



Shady Business

Newsletter of The Potomac Hosta Club, Inc.

Volume 31, Number 4, December 2017

www.potomachostaclub.com

President's Letter

Happy Holidays to All!

At this time of Holiday Cheer it's unfortunate to bring up urgent business, but the Potomac Hosta Club needs your help ASAP. Our Treasurer, Jim Turcol, has had a death in the family and needs to leave this position promptly. Also a board member is moving to NC and that position needs to be filled. Please let me know if you are able to fill either of the positions before the next board meeting at end of January or Early February. Two of us in the board also have had major surgery and are moving slowly, so please help.

We had some new faces helping at the plant sales this year; we are grateful and thankful. We would love to see more new members giving a hand at the sales, set-up and take down. Or please put you garden up for the 'Open Garden Strolls.' We also need a webmaster. The more those help the less work for all.

The 2018 American Hosta Society Convention registration is now **OPEN** (details are on Page 10 below). This convention in Philadelphia is only about 3 hours away from the DC Metro area. Extra special this year is that the AHS will hold a lottery to reimburse the Early-Bird registration fee for two attendees. To be entered, you must register before January 31st, 2018. The two names will be drawn during the AHS 50th Birthday Party at the convention on Friday night. There are also some very special events not to be missed – so get your registrations in early for a reduced price and a chance to get your registration reimbursed.

If you forgot someone on your gift-giving list – consider a membership to the Potomac Hosta Club. We have a lovely card to announce the membership. Membership dues are due for many of us. We will send out emails or postcard shortly.

I wish all a safe and wonderful holiday.

Thanks,

Susan

'Hosta Gardeners have it made in the shade.'

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Hostaphile vs. Hostaholic?

By Jane Christiani

(Reprinted courtesy of the Fall 2017 edition of the Ontario Hosta Society's newsletter, via the Tri-State Hosta Society of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut's newsletter, Tri-State Tribune, Volume 2017, Issue 3, Fall 2017.)

Recently I read an article in the American Hosta Society Journal addressing this very issue, and I had to ask myself, which one am I?

I've been running the question through my head for the last few weeks, and haven't come up with any definitive answers. So when in doubt, make a 'pro and con' list.



In my mind, a **hostaphile** has numerous hostas, all neatly displayed and professionally labeled in their weed-free gardens. He or she knows them all by name, their parentage, their sports, how big they get, the size of their leaves, the vein count, what colours they _ display at any given time of year, including flower colour, the name of the originator, etc., etc., etc. They can take you through their gardens and expound the virtues of each and every plant. They have hundreds of hostas, know them all by name without looking at the tags, and are forever on the lookout for new and exciting hostas. Part of the thrill is in the knowledge. If you need a hosta identified because so-and-so's grandmother gave you this hosta, this is the type of hosta expert you need to find. They can help you out. The downside is that when you were really only after the name of the hosta, you will get a twenty minute dissertation on where to plant it for optimum performance, what to expect at any given time of the year, make sure you do

this and make sure you do that. A **hostaphile** cannot fathom that your interest in these plants is not the same as his or hers.



A **hostaholic** can have all their hostas neatly displayed and labeled in their gardens, but can make do with venetian blinds for tags, quickly scribbled names using permanent marker, which is only permanent for a couple of years. He or she knows them all by name, and how big they get, but doesn't necessarily know their parentage, their flower colour or any pertinent factors that identify that hosta. They can also take you through their garden and expound the virtues of each and every plant, but if you are lucky enough to get the tour, chances are that the **hostaholic** will be pulling weeds as you go. While they definitely love hostas, their minds are not 100% focused on showing their gardens. And even though they know each by name, if you were to take a picture or a leaf of a hosta to that person for identification, chances are good that they don't know. In their minds, they have a memory of where they are placed in the garden, rather than the plant itself. They have hundreds of hostas as well, probably more than a **hostaphile**, and not only are they forever on the lookout for new and exciting hostas, but they can move mountains in their efforts to acquire same. The thrill is in the acquisition, especially if the hosta is really new to the industry, or not yet available in Canada. Nothing is more satisfying in knowing that no one in the country has this hosta.

