

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

central illinois hosta society
www.cihshostaclub.org

may 2010
volume 16, issue 3

Sue's News

Now that May has arrived, the growing season has "officially" begun. Time to get those containers potted up, veggies planted, and so forth. I really enjoy the warm summer months, and my time spent in my garden. I remember Golda had a past president's letter that extolled the virtues of gardening on your physical health. For me, the exercise is great, but I think I get more mental health than physical health out of gardening. There is just a peacefulness to being out there, a feeling of accomplishment, and the comfort in knowing I will never be "finished." After a stressful day, I can take my frustrations out on a few weeds, and quickly feel better. I hope you all take the time to "smell the roses" while in yours' and others' gardens, and enjoy the process, not just the results.

Thanks to all who participated in the potluck, the food was wonderful! Thanks also to Lou Holverson for her informative talk on her garden experiences. I really appreciated her thoughts on the Hosta Society, and how much she misses it. I think that is true of many things in life, we don't truly appreciate them until they are gone. Thanks to Lou for coming all way up here, and sharing her thoughts with us. This is the first month for our garden meetings, and I look forward to seeing Gloria Hicks' garden. I hope to see you there.

Sue Eckhoff, CIHS President

"A garden is a friend you can visit any time."

Unknown Author

Our Next Meeting

Tuesday, May 18, 6:30 pm

Gloria Hicks' Garden

1608 Robin Court, Morton, IL

Gloria downsized her garden when she moved to her new home, a condo. The garden demonstrates the wonderful potential that smaller spaces and smaller gardens can yield. From mini to large hosta Gloria has a spectacular collection of hosta. You won't want to miss this garden!

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 Queenwood Exit, east, into Morton. The Queenwood Exit is the second exit south of the I-74 and I-155 junction. Turn left onto Queenwood Road and head into Morton. Follow Queenwood Road past Main Street & 2nd Avenue and turn left onto Robin Avenue.





Hosta of the Month

H. 'Blue Whirls' (Medium-Large) - The blue leaves are about 14 inches long and 4-6 inches wide. They radiate vertically from the center of the plant in vase-like fashion. It bears near white flowers in July.

H. 'Abiqua Moonbeam' (Medium-Large) - Blue - green center with irregular lime - green margins. This is the original mutation from 'August Moon'. Lavender flowers in July.

H. 'Moongate Little Dipper' (Medium) - cupped and puckered dark green leaves; dark lavender flowers; good grower.

H. 'Little Aurora' (Dwarf) - very small, puckered gold; makes an eye-catching, bright clump.

The Hosta Library

If you would like to check out a magazine or book from the Hosta Library, see Ella Maxwell at a meeting or call her at 309.444.3758.

Welcome New Members!!!

Jane Bruso, Groveland
Bev Hiermeier, Bartonville
Bob & Sharon Hodson, Peoria
Michele Klein, Morton
Lynn Moletti, Metamora
Shirley Ann & James Smith, Creve Coeur
Connie Wittmer, Bartonville

2010 Hosta Happenings

Tuesday, May 18, 6:30 pm
Gloria Hicks' Garden
1608 Robin Court, Morton, IL

Tuesday, June 15, 6:30 pm
Bill and Toni Cottrell's Garden
201 Daniel Pkwy, Washington, IL

June 23-26, 2010 (New date!)
AHS National Convention
"Stars of the North"
Sheraton Hotel, Bloomington, MN

July 8-10
Midwest Regional Convention
Des Moines, IA

Saturday, July 17
2010 CIHS Bus Trip
Champaign/Urbana

Tuesday, July 20, 6:30 pm
Connie Zuercher's Garden
1448 W. Birchwood, Morton, IL

Tuesday, August 17, 6:30 pm
Hosta Auction
Illinois Central College, Land Lab

Tuesday, Sept. 21, 6:00 pm
(earlier time) Annual Banquet
Speaker: T.B.A.

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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:
Barb Schroeder, Treasurer
1819 Coventry Drive
Champaign, IL 61822-5239

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

Gone, yet Not Forgotten

Life changes and a variety of other factors, continue to negatively impact the number of large hosta collections in the Peoria, Illinois area.

