rates are \$105.00/night.

Additional details and a full schedule should be available soon via a link on the American Hosta Society's website at:

www.americanhostasociety.org.

[For those of you who have never attended an AHS national convention and may feel a little uncertain about doing so, don't worry! Roberta Chopko (below) will disabuse you of that feeling, and with Raleigh only a four-to-five hours drive from here, you really don't have any excuse for not going. *The Editor*]

Confessions Of A Convention Groupie

by Roberta Chopko

(This article is courtesy of the Western New York Hosta Society from their newsletter, Hosta la Vista, of February 2014.)

Why, you ask, would anyone drive more than 950 miles over the course of two days in June, to attend a Convention of plant nuts in St Louis, Mo? Why indeed? For the same reason, I suppose, that we drove over 700 miles last year to spend some time with a similar group in Indianapolis, or a few years ago when we drove 1,200 miles to attend another Convention of the American Hosta Society in Minneapolis, or the 1,100 miles we drove to Des Moines, Iowa a few years ago for the same reason. *(Editor's Note - we drove to Milwaukee last year and we intend on driving to Iowa this year ... more plants)*

It is an opportunity to see the world, or at least places in the United States that we would probably never go to otherwise. Or perhaps we like getting up at 6 am to board a bus before 7:30. Or like to spend a day trooping on and off the same bus, viewing many beautiful gardens in the course of the next nine hours ... stopping only to eat a delicious box lunch (often on the bus), or to use the toilet as little as humanly possible (cause it is also on the bus), or pray that this same toilet doesn't

malfunction THIS year. Perhaps we just like the camaraderie of being on a bus that sometimes gets lost on back country roads, or has a window broken when the driver tries to maneuver a tight turn under low hanging tree branches. Or maybe it is the anticipation of finding out how the banquet chef has tried to creatively disguise the chicken this year (while we were spending a long day on our bus tour).

Do you suppose it is the waking up at 3 am to discover that your husband is missing from his side of the bed (because he woke up at 2:30 and remembered that he left his hosta purchases down at the bar)? Or perhaps it is the suspense of discovering that this same husband has bid too much for a plant at the auction? Or maybe it is the growing realization that I packed warm clothes when it is destined to break all heat records in St Louis (or packed for the heat when it turns that they will have an unprecedented cold snap this June)?

One can never tell what one will encounter at a National Hosta Convention, though you can be sure of meeting with old friends who share a similar addiction. It is always something we look forward to. We come home exhausted, functioning for 6-7 days on very little sleep, but always reflecting for months afterward on what a good time we had. So if you want to share in this experience, as a frequent hosta flyer, or as a first time attendee, look for the convention information elsewhere in this newsletter.

If you can spare the time or the money I don't think that you will be disappointed!

Hosta Garden at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville

The University of Tennessee at Knoxville will be dedicating a hosta garden on June 7th of next year and all hosta lovers are invited to attend. The majority of the hostas and other shade plants in the garden were donated from the home garden of Cornelia Holland of Franklin, Tennessee. For those of us who attended the American Hosta Society's national convention in Nashville in 2012, Cornelia's garden, "Tranquility," was one of the highlights of the show.

The garden design is by Benjamin Lee Ford, who will receive his M.S. in Public Horticulture in

December. The design and installation of the garden is his non-thesis Project. Cornelia served on his Graduate Advisory Committee and has had fun working with him and others affiliated with UTK.

In October 2013 a dig in Cornelia's home garden resulted in 300 hostas being transported to UT-Knoxville. (The picture below shows some of the hostas under cover in preparation for shipping.) Since that time azaleas, Japanese maples, hydrangea, evergreen shrubs, ground covers, asarums, ferns, and helleborus have been shipped, and in June, another 300 hostas were dug. For the first shipment, the hostas were put into an early dormancy and the latter were bare-rooted for shipping. A number of *Rohdea* seedlings and hybrids have also been sent. While all of the plant material did not come from "Tranquility – Franklin," the majority of it did. (The UTK garden will be known as "Tranquility-UTK".)