In purchasing a hosta, a **hostaphile** will consider a particular hosta, check out its parentage, its size, its merits, and after careful deliberation, decide where it will go into their carefully prepared hosta

beds should they be fortunate enough to acquire it. They can be quite meticulous in their choices. If a hosta has a certain parentage that the hostaphile knows does not do well in their area, they won't buy it. Move on to the next one!

The hosta**holic** will buy hostas willy nilly, doesn't care about maturity size because they plant their treasures too close together, working on the premise that there is always room for another hosta. If they know that a certain family of hostas hasn't done well for them in the past, or doesn't do well in their area, they buy it anyway, thinking for some reason that 'this time will be different'. It rarely is! How many times have they bought "White Feather" or "Tattoo", thinking they will be the ones to have perfect specimens in their gardens, and be the envy of the hosta world at large? Too many to count!

So again, I have to ask myself, *Which one am I?* The answer is, both! At one time, toward the end of the summer season, I would take a day for myself travelling to every nursery and garden centre within a hundred-mile radius. If I saw a named hosta that I didn't have, I bought it. If I loved the look of it, I bought it. If it was on sale, I bought it. I would tell myself that it was okay to spend like this, because after all, we are *seasonal* collectors and have a very small window of opportunity to purchase.

Several years ago, I actually came home with the same hosta in triplicate. I bought it one place because I liked the look of it, and at the next garden centre, I didn't even consider what I had already packed into the truck before buying it again. And again! Definitely shades of hostaholic here! At the end of the day, I would unload my new treasures into a shady spot, thinking of all the planting I had ahead of me, and move on to something else for the time being. They were safe and snug where I had dumped them, and I would get to them sometime. I am ashamed to admit that I currently have about 100 hostas...no, honestly, more than 150...that are currently awaiting a new home in my gardens. I tell myself that I am looking for the perfect spot, and that is partially true, but the fact of the matter is that my gardens are near overflowing and I don't know where to

put them. New gardens are obviously needed! That is a hostaholic for you.

Age and wisdom has pushed me from being a total hostaholic who has to have them all, to being a partial hostaphile. I spent last winter researching the parentage of each and every hosta I own, and incorporated the information into my carefully detailed charts. What I was surprised to discover was that over the years, I have gravitated toward a certain family or two of hostas. It is amazing how many of the Halcyon sports I own, totally by chance, and they do very well for me. I have made a concentrated effort on getting as many of the Striptease sports that I can acquire, but who knew I was doing it unconsciously with other hosta families. And by the same token, I own only one hosta in the *montana* family. Has not done well for me in the past, and the others that I have purchased have gone to 'hosta heaven'. Who knew?

So, hosta**holic** or hosta**phile**? Which one am I? Neither. I am of the new breed of hosta collectors. We are not defined by a title, but by a condition (no, IT IS NOT A DISEASE). There is no cure and we don't care. The Latin term is *wackohostitis* and I wear the badge proudly.

Jayne Christiani Hosta Vista, Baby!

PS. Other Latin terms to consider that I have jotted down over the years. I never got around to making the garden signs I wanted to do: *'Insectum Devourum' 'Et tu Insectus?'* *'Plantaholica Incurablis' 'Plantum Whydibuyum'* *'Costa Fortunii' 'Gardenitis Uncontrollus'.*

**In Memoriam: Bruce Banyai,
1952-2017**



(Bruce's obituary is reprinted courtesy of the Delaware Valley Hosta Society from their Newsletter, Volume 26, Number 4, Fall 2017.)

(Note: Members of the Potomac Hosta Club may remember Bruce from his outstanding presentation to the Club at our 2016 Spring Meeting. His many friends in this area also will miss him greatly. The Editor)

We have just received the very sad news of the sudden passing of Bruce Banyai on Wednesday, September 6, a few days shy of his 65th birthday. Bruce was deeply devoted to hostas and the AHS, a love passed on by his mother, Pauline (originator of 'Gold Standard' and many other hostas). Bruce was a hybridizer himself and maintained a small nursery of hostas for sale, first at his home in Delaware and later after a move to Virginia.