One day as my wife and I were out for a ride, as we so much like to do, I noticed a long-time Central Illinois Hosta Society (CIHS) member's house was up for sale. This saddened me for a number of reasons. First and foremost, I envisioned this was at least partially due to the passing of the gardener's spouse. I was afraid it meant the giving up of something that had given so much joy to the owner for so many years, and the CIHS may be losing access to yet another wonderful garden.

My mind started to think back over the number of quality gardens the CIHS has lost over the years, gardens that have entertained so many, yet newer members would never have the joy of viewing. When I sat down to document my thoughts, I started listing the gardens we have lost over the past six or so years. I quickly came to the realization that not only would the list take up more space than should be allowed in our newsletter; I did not want to offend anyone by omission.

We have lost several gardens because people have moved out of the area. Oft times these people have sold hostas prior to leaving and/or have taken a large number of hostas with them, leaving behind few memories of what once was.

Some members, myself included, moved to newer homes sited on ground better suited for sun gardening than shade plants. The purchaser of my previous home had no interest in gardening. I took a small number of hostas with me, some of the remaining plants were given away, and many others were not so fortunate. I am sure this scenario has been repeated many times over.

We also have members that have no intention of leaving their gardens anytime soon, but after several years of building their collections, readying their gardens for The American Hosta Society national convention attendees, Midwest Regional Hosta Society convention attendees, CIHS meetings, garden walks, etc., have slowly been scaling back. This is certainly understandable, yet once again, newer members may never have seen these gardens at their grandest moment.

As maintenance-free living situations have been and continue to be sought out, especially among baby boomers, I envision an increasing number of gardens

being vacated. In all too many cases, these gardens may then give way to other priorities.

It is important to remember that even when gardeners lose their ability or desire to work their own gardens, they can continue to enjoy the efforts of others through membership in local, regional, and national hosta societies.

On a more positive note, some CIHS members have moved within the area, relocating at least a substantial number of their hostas into new garden spaces, and have continued to increase their collections.

Hostas have been very aptly coined as "The Friendship Plant". Based on seemingly countless examples, hostas have also proven to be "The Portable Plant" or "The Movable Plant".

I am less knowledgeable about the gardening focus of our newer members, but I certainly hope that there are many new gardens being built by those with the same burning passion for hostas and gardening excellence, as did many that came before them.

Longtime CIHS members have certainly experienced the building up and the subsequent erosion of Peoria area hosta gardening history. If we want to ensure the livelihood and strength of the CIHS, we will need to continue our efforts to promote hostas and our society, and to encourage current members to act as recruiters.

For anyone that has a substantial hosta collection and is considering moving, please make us aware and allow us to visit your gardens one last time!

By Ray Rodgers, CIHS

Solberg Hosta Order

You can still pre-order Solberg Hosta at the upcoming May Meeting. Some are already sold out but we have many great hosta still available (see the list below). We have the following times that you can pick up your Solberg hosta order:

- § June 3rd at Luthy Botanical Garden between 5:00-6:30 PM
- § June 15th at the CIHS meeting

H. 'Bulletproof'

\$13

Medium, (12" X 28" or larger) It is difficult to tell which is more impressive about this tetraploid form of 'Halcyon', its incredible substance or its rich deep blue color that lasts well into summer. **Continued on page 4**

Its very sturdy blue scapes provide a beautiful floral display of surprising large lavender flowers. It is the toughest hosta around, dog proof but not deer proof.

H. 'Summer Lovin' \$13

Large, (18" X 36" or larger) This hosta has a strange attraction for me, it has a certain glow about it. The rich gold margins contrast well with the almost round, dark green centers of leaves that have substance and shine. Lavender flowers appear in July. As attractive in spring as it is in summer.

H. 'Hideout' \$11

Mini, (4.5" X 11") This little fellow has very curly, white-centered, narrow dark green leaves that appear to be in constant motion. It is a fast growing hosta that favors some cool sun and plenty of water. A great container plant, it blooms in June and July with lavender flowers.

H. 'Paradise Island' \$15

Small-medium, (14" X 24") This is a spectacular hosta in early spring with glowing yellow leaves bordered in green and rich purple petioles with color often up into the leaf. The leaves do become chartreuse in summer when topped by nice lavender flowers in July and August. A great container plant!

