

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

central illinois hosta society
www.cihshostaclub.org

may 2009
volume 15, issue 3



Pictured are 11 founding members of the Central Illinois Hosta Society. They were our guests of honor at our April meeting.

Our April meeting was wonderful for many reasons. We had almost 80 people attend the potluck. Moving the potluck to April and having it inside worked great! But, the real highlight of the meeting for me was having 11 of the original Central Illinois Hosta Society members as our special guests! We celebrate our 20th anniversary as a club this year and our founding members shared their precious memories with us at the meeting. They talked about how hosta gardening has changed since 1989. For Example, hostas were difficult to find, expensive and people did not make island beds. Hostas are known as the friendship plant, and from what the CIHS founders said, the love of hosta gardening helped to form strong friendships with each other that have lasted over the years. I loved hearing about how they shared their hostas with each other and many of them still have these hostas growing in their gardens. Think about sharing a hosta with a friend this year. I know I like to give hostas as gifts, and it is fun give one with an interesting name that reminds me of that person. I want to thank our 11 founding members for making the evening so special. I enjoyed hearing the stories and gaining a deeper appreciation for the Central Illinois Hosta Society. Hope to see you this month in the Roth Garden!

Warmly, Golda Ewalt, CIHS President

may meeting

Tuesday, May 19, 6:30 pm
Roth Garden
300 W. Birchwood, Morton

A wonderful garden with an emphasis on seasonal interest...it really changes as the seasons change. Gardening on Birchwood for about eight years, there were no hosta when she moved in. She brought only one hosta with her since the former garden was very sunny.

“I was thrilled with the large shade trees here. Those trees were about all the yard had going for it. There were no hosta, brick paths, boulders, barn stone walls, fences, shrubs or even flowers! I am happy to say there are some now, I'm working on it and it gets better with each passing season. If you get here and think I need more hosta, I would have to agree with you. This is a very large lot and I'm filling it up as fast as I can. (*that sounds all too familiar*). You are all welcome to visit my garden anytime.”

Notice: To provide adequate time for viewing Host Gardens, each Garden will be open to visitors ½ hour early at 6:00, while the meeting starts at 6:30.

Directions: From interstate 155 take the Birchwood Exit, east, into Morton. The Birchwood Exit is the first exit south of the I-74 and I-155 junction. Her address is: 300 W. Birchwood St. It is just a little further down from Freedom Hall on Birchwood St., where we are meeting. It is on the right hand side of the street. Please park all along Glen which is a side street that runs along their corner lot. Avoid parking in the circular drive since it will make it difficult to see the front garden.

garden walk

This year the CIHS Garden Walk will be held June 20-21st. Please contact John Machens, Garden Walk Chair, or sign up at the next meeting if you want to help host a garden. You will receive a free ticket for your help in hosting a garden. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at any of the gardens. This will be our primary fundraiser for the club this year, so encourage your friends and neighbors to go on the garden walk. Thank you to all those participating; we have some really wonderful gardens and generous gardeners in the club. Those gardens included in the walk are:

Debbie Dietrich's & Doc Higgins' Gardens, 2 West Beech Street, Chillicothe
Jeanette & Tom Hoerr's Garden, 2722 West Cedar Hills Dr., Dunlap
Sandy Svob's Garden, 128 W. Northridge Lane, Peoria
Don and Cynthia Glover's Garden, 3320 North Bigelow, Peoria
Dan Callahan's Garden, 439 North Malvern Lane, Peoria
Jalayne & Bob Lapke's Garden, 5104 North Merrimac Avenue, Peoria
Carolyn and Don Jones' Garden, 402 Shady Knolls Drive, East Peoria
Sue Eckhoff's Garden, 11846 Ropp Road, Tremont
Lee Gardens, 25986 Sauder Road, Tremont (Bonus Garden)

Also, included with the walk, we will conduct a plant sale, featuring some very nice hosta from Solberg's Green Hill Farm. Of course, CIHS Members will get an opportunity to shop early; stay tuned for more details. The cultivars include: 'Baby Blue Eyes,' 'Barbara May,' 'Corkscrew,' 'Dragon's Eye,' 'Fat Cat,' 'Friends,' 'Frost Giant,' 'Lime Smoothie,' 'Ocean Isle,' and 'Strawberry Banana Smoothie' (**exclusive, sold only to clubs!!**)

welcome new members!!!