A former president of the Delaware Valley Hosta Society, he kept his membership current long after his family's move to Virginia. Bruce is survived by his wife Lois, his brothers, two sons and their wives, and eight grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be made to Project Amazon, P. O. Box 3253, Peoria, IL 61612.

A personal remembrance by David Teager,
President, Delaware Valley Hosta Society

Bruce was, not surprisingly, one of the first people we met through the DVHS. A scientist like myself and like Warren Pollock, the three of us represented three generations of scientist-gardeners whose passion for hostas went deeper than an appreciation of the plant's beauty and garden potential.

We visited his home in Hockessin, Delaware. He was always generous, not only with the hostas he sold (and gifted) to us, but with the information behind them. He couldn't sell us a 'Frances Williams' without making us scrutinize his clump of the very similar 'Samurai'. In the days when tissue culture propagation was just starting in hostas, he showed us the bed where he would toss the tiniest pieces of roots and crowns sacrificed when he divided hostas for sale. These neglected fragments would sometimes re-sprout as clones of their parents. He continued to look for new plants, even sending us a trial of a new sport that he

wanted us to evaluate before registration (and to have it on display at next year's convention).

He and his wife Lois had already volunteered their services as bus captains for 2018. He will be sorely missed.



Photo, www.plantdelights.com

H. 'Twist of Lime' Banyai/Solberg

Bruce Banyai Registrations:

'Crystal Fountain'	'Crystal Glaze'
'Gold Springs'	'Green Nymph'
'Regal Skies'	'Smoothie'
'SunDrop'	'Twist of Lime'

Over-wintering Hostas in Nursery Pots

By Mary Bardens

(Reprinted courtesy of the Ontario Hosta Society from their newsletter, OHS Newsletter, Volume 22, Issue 4, Fall 2016.)

It happens to all of us. At some point in our gardening life, we don't get all of our plants planted. Fall comes, big end of season sales, life happens, then winter shows up and we still have plants sitting in black nursery pots. Not only are you looking at money spent, but you really wanted those hostas. And now you need them off of the sidewalk so you don't hit them with the snow blower.

Hostas can be over wintered in those pots in a few different ways. As temperatures drop, the plant will start to go dormant. The leaves will yellow and die back. Cut off the leaves and discard; don't compost. Be sure to sterilize your tools between

plants in a 10% bleach solution to avoid spreading anything contagious. Allow the plants to continue getting the same moisture as the in-ground plants. Don't let them dry out prior to storage as they will need some moisture to get them through the winter. Check the pot bottoms for slugs and their little white pearl slug eggs so they don't overwinter with the hosta. Plants in gallon pots will survive better than in smaller pots due to the increased insulation of the soil around the roots. Soils that are too heavy with clay or peat will hold too much moisture and can cause root rot.



Tip 'em

If you are overwintering the pots outside and you don't have a cold frame, one way is to dig a shallow trench before the ground freezes. After the hostas are dormant, place them in the trench at an angle to keep water from pooling on the surface. They can also be leaned against something like a landscape timber. You will want to keep the pots from thawing and freezing, so a cover of pine branches can be used. Or, a white insulating blanket designed just for this purpose can be placed over the pots and secured. Black plastic would cause too much heat and thawing could occur.

Bury 'em

Dig a hole to bury at least 3/4 of the pot in the ground. Again, a white insulating blanket over the pots and a piece of plywood weighted down over that to keep out extra moisture and critters.

Stash 'em in an unheated building

An unheated garage, shed or barn works very well for winter hosta storage. In this environment they can be put on shelves or on the floor. Place the

pots in the coldest part of the building, such as the north side, to reduce the chance of premature thawing. A little mouse bait would be a good idea if the area is not critter proof or patrolled by a cat. About mid winter, or if the pots appear very dry, you will need to add some moisture, but not too much. This can be done by placing a few ice cubes in each pot, or a snowball if available. The normal winter temperature fluctuations should cause the ice or snow to melt slowly enough to add some moisture without drowning the roots.

Spring thaw

Now things will get interesting. You will have to be aware of the spring temperatures. If it gets too warm where the plants are being stored, they will prematurely sprout. Then you will end up with pale, gangly leaves that will be too tender for outside fluctuating temperatures. Ideally, you should move the pots back outside, or uncover if already outside, prior to their spring thaw so that they wake up slowly and naturally. You should be able to cover up the pots if it rains and then freezing temperatures occur. You don't want ice pooling in the top of the pot.