H. 'Sun Shower' \$23

Medium, (14" X 30" or larger) Sun Shower 'Sun Shower' was a surprise. A "Longiana" in every way, it is a rich yellow in spring that catches every eye. It will fade toward chartreuse in mid-summer but remains a very attractive hosta. It is a one of a kind and the centerpiece of my "Longiana" hybridizing program. Light lavender flowers appear on yellow scapes in July. I probably should have patented this one.

H. 'Blaze of Glory' \$13

Medium-Large, (20" X 38") While the rich gold color will undoubtedly catch your eye, it is the sturdiness and the beautifully ridged veins that make this hosta special. It has an upright habit and near white flowers in July. Spectacular in a large container.

H. 'Blueberry Cobbler' \$15

Small, (7" X 18") This is a rare September flowering frosty blue hosta. It is really a very nice little blue H. longipes with little pale lavender flowers whose tiny petals recurve delicately. Our best "long season" blue to date and it grows well. When you have finished your 'Blueberry Tart' it is time for cobbler.

H. 'Awakening Angel SOLD OUT

H. 'Spartacus' SOLD OUT

H. 'Cup of Grace' SOLD OUT

H. 'Deanne's Dream'

SOLD OUT

H. 'Holy Mouse Ears'

SOLD OUT

Overrun by Mice!

Once upon a time there was a hosta named Minnie Mouse from Keith Squires but, upon threat of possible legal implications of a trademark, the name was changed to Missie Mouse when registered by Peter Ruh. But recently we have had one introduced as Mighty Mouse, so who knows where this will take us. But it certainly has kindled the interest in small hostas.

We have certainly been inundated by the pesky little creatures over the last couple of years. With the promotion of Blue Mouse Ears as Hosta of the Year, we have been simply overwhelmed with the offspring and variations. It is rumored to be a sport of Blue Cadet.

Green Mouse Ears followed shortly but was this just a reversion to its natural color or a sport of BME?

Blue Mouse Ears Supreme is a streaked sport of BME and is similar to Royal Mouse Ears.

Cat and Mouse is a thick leaved, mediovariegated sport of BME with a chartreuse interior and an uneven blue-green margin. Shades of green overlap.

Mighty Mouse is a streaked sport and Pure Heart is the white centered form to accompany it (for you comics fans).

Mouse Tracks, a cute little streaked hosta out of "Mighty Mouse features various yellows and creamy whites that streak throughout its blue/green leaves.

One Iota is a variegated sport of BME with a light green/cream edge on dark green. This is a forced sport by Jim Anderson and of course there is a streaked form as well.

Snow Mouse is a BME sport from Marco Fransen with a beautiful white center surrounded by a blue-green border. Leaves are very thick. And Royal Mouse Ears is a variegated sport of BME, which is medium blue-green, with cream-colored streaks. It is deeply cupped and is dull on top, with a glaucous bloom underneath.

Frosted Mouse Ears is a tissue culture sport out of 'Royal Mouse Ears' developed at Q&Z, featuring a wide, creamy white margin, a bluish green center and thick substance. Holy Mouse Ears is another sport from RME features thick white leaves with uneven blue-green margins.

Continued on page 5

Each of the above usually produces a cute little clump of lavender flowers about three or four inches (8-10 cm) above the foliage. They make interesting displays in troughs and planters and at the front of beds – hopefully raised so they can be appreciated.

Perhaps by the time this newsletter is published we will also have Mouse Trap, Mouse Droppings, Field Mouse, Computer Mouse, Mouse Hole and who knows what else. They seem to proliferate at the same rate as real mice. How about some cheese with that?

By **Bob Leask**, from the Ontario Hosta Society Newsletter Spring 2010

Hostas are Like Used Bricks

Now that I have your attention, I will explain my thoughts.

It is not uncommon for new houses to be built with used bricks. These may also be referred to as reclaimed, salvaged or antique bricks. When my wife and I had our previous house built, we opted for used brick. I believe the brickyard called it Peoria Mix No. 1. Presumably these bricks were recovered from the demolition of historic buildings within the Peoria area.

Like snowflakes and used bricks, no two hostas are identical. Each has its unique color, texture and character. When looking at used bricks individually, some are certainly much more attractive than others. But, when thoughtfully mortared together by a skilled mason, a beautiful structure is created.