David & Molly Knight

2009 meetings & events

Saturday, June 6th
Annual bus trip

June 11-13, 2009
Midwest Regional Convention
Champaign, Illinois
mrhs2009.com

Tuesday, June 16, 6:30 pm
Don & Cynthia Glover's Garden
3320 N. Bigelow, Peoria

June 20-21
CIHS Garden Walk

June 24-27, 2009
AHS National Convention
Lansing, Michigan

Tuesday, July 21, 6:30 pm
Carol Koch's Garden
456 S. Montana, Morton

Tuesday, August 18, 6:30 pm
Luthy Botanical Garden
2218 N. Prospect, at corner of Gift &
Prospect; Peoria

Tuesday, September 15, 6:00 pm
Annual Banquet
(note earlier time)
Speaker: Mark Zilis

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to join:

Central Illinois Hosta Society
\$10/year, form on back cover

Midwest Reg. Hosta Society
\$20/2 years
Send dues to:
Pete Postelwaite, Treasurer
21172 Andover Road
Kildeer, IL 60047

American Hosta Society
\$30 individual, \$57/2 years
\$34 family, \$62/2 years
Send dues to:
Sandie Markland
AHS Membership Secretary
Post Office Box 7539
Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948



Coarse material such as gravel at the bottom of a plant pot increases drainage.

- a. true
- b. false

The answer is false. It seems counter-intuitive but research has shown that water doesn't pass easily from finer to coarser material until the fine material is totally saturated, which then allows gravity to pull water into the coarser layer. Small particles exert a greater tension on water than large particles, thus the small particles hold onto water around them more strongly against the pull of gravity. Thus, finer potting mix over gravel retains more water per cubic inch than if it was used alone.

To help reduce problems with slugs:

- a. do your watering in the evenings
- b. do your watering in the mornings
- c. use mulch

The answer is b. Slugs need a moist environment. Watering in the morning as opposed to later in the day allows the soil surface and atmosphere to dry out before night-time, thus making the garden less hospitable for slugs. Mulches can actually increase slug problems by creating moist hiding places.

The food that provides the energy necessary for root growth comes from:

- a. the soil
- b. fertilizer
- c. the plant's leaves

The answer is c. Plants make their own food (carbohydrates) by photosynthesis in the foliage, a process that basically converts light energy into the chemical energy ultimately used for growth and other processes.

The term pesticide is applied to products that control which of the following:

- a. insects and/or mites
- b. weeds
- c. fungal or bacterial diseases
- d. any of the above

The answer is d. any of the above The term pesticide includes insecticides, miticides, herbicides, fungicides, rodenticides and other similar products.

Everything needs a companion, even a hosta ...

Corydalis or Formitory *Corydalis lutea* (kor-RID-a-lis lou-TE-a)

USDA Zone 5

8 to 12 inches tall, the gray-green leaves are finely dissected, almost fern-like. The leaves often hang limply, giving the impression that the plant is wilting. From late spring, spikes of yellow tubular flowers which open out to form a split funnel are carried above the foliage on thin green stems. Plant in partial shade to sun; average to humus-rich soil. Self-sows readily; divide in early spring when plants are dormant. Plant with astilbe, hosta, bulbs and fern. **Reprinted From The Northern Illinois Hosta Society Newsletter**

A few more companions...