Be aware that not all hostas emerge at the same time. Just as in your garden, some will lag behind. Give the plants a chance, have a little faith, and make yourself the same solemn promise you did last year: "This year I will get everything in the ground by Labor Day".

Good Luck!

Let's Talk Hostas: Foliar Nematodes

By Tom Micheletti

(Reprinted courtesy of the Northern Illinois Hosta Society from their newsletter, Hosta Happenings, Issue 95, September 2017.)



I hope you have been keeping up with watering. While the spring was nice and moist, it has dried up as summer progressed. I know you may be tired of dragging hoses around your yard, but late summer is when hostas benefit from extra water if Mother Nature doesn't cooperate. In their native environment fall is when hostas receive most of their annual moisture. Since they are used to wet autumns, don't give up on the watering.

Late summer is when those pesky brown streaks begin to appear between the veins on the leaves of hostas in our area. If you see them then that may be a sign of foliar nematodes. You can do an internet search as to the type of foliar nematode, symptoms, and learn more about them. However, the American Hosta Society has just completed a 2 year study to learn about the life cycle of these worms and to try to find something that will control them. At this summer's AHS convention, Dr. Parwinder Grewal, the author of the study was one of the speakers. He summed up the results of the study and answered questions from the audience. You can read the final report at www.hosta.org, the American Hosta Society website. It is in the member's only section so you do have to be a member. Hmm! Another benefit of being a member of the AHS! Lots of information!

However I will give you a brief summary of what he found. They found that foliar nematodes do not overwinter as eggs in soil or plant tissue. They overwinter as juveniles or adults in below ground hosta tissue and dead leaves. A very good reason to clean the dead leaves from your garden each fall! In the spring when temperature and moisture are right they migrate up the petioles of hosta leaves and enter openings in the leaves. Many chemicals were tested and a few were found to have beneficial results, some of which are readily available to the home gardener. Interestingly boiling water, poured over the plants as a drench, and that means a lot of water not just a sprinkling, in the spring just as the hostas are beginning to emerge, was as effective as the chemicals. The main chemical that was found to have control over nematodes, and is available to the home gardener, was NemaKill. I am not endorsing any product, just reporting the findings. You can do an internet search to find out more about NemaKill.

Foliar nematodes spread from plant to plant on a thin film of water or by splashing from rain or overhead watering. If you have a plant that is severely infected then it is prudent to remove that plant from your garden and keep an eye on nearby plants as they may have become infected as well. One question Dr. Grewal received was about removing leaves from a plant that showed foliar nematode symptoms. He said it would reduce the population of nematodes, but not remove them entirely as there may be more in other leaves.

What does all this mean? It does give some hope to control foliar nematodes. It seems the best practices are good fall clean-up of dead leaves. Remove them from the garden and don't compost them. Drenching plants that have shown nematode damage in previous years, with boiling water just as hostas are emerging in spring, may help reduce populations. This may have to be done in subsequent years to get good control. Also removing an occasional infected leaf may help reduce populations in plants, avoid spreading them to other plants, but won't eliminate them.

I am not the expert on this subject, nor am I endorsing any product or procedure. I am merely trying to recap the research and give you all some sort of idea on how you may be able to control foliar nematodes in your garden. As mentioned you can read the study report on the AHS website and form your own conclusions. As with many things there is not a magic bullet that will fix a problem with one application. It takes persistence, patience, and observation to help reduce problems in our gardens.

REMEMBER: You can always visit the Potomac Hosta Club on Facebook for all the latest information.

Gardening Blog

Fellow Club member Barry Sperling has started a gardening blog, posting a short essay once a month, which many of you may enjoy reading. You can find Barry's blog at:

<http://www.thegardenedge.blogspot.com>

Yikes! What's happening to my hostas!

By Joan Poos

(Reprinted courtesy of the St. Louis Hosta Society from its newsletter, Shady Notes, Volume 18, Issue 7, September 2017.)