Variiegated hostas have the ability to light up darker areas in the garden and are often used as the center of attention or as a focal point in the landscape. While undoubtedly the best sellers, a garden consisting of only variegated hostas would not make good design sense. Such a garden would appear very busy and provide nowhere for one's eye to easily stop and rest. But, as with the mason, when a skilled gardener combines variegated hostas with an occasional solid-colored (monochrome) hosta, the end result becomes much more appealing and easier on the eyes.

All gardens need the solid-colored greens, blues, and yellow hostas to set up or emphasize the variegated plants. There are many wonderful monochrome hostas.

Several have been around long enough that they are readily available and relatively inexpensive. In my opinion, the plants listed below (alpha order by color) are among the very best such hostas.

Green: 'Baby Bunting', 'Donahue Piecrust', 'Elatior', 'Flower Power', 'Fried Green Tomatoes', 'Invincible', 'Joseph', 'Leather Sheen', 'Manhattan', 'Moonlight Sonata' (starts bluish green, turns dark shiny green), 'Niagara Falls', *plantaginea* (species), 'Potomac Pride', 'Raspberry Sorbet', 'Second Wind', 'Valerie's Vanity' (registered by CIHS's own Bob Keller, White Oak Nursery) or 'Devon Green', and *ventricosa* (species)

Blue: 'Abiqua Drinking Gourd', 'Azure Snow', 'Big Daddy', 'Big Mama', 'Blue Angel', 'Blue Arrow', 'Blue Betty Lou', 'Blue Hawaii', 'Blue Mammoth', 'Blue Moon', 'Blue Mouse Ears', 'Blue Wedgwood', 'Brother Ronald', 'Fragrant Blue', 'Hadspen Blue', 'Halycon' (a must for every collection), 'Krossa Regal', 'Queen of the Seas', *sieboldiana* 'Elegans', 'Salute' and 'True Blue'

Yellow (including chartreuse): 'Abiqua Recluse', 'August Moon', 'Birchwood Parky's Gold', 'Choo Choo Train', 'Gold Regal', 'Golden Friendship', 'Golden Gate', 'Golden Sculpture', 'High Noon', 'King Tut', 'Little Aurora' (has also been sold as 'Golden Prayers'), 'Maui Buttercups', 'Sea Gulf Stream', 'Solar Flare', 'Spotlight' (droopy scapes is a negative), 'Squash Casserole', 'Sum and Substance', 'Ultraviolet Light' and 'Sun Power'

Pictures of all of the above are available via the Hosta Library, <http://www.hostalibrary.org/>

So, when perusing through gardening catalogs, websites and/or nurseries, remember the importance of monochrome hostas. Consider what combinations of colors, sizes, shapes and other plant habits would work well together and which would best accent existing plants in your gardens. Whether building with used bricks or designing a garden, the whole is truly more significant than the sum of its parts.

By **Ray Rodgers**, CIHS

cihs bus trip
saturday, july 17th
(Open to the public)



A fabulous bus trip
is lined up for
Champaign/Urbana
....so mark your
calendar and get
your ticket!!!!

We're heading to Champaign/Urbana. We plan to visit five of the personal gardens featured last year on the Midwest Regional Convention Tour and stop at 2 nurseries, along the way, to shop!!!! We will be eating lunch "on the road," so please pack your own lunch. 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 with 55 seats, so please make your reservations early. Payment of \$25 (check made out to CIHS) is required when making the reservation. A tentative itinerary for the excursion is provided below:

We will be leaving at 7:00 AM from the parking lot by Kroger at the corner of Sheridan and Lake. The following is a tentative itinerary for the day:

- 9:00 Arrive at the Metz garden
- 9:45 Head to the Weber garden
- 10:55 Head to the Myer and Guardia gardens
- 12:30 Leave for Country Arbors Nursery
- 1:00 Arrive at Country Arbors Nursery
- 2:30 Head to Schroeder garden and arrive at 3:00
- 4:00 Begin drive home with a stop at Growing Grounds in Bloomington
- 6:00 Leave Bloomington
- 7:00 Arrival in Peoria

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

Golda Ewalt
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