Bloodroot *Sanguinaria canadensis*

Height 12-16", Spread

Partial Shade to Full Shade

USDA Zones 3-9

A thick red juice in its roots and stems give it the name. It was often used to make a red dye. As it first emerges in the spring, the leaves wrap themselves around the flower bud and the flowers grow above and open as the leaves unfurl. It forms a daisy-like white flower, 1" diameter, which is quite delicate. It is best planted in a wooded site, out of the wind, with rich moist soil. In the right environment, it will self-seed; in my garden, seedlings have taken a liking to an area near some large boxwood and they look perfect. They will often go dormant in the heat of the summer, thus, it is important consider this absence in placement. Bloodroot is a perfect companion for hosta or anything native to the Midwestern woodland like Virginia bluebells, fern and wild ginger.

Virginia Bluebell, Virginia Cowslip *Mertensia virginica*

Height 1-2', Spread 1'

Partial Shade to Full Shade

USDA Zones 3-9

Nodding clusters of small, fragrant blue flowers in spring; buds and young flowers are pink, maturing to soft, lavender blue. Native to the woodland, it likes a rich moist soil rich in organic matter, preferably leaf mould. Ephemeral, disappearing by early summer, Virginia bluebells are best used to underplant hosta, fern and other woodland dwellers. The soft lavender blue flowers are particularly nice paired with cushion spurge, yellow corydalis or bleeding heart. It is especially well suited as an underplanting for shrubs and shrub borders as it will self-seed freely forming beautiful colonies; the passing foliage will quietly melt away after the shrubs are in full leaf.

cihs bus trip
saturday, june 6th
(Open to the public)

A fabulous bus trip is lined up for **Saturday, June 6th....**so mark your calendar and get your ticket!!!!



The CIHS will be taking a bus trip to Wisconsin on June 6, 2009. The bus will be leaving from Evergreen Square at 7:00 a.m., traveling to Klehm's Song Sparrow in Avalon. Klehm's is not open to individual retail shoppers, so this is a special opportunity to see and shop this beautiful nursery. Then we will stop at Rotary Botanical Gardens in Janesville. This garden covers approximately 20 acres, including 7000 perennials, 3000 trees and shrubs, and 100,000 annuals. From there we will travel to Stoughton, eating lunch along the way. In Stoughton we will visit The Flower Factory, one of the largest nurseries in the Midwest, with more than 4000 varieties of hardy perennials. Our last stop is in Madison, at the Olbrich Botanical Gardens. Stroll through 16 acres of outdoor display gardens including the Rose Garden, Thai Pavilion and Garden, Sunken Garden, and Perennial Garden. We will then head home, arriving in Peoria around 9:00 p.m.

We will be eating lunch and dinner "on the road," so please pack your own meals. CIHS will provide donuts, snacks and drinks. This promises to be a wonderful day for shopping and viewing gardens, and we are only taking one bus, so please make your reservations early. Payment of \$40 for CIHS members and \$45 for non-CIHS members is required when making the reservation, and includes admission to both botanical Gardens.

You may sign up at the meeting or send your check, with phone #, directly to:

Sue Eckhoff
11846 Ropp Road
Tremont, IL 61568
309.925.5267
gardener22@verizon.net

Confessions of a Convention Groupie

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, Missouri? 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.

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 a.m. 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 a.m. 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, I don't think that you will be disappointed!

By Roberta Chopko and reprinted from the Tristate Tribune

Journal Your Way to a Better Garden

Journaling is a great way to keep track of what your garden did this year, how the weather affected it, what to do next year and when to do it.

You don't need a fancy bound book. In fact, a loose leaf notebook works just fine because you can add pages where you need them and scribble notes to transcribe into legible text later. Making 'To Do' lists, actually seeing it written down, is one of those psychological tricks. When you complete the task, you get to check it off and your brain releases chemicals that make you feel good. When you perform the act of writing notes, your brain will also remember it better. It has something to do with actually thinking about the words your hand is forming. And rewriting the notes in a sensible manner sticks it into your brain even more.

Take the journal out into the garden with you. We all develop attention deficit disorder when we walk through our gardens. So many things, so little time. At first, it may feel like you are wasting time writing instead of doing. But a list can help put it in perspective. Prioritize: rank things according to importance or urgency. Break it down into singular tasks.