Photo by Joan Poos

H. 'Alex Summers' is a striking hosta, much more gold than my photograph. Note the upper leaves are solid gold while the lower are normal.



Photo by Joan Poos

We replanted the reversion in a dark corner of one of our beds. It was much too pretty and vigorous to just throw away.



Photo by Joan Poos

H. 'Galaxy'. Note the upper leaves resemble one of its parents sieboldiana 'Elegans'. We dug up the plant and removed all the dark blue-green reverted divisions.

After the frantic pace of spring and early summer when mulching, edging and weeding consume all our energy, mid and late summer allow time to “smell the roses”. On closer inspection some of our hostas look a bit off.

Whatever has happened to our beautiful H. 'Alex Summers'? Half the clump is now all gold. Where has the stunning blue and green variegation that we love so much gone? 'Alex Summers' has decided to either put out a new distinct plant called a sport or revert back to the color and form of one of its parents. It didn't take much research to determine which scenario was most likely.

Reviewing the parentage of the hosta through the AHS Hosta Registry

(<http://www.hostaregistrar.org/>), we found that 'Alex Summers' is a sport of H. 'Gold Regal'. The golden half of my clump certainly looks like 'Gold Regal'. The coloring, leaf shape and upright form are very similar.

Reversion is a natural process, which sometimes occurs in hostas. Some cultivars are more prone to this than others. All parts of the plant are healthy. It is just changing, one division at a time, returning to the make-up of one of its parents. At first it will be one or two eyes, but if left unchecked, the entire plant will eventually revert.

What to do? If the whole plant has changed, it is too late. There is no way to recover the original plant. But if just a part of the plant has reverted, then the solution is to remove the affected part.

Trace the leaves back to the base of the plant and cut out the whole section (all the eyes) with a sharp knife. For small and medium hostas, if we have the time, we remove the plant from the ground and pull the divisions apart. We then replant the original piece as we would any new hosta. If the reverted piece is nice, such as the part taken from 'Alex Summers', we save it for use in pots or corners of the garden that don't get as much care and attention.

If a large mature plant, it may be enough just to take off the affected leaves and stems. This is a temporary cosmetic fix. The reverted leaves will grow back.

Fall is the perfect time to perform this surgery. Just do the operation early enough that roots have time to get established before a hard frost occurs.

Rabbit Damage

By Dave Robson

(Reprinted courtesy of the July 2017 edition of the Northern Illinois Hosta Society's newsletter, Hosta Happenings, via the Central Illinois Hosta Society's newsletter, Great Expectations, Volume 23, Issue 6, August 2017.)



Peter Rabbit looks so innocent with his little fluffy tail wiggling back and forth. Not to mention Flopsy, Mopsy and Cottontail. But there is garden evil imbedded in his DNA.

Rabbits are gnawers, loving to eat branches and bark (during the winter) and tender plants during the spring and summer. They'll munch grass down to the crowns, eat developing peony shoots, vegetable transplants, and some bulbous plants like lilies and tulips. They'll occasionally munch on hostas, but most severe hosta damage is usually from deer, which will devour the blade and leave the leaf petiole. Angular cuts or chewing is an indicator of rabbit damage. When feeding on woody twigs close to the ground, their angled cuts looks similar to those made by pruners.

Fruit plants are fair game during winter months, as are most shrubs including barberries, which goes to show the plant's barbs don't really protect the plant from hungry rabbits. Thin barked young trees are also fair game. Rabbits will feed close to

the soil surface, and proceed higher on the plant by standing on their hind legs, reaching for the tenderer and less "barkier" limbs and buds. Rabbits have the ability to stand on snow, which wasn't a problem in winter 2016-2017 but has been in previous years. Damage usually appears as stripped bark or gnawing on the woody tissue. Bark damage can kill the plant; damage from eating the stems from multi-stemmed shrubs tends to be minimal.

A rabbit may breed up to 5 times per year depending on the environment, with the typical litter consisting of 3 to 6 little ones. If the food source is plentiful, the population explodes.

Exclusion is the best control. A good fence, with at least 6" buried below ground to prevent the rabbit from digging or crawling under, is recommended. Chicken wire or hardware cloth cylinders can be erected around desired plants, again making sure to bury 6". Leave several inches between the wire and the trunk of any tree to prevent the rabbit's teeth from reaching the wood.