Photo courtesy of Cornelia Holland.

The garden design is Asian-focused with a theme of "From East to West." About 125 of the hostas are species or Asian hybrids and most of the companion plants are Asian or have their ancestry there. The garden will feature an event area which will hold about 70 guests (the circle on the diagram below). It will be ringed with Encore Azaleas and camellias and lighting will be available for night time events. A moon-gate is planned for the entrance and a pergola will serve as the "stage" for events. There are three small water features to be installed... a bamboo pipe... bubble rock... and hosta fountain. The Asian statues from Cornelia's garden will be transported and installed in early Spring.

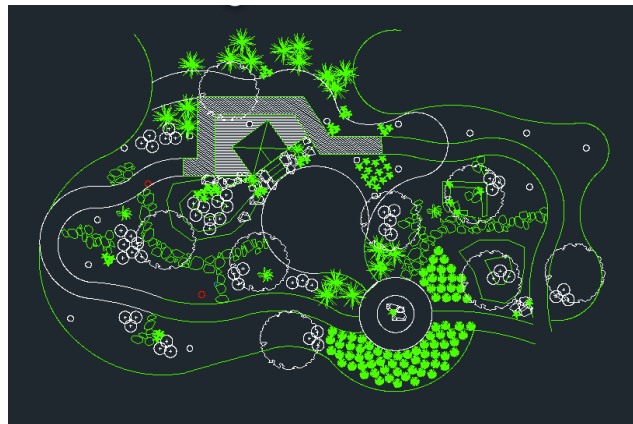


Diagram courtesy of Cornelia Holland.

The UTK Garden is open to the public 24/7 and the new garden will provide a venue for the public and students to learn about hostas. Also, it will serve as a living laboratory for students and faculty. Dr. Parwinder Grewal who was conducting hosta foliar nematode research at The Ohio State University is now the Head of the UTK Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology. Dr. Ruisheng An, also came to UTK from Ohio State.

It will be fun watching the garden "sleep"... "creep"... and "grow"...

Information concerning the Hosta Garden dedication is below:

Sunday, June 7th
2:00 - 4:00 EST
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Institute of Agriculture
2514 Jacob Drive
Knoxville, TN 37996



The Potomac Hosta Club and Dixie Region Are Now On Facebook

The **Potomac Hosta Club** and now the **Dixie Region** (our region within the American Hosta Society) have Facebook pages. Please like us. The latest pictures and information can be seen there. Check us out at: [potomachostaclubfacebook](https://www.facebook.com/potomachostaclubfacebook) and www.facebook.com/dixiehosta.

Support for Our Professional Members

These commercial members not only bring another level of expertise to the PHC, they also support our efforts to bring members the newest hostas at reasonable prices.

Bridgewood Gardens, Chick Wasitis proprietor, Strasburg, Virginia; www.bridgewoodgardens.com

Claythings, LJ Pendlebury, proprietor, Alexandria, VA; www.claythings.net

Green Hill Farm, Bob and Nancy Solberg proprietors, Franklinton, North Carolina; www.hostahosta.com

Heather Hill Gardens, Bonnie Ruetenik proprietor, Fairfax Station, Virginia; www.heatherhillgardens.com

Possess the Land Nursery, Addie Drayton owner, 705 Shelby Dr, Oxon Hill, MD; e-mail address is: creativeaddie@yahoo.com

Wade & Gatton Nurseries, Van Wade proprietor, Belleville, Ohio, wadeandgattonnurseries.com

Volunteers

As always, we need Club members to volunteer for the many activities in which the the Club is involved. So, please take a look at the list of 2014 activities, and as we identify activities for 2015, keep those in mind for future assistance. The Club needs your involvement to keep it together as a club, so if you can help, contact Susan Hedrick on 703-866-2211 or at: hostaclub@gmail.com.