List what you liked or disliked about your garden and how it got to either place. What hostas survived unscathed in the uneven drought-to-deluge summer weather and who just disappeared? Was it the hosta's fault or yours? Who needs to be moved, removed, divided, or donated to your local society's next auction? What did you neglect and are sorry for now? And what did you pay extra attention to and like to show off now? Take some pictures to add to your notes for a visual reference.

This is your journal. No one else has to see it. Write what ever you want. It will be your secret weapon to gardening success.

By Mary Bardens and printed in the Northwest Indiana Hosta Society newsletter

Which Hostas Would You Not Leave Home Without

On occasion, as Central Illinois Hosta Society members have moved, I asked them which hostas they would not leave home without. Hostas with sentimental value often rated quite high.

Two and a half years ago, I found myself facing relocation. My wife and I stayed in the area, moving from three heavily wooded acres to a 1.8 acre site. Although I did take approx. 60 hostas, I left hundreds behind. I would have taken more plants had there not been as many demands on my time and the whole moving experience had not happened so quickly.

My selection criteria was to dig as many of my favorite plants as I could get out of the ground and into my pickup truck in one load. After breaking two Sears Craftsman Spading Forks, I came to the realization that the largest clumps had to stay.

Even more important than selecting the prettiest hostas, was to select only ones with a clean bill of health and that were not growing near any suspect plants or in areas where I had experienced problems in recent years. Starting anew with no pest or disease problems was of utmost importance to me.

Today, circling around my much smaller hosta garden, my mind often reverts back to particular plants left behind. I am sure in my hurried state that I just overlooked some that should have made the move. Since my current location is much better suited for sun gardens than shade plants, my hosta collection has and will continue to remain small.

The silver lining to this scenario is I am confident I did not bring any problems from my previous gardens. I now can nurture and admire my much smaller collection without any of my previous worries. For me, gardening has once again become fun, with one exception.

The bad news is I now have to protect both my sun and shade plants from a never ending number of voracious rabbits and an occasional grazing deer. I do miss the fox and coyotes that seemed to keep rabbit numbers in check at my previous home.

Since the early years of my fascination with hostas, I have kept a list of all my named varieties in an Excel spreadsheet. Looking back over this list, there are certainly a number of plants worth purchasing again, but there are many that I would not, even if I had the space.

My advice to newer hosta gardeners / collectors is that selecting quality varieties from safe sources is much

more important and gratifying than trying to amass a large collection over a short period of time. Talk to people that have collected for a number of years. Ask about safe sources, what buying options to avoid, and which varieties have performed best in their gardens. Attending CIHS meetings is the perfect place to initiate such dialog.

By Ray Rodgers

the library

If you would like to check out a magazine or book from the library, make out a check in the amount listed next to each book. This will be held as a deposit, which will be returned when the book(s) are returned. One month is generally the checkout time; however, they can be renewed for an additional month. See Ella Maxwell, librarian, at the meetings or call her at 309.444.3758.

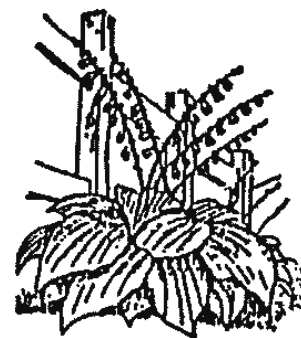
hosta finders & hosta adventure

Both will be available at clearance prices at the meetings...while supplies last

Hosta Finder, the 14th edition, lists the complete offerings of 55 nurseries and growers.

New Hosta Adventure! It is a very good reference with 32 total pages, and color throughout! Your journey into the world of hosta is incomplete without it. Sections include: Hosta background, Landscaping, Floral arrangements, Hosta Buying, Planting and growing, Propagation, Pests and Diseases, New hostas, Hosta societies and a list of other resources.

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