Repellents such predator urines, capsaicin (pepper) extracts or castor oil will provide some relief, but you must continue to reapply after rains.

Illinois law prohibits trapping or hunting rabbits, out-of-season without permission from the IL Department of Natural Resources.

And since we are on a roll about creatures that can damage our hostas and other garden plants, the subject of the next story may seem humorous, but as you will see, it too, can pose another threat to our yards. The Editor

BEWARE THE WORM

(Reprinted courtesy of the Western New York Hosta Society from their newsletter, Hosta la Vista, November 2017.)

We have received this alert through the Rochester Perennial Society on the ASIAN JUMPING WORM. The worm does not attack your plants, but what it does do is dramatically change the pH of your soil, raising the alkalinity to a point that will not sustain many plants (like hostas). We will have the Cooperative Extension bulletins as

handouts at the meeting, but for now, here is the alarm raised:

About 2 months ago one of our members approached me with a vexing query. A Japanese umbrella pine in one of her client's yard was turning yellow (chlorotic) for no apparent reason. After several questions, the situation had to be pH. However, the client yard's pH was mostly neutral to acid. Then it dawned on me. 12 years ago, while visiting Cornell Plantations, the head horticulturist showed us a chlorotic azalea collection. They were trying to figure out what was happening. About a month after that, the horticulturist emailed me that the culprit was the Asian jumping worm that was quickly, in six weeks, reducing a 4 inch layer of mulch to worm castings. The castings turned out to have a pH of Plus 9! (Normal soil pH ranges between 6.5-7.2) The horticulturist did mention they were removing what was left of the mulch and applying a heavy dose of sulphur. I have never heard more about this. They must have reached a solution because I was there two years ago and the same collection was thriving (and mulched!)



The metabolic rate of this worm is 10 times that of our normal earth worm. They move quickly and often startle you, much as a snake would.

We do not want to spread this worm.

Do you have it? A quick way to tell is to apply a "mustard solution" to the soil at the plant's base (potted or inground). This will quickly bring any worms to the surface where you can dispose of them. Do this again in late May or Early June. Any overwintering eggs will have hatched and bring the remaining population to the surface. The mustard drench will not harm your plant. You can then promise a "worm free" plant.

(Note: While the Asian Jumping Worm has generally been found in the southeast U.S., it also is being seen in the Great Smokey Mountains and in Illinois and Wisconsin. If you google "Asian

Jumping Worm" you will find articles from various extension services discussing the worm, none of which indicated it has yet been detected in the Washington, DC, area, but it may be only a matter of time. Just one more thing in our garden to worry about! The Editor)

Longwood Gardens Fountain Project

By Kathy Miller

(Reprinted courtesy of the Delaware Valley Hosta Society Newsletter, Volume 26, Number 2, Late Spring 2017. Note: Longwood Gardens will be a prime attraction as part of the American Hosta Society's 50th anniversary in the Philadelphia area in 2018. See the note on the convention below on Page 10. The Editor)



Longwood Garden's renovated fountains at night.

On May 4, Longwood volunteers attended a Fountain Preview Party. Although the weather was cold and rainy, we were warmed by the wine and cocktail fare, as well as a wandering brass band. It was a treat to see the fully revitalized fountains for the first time. Although Longwood bills them as "The Most Significant Fountain Collection in the United States," this is an understatement. They are really spectacular!

The revitalized and repaired fountains are accompanied by a totally new formal garden, which duplicates much of the original design. The Norway maple allee has been replaced with a linden tree allee. The number of boxwood shrubs is inconceivable. A new feature grotto beneath the main fountains is a popular draw, as well as the Pump House Plaza, which is adjacent to the historic pump house.

At least half of the new construction is underground. 1400 linear feet of tunnels house

the hydraulics and electronics. 9000 cubic yards of concrete and 51 tons of copper wire were used in the engineering.

The original fountains were built 1921-1936 by Pierre DuPont. He and his wife, Alice, had travelled extensively in Europe and were fascinated by the beautiful fountains they visited there. These European fountains inspired the original design of the main fountain garden at Longwood.