Club Publicity: As we all know, the Club needs to recruit new members, which means we all have to publicize the Club wherever and however we can. To this end, we are asking all the PHC officers and board members to do what we can to ensure that articles or notes about the Club are inserted in local news outlets, homeowners' associations newsletters, bulletin boards and the like. We also need the Club's membership to help us with this effort. If you know of an outlet for publicity for the Club, we will provide a note or article for inclusion. For assistance with this, you can contact Gerald Fitzgibbon at mikefitz2@hotmail.com ; Susan Hedrick at hostaclub@gmail.com; or Tom Hilt at tandjhilt@verizon.net.

PHC Membership

For details about changes to the Senior membership dues, see Page 2 above.

The current dues for 1 year/3 years are:

Households	\$10.00/\$25.0
Senior Households (65+):	\$5.00 annually
Garden Clubs, Plant Societies, and Businesses:	\$15.00/\$40.00

Make checks payable to the **Potomac Hosta Club** and send to:

Tom Hilt
1336 East Capitol Street, NE
Washington, DC 20003-1533

Hostas Around the World



Hostas in front of a small hotel in Passau, Germany, September 2014

2015 Activities and Events

- **Hosta College: March 20-21 at Piqua, Ohio**; the college is sponsored by the Great Lakes Region of the American Hosta Society and held annually. The Class List for 2015 will be released on 1 January 2015; for details see: www.ihostohio.org.
- **The PHC Annual Meeting and Plant Sale: Sunday, March 29th, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM**, at the Merrifield Garden Center in Fair Oaks, Virginia; the speaker will be Roger Smith, Club member and hybridizer.
- **AHS River Farm Plant Sale: Thursday through Saturday, April 9th-11th**, at the American Horticultural Society's River Farm, Alexandria, Virginia. Note: Thursday is for American Horticultural Society members only. *Volunteers will be needed for the Club's setup and sales on all three days.*
- **Historic Garden Week in Charlottesville: Saturday/Sunday, April 19th and 20th, from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM, and Monday, April 21st, from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.** Location information will be provided in the March newsletter.
- **Friends of the National Arboretum (FONA) Plant Sale: Friday and Saturday, April 24th and 25th**, at the National Arboretum, Washington, DC. *Volunteers are also needed for this sale.*
- **Green Spring Park Plant Sale: Saturday, May 16th**, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria, VA; *volunteers needed.*
- **PHC Garden Strolls: Saturday, May 30th and Saturday, June 13th**, in lieu of the Annual Garden Tour; see Page 7 above for details. *We need volunteers* and will try to group the strolls by location.
- **Behnke Nursery's "Garden Club and Plant Society" Day: Saturday, June 6th**, from 10 AM to 3 PM, at Behnke's Nursery, 11300 Baltimore Avenue, Greenbelt, Maryland.
- **Dedication of Hosta Garden at UTK: Sunday, June 7th, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM**, at the University of Tennessee Knoxville; see Page N above for details.
- **AHS Annual Convention: Thursday, June 18th, through Saturday, June 20th**, in Raleigh, North Carolina, hosted by Bob and Nancy Solberg; see Page 11 above for details.
- **Hosta Bingo:** to be scheduled in July.
- **PHC Annual Picnic:** to be scheduled in late August/early September, date and location still to be determined.
- **Fall Hosta Forum:** *normally scheduled in the September timeframe*, at Edinboro University, Edinboro, Pennsylvania. This one-day event is jointly sponsored by the Western Pennsylvania and Western New York Hosta Societies, with noted speakers on hostas and other plant/garden issues of interest. Details for 2014 are not yet available; got to www.wnyhosta.com and click on the link to the "Fall Hosta Forum" at the top of the page to check for emerging news on the event.



Potomac Hosta Club, Inc
Tom Hilt, Newsletter Editor
1336 East Capitol Street, NE
Washington, DC 20003-1533