After construction, the formal gardens were added and the project was completed in 1936. In 1958, a severe snowstorm decimated the boxwoods, which never fully recovered. By 1990, deterioration of some of the water features caused them to be abandoned for safety's sake.

For more information, visit www.longwoodgardens.org.

Our planned visit to Longwood Gardens ought to be a big drawing card for the American Hosta Society's national convention here in 2018. Buses will be timed so that all attendees will have an opportunity to see the scheduled fountain shows.

American Hosta Society's 2018 Convention



Philadelphia—City of Brotherly Love

Philadelphia—site of the first American Hosta Society convention in 1968

Philadelphia—city throwing the party to celebrate our 50th Anniversary!

The Delaware Valley Hosta Society invite's you to Philadelphia not only for a convention that's

full from start to finish, but also for all that the Philadelphia area has to offer.



Take some time to savor the history in Philadelphia, with its important place in our nation's history, and its important place in the history of the AHS! Well visit gardens on historic properties, and you can take advantage of the optional Wednesday special tour to visit Old City (or take a few extra days at our hotel's great rate, with easy access downtown).

Philadelphia's arts culture may call you to visit one of the great museums. The optional Wednesday tour will include a drop-off at the Barnes Collection, where you can see treasures of impressionist art. And you'll be impressed by the hosta arts as well in the Hosta Show, where a special division will recognize hostas of historic importance.

If campus-hopping is your thing, take a stroll past one of the area's great educational institutions, several of which have important associated arboreta. Or save your leanings towards learning for the convention, where we'll present a full curriculum of hosta-focused presentations and discussions, and tour seven spectacular private gardens that feature not only the best in hosta cultivars but also the best in unusual companion plants.

We've stuffed our vendors' space full of the coolest shady sales folk, so shopping should be in your plans. For pants, not plants, just down the road is the incredible King of Prussia shopping complex. An innovative Friday schedule for the AHS auction should also keep your charge cards active.

We can't neglect the most august events of each and every AHS convention: recognition of the

recipients of the three big awards: the Alex J. Summers service award, the Eunice Fisher hybridizer's award, and the Benedict garden performance award. After all, the AHS is a society--of people!

All this is served up with a heaping helping of Philly food and fun. Check out the online meals page to see how much food is included! We'll make sure you have a good time. We're making every day, and every night, special.

And as a very special treat, we're inviting everyone to join us for a visit to the incomparable Longwood Gardens (for only a \$38 supplement). You'll have plenty of time to visit the garden from late afternoon through nightfall, when you'll see the incredible \$100 million renovated Main Fountain Gardens in a spectacle of sight and sound (see the story above on Page 9).

The convention will be located at the DoubleTree Hotel (Philadelphia-Valley Forge) in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, just west of Philadelphia. Attendees can register through the website, www.ahs2018philly.org, to receive a special rate and ensure that the AHS gets credit for your stay.

Invite a friend, either for the full experience or for our half price "Hosta Widow(er)" rate. As a special incentive, the AHS is holding a sweepstakes, rewarding two early-bird registrants (i.e., registering before January 31st) with a full reimbursement of the base registration price! See the website for details, and sign up today!

Join us, for ... *Phifty in Philly!*

Discover Hostas.....

Join the American Hosta Society

The American Hosta Society is a non-profit organization dedicated exclusively to educational and scientific purposes, and especially to promote, encourage and foster the development of the genus *Hosta*. Members of the AHS receive *The Hosta Journal* mailed twice a year and have access to a third issue online in the "Members Only" section of the AHS website. This publication offers the latest information on care, feeding, and hybridizing; pictures of new cultivars; and news of upcoming meetings and conventions. Additional membership benefits include:

- An opportunity to attend national meetings and conventions, which offer educational and scientific presentations, garden tours, judge's clinics, and a chance to see the latest and best hosta in the hosta show.
- A Biennial AHS Membership Directory.
- The privilege of visiting display gardens throughout the country, many of which are only open to AHS members.
- An invitation to exhibit your favorite hostas and compete for recognition in various AHS national and regional cut-leaf shows.
- Developing friendships with people who share an interest in growing hostas.
- Access to "Members Only" section of the AHS website.
- Eligible for the AHS Voucher and Members-Only Plant Programs.

Details on all the benefits and membership forms can be found on the AHS website:

www.americanhostasociety.com.

AHS Membership Fees

Individual: 1/3/5 years at \$30/\$80/\$129

Family: 1/3/5 years at \$34/\$90/\$146

e-membership: \$20 annually

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.

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

Green Hill Farm, Bob Solberg proprietor, Franklinton, North Carolina; www.hostahosta.com

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

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

Club Publicity: With regard to publicity, 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 Susan Hedrick at hostaclub@gmail.com or Tom Hilt at tandjhilt@verizon.net.

Volunteers

This note has finally become a permanent feature in the newsletter and only you, as members, can make it go away. The club needs volunteers for the many activities we are involved in, so as a member, that means you! The current spring and summer schedule of plant sales is still evolving, but there definitely will be places and times we will need people to man the Club's booth and provide hosta-related information to customers and – hopefully – sales. So, we'll be looking for you! A tentative list of next year's activities is included at the end of the newsletter. If you have questions, you can always contact

Susan Hedrick on 703-866-2211 or at: hostaclub@gmail.com; or Tom Hilt on 202-546-4199 or: tandjhilt@verizon.net.

PHC Membership Dues:

The current dues for 1 year/3 years are:

Households \$10/\$25

Senior Households (65+): \$5 Annually

(However, Seniors can renew for more than one year, e.g., 3 years for \$15.)

Garden Clubs, Plant Societies: \$15/\$40

When renewing, make checks to the Potomac Hosta Club and send them to Tom Hilt, 1336 East Capitol Street, NE, Washington, DC 20003.

Note: Memberships end on 31 December and if it is time for you to renew, you will be contacted either via e-mail (if you receive your newsletter electronically) or by postcard if you still receive a printed newsletter.

2018 Tentative Hosta Schedule

- **Hosta College: Friday-Saturday, March 16th and 17th at Piqua, Ohio**; the college is sponsored by the Great Lakes Region of the American Hosta Society and held annually. Further details, the Class List for 2018 and registration information is available on-line at: ihostohio.org.
- **The PHC Annual Meeting and Plant Sale: Tentatively scheduled for Sunday, March 25th, from 2:00 to 4:00 PM.** Location and further details will be provided in the March 2018 newsletter.
- **Friends of the National Arboretum Garden Fair and Plant Sale: Saturday-Sunday, April 28th-29th,** to be held in a new location on the north terrace of the Administration Building; additional details in a future newsletter.
- **Town of Vienna Garden Faire: Saturday, May 12th,** on the Vienna town green, 144 Maple Street, Vienna, VA 22180; **volunteers will be needed to help with the sale.**
- **Green Spring Gardens Plant Sale: Saturday, May 19th,** at Green Spring Gardens, 4603 Green Spring Road, Alexandria, Virginia; additional details in a future newsletter. **Volunteers will be needed to help with the sale.**
- **PHC Garden Strolls: The Club is tentatively scheduling these for Sunday, May 20th and Sunday, June 3rd;** **the Club needs volunteers who would like to show off their gardens and all their hard work.**
- **AHS Annual Convention – “Phifty in Philly”: Wednesday, June 20th, through Saturday, June 23rd,** at Valley Forge/King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, in the greater Philadelphia area. The annual meeting is sponsored by the Delaware Valley Hosta Society and **details can be found on Page 10 above.**
- **Hosta Bingo: To be held in mid July,** with the date and location still to be determined.
- **PHC's Annual Picnic and Plant Auction: Tentatively scheduled for Sunday, September 9th, from Noon to 2:00 PM,** with the location to be determined.

- **Fall Hosta Forum:** *Usually scheduled on a Saturday in mid-September* 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. Specific details for 2018 are not yet available; if you are interested in this event, check their website at: www.wnyhosta.com.

Snapshots From the Club's 2017 "Garden Strolls"



Janet McGhee's Frog & Hosta



Pat Myler's "Handy" Hosta



Roger Smith's Gigantic Hosta Leaf

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2017 Year-End Edition