

Prairie Hosta Herald

March 2008 Volume 5 Number 2

Illinois Prairie Hosta Society

Promoting knowledge and interest in Hostas, fostering the development of new and improved Hosta varieties and encouraging cultivation and usefulness of Hostas in landscapes.

Conifers for the Shade Garden

Speaker: Glenn Herold, Professor of Horticulture, Illinois Central College

Location: Parkland College, Tony Noel Center, Champaign

Saturday March 15, 2008 - Time: 9:00 - 12:00 A.M.

Conifers are often thought of as plants for the sun and incompatible with the shade garden. However, the hosta gardener need not be deprived of these diverse plants, for many perform superbly in shade and part shade. This talk will emphasize shade tolerant conifers and how they can be used to diversify the garden.

Our speaker Glenn Herold is a professor of horticulture at Illinois Central College in Peoria, Illinois. He is the founder and curator of the Illinois Central College Arboretum and the former Vice President of the American Conifer Society – Central Region. His gardening interests are dwarf conifers, woodland wildflowers, small maples, and of course hostas!

In addition Barb Schroeder (Rick is doing the train show this weekend at Lincoln Square) will have the DVD presentation by the Northern Illinois Hosta Society which are hosting the Midwest Regional Hosta Society convention that will be held in Schaumburg, Illinois on July 10-12, 2008. We will be making a similar presentation at this convention for our 2009 convention as well as selling conventions items. We would like to have as many of our members as possible attend the MRHS convention so put the date on your calendar now.

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Membership - Single \$10, Family \$15 and

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61822*

Web Site - <http://www.prairienet.org/iphs/>

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Leaf Show - Mary Ann Metz

Trips - Rick Schroeder

Ways & Means - Whit & Cathy Daily

Allerton Hosta Garden - M. Metz and Karen Meyer

Please volunteer and help these chairpersons.

Future Meetings

Our 2008 programs will kick off with Glenn Herold, Horticulture Professor at Illinois Central College. See the front cover for details.

- **APRIL:** Saturday the 26th at 9 AM - IPHS Work Session and Meeting at Allerton Park, Monticello

- **MAY:** Saturday the 10th at 8 AM - 2 PM - IPHS Hosta Plant Sale w/Herb Soc, Grand Prairie Friends and C-U Business & Prof Women, Lincoln Square Village, Urbana

- **MAY:** Wednesday the 28th at 6 PM - Guardia Garden, 809 Dodds Dr. Mary Ann Metz and Barb Schroeder - a IPHS Member Leaf Show

- **JUNE :** Saturday the 7th at 7 AM - One-Day Bus Trip Northwestern Indiana to visit 4 gardens and Sunrise Nursery on the way back.

- **JUNE:** Saturday the 28th at 9 AM - St. Joseph IPHS Member Garden Walk, Hoffman, Hartman and Campbell - visit Schuren Nursery and Mary Kaye Falks will be speaker.

- **JULY:** Wednesday the 16th at 5:30 PM - Potluck at the Cathy and Whit Daily Garden, 4 Moraine Ct, Champaign - After dinner Whit will speak on drip irrigation systems;

- **AUGUST:** Saturday the 23rd at 9 AM - Illini FS Farm Store, Urbana, Stacy James, Prairie Rivers Network on Rain Gardens;

- **SEPTEMBER:** Saturday the 27th at 4 PM at the Weber Garden, 1006 S. Prospect (note time). 5 PM , meet at Blue Ridge Stone, West Springfield Street, just west of Staley Road. The program by Gary and Diane Ballengeer, Blue Ridge Stone and Susan Weber -Working with Stone in the Garden. (bring your truck to load up stone).

- **OCTOBER:** Sunday the 26th at 12 Noon - Allerton Park & Retreat Center, Monticello - Fall Banquet and Annual Meeting at Allerton Park with Mark Zillis of Q & Z Nursery as speaker.

New Members

We welcome the following to the IPHS:

Roger Cooper, 1215 Thomas, Champaign, IL *

* Roger's membership is a gift from one of our members. What a nice idea. If you have a friend that you would like to give a gift to think of giving them a membership in the IPHS.

Rick

President's Remarks

See you on March 15 at our first meeting of 2008.

REMEMBER - ANNUAL DUES ARE DUE BY THE END OF THE MONTH. The 2008 Membership Annual will be available at the April meeting and renewals after April 1 may not be listed. Also, if you get time this weekend visit Rick's train show at Lincoln Square Village.

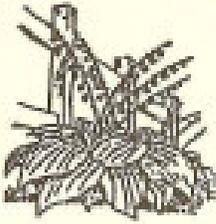
Where is Spring?

Barb

Hospitality

Cecilia and John Maggio have volunteered for Hospitality for 2008. Please volunteer your services (read that as food) for this years meetings. They can be reached at cecilmagg@netzero.com.

LEE GARDENS

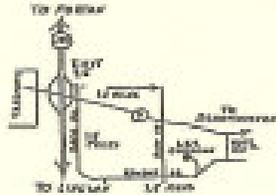


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I Love Those Minis!

by Joe Haber, Centerport, NY

Gardening on a small piece of property with a steep hillside in my backyard, I must confess that mini and small hostas have become my favorites. Obviously I'm not alone since the American Hosta Society decided to conduct a separate popularity poll for minis in addition to their poll of the most popular standard varieties. Also, I have noticed that articles on this subject and photos are appearing in *The Hosta Journal* more frequently in recent editions.

These little guys look great in containers and my favorite containers are troughs. Troughs can be filled with many different plants including dwarf conifers, small succulents and of course, mini hostas.

Making hypertufa troughs is not difficult and can be a good winter pastime as you wait for your hostas to start emerging in the spring. There are several recipes for hypertufa mixtures. The main ingredients are portland cement, peat moss and perlite – all readily available in local home improvement centers. They can be made using molds that are rectangular, round, etc., or even free shaped. Whatever shape you choose, the final product can really dress up a patio.

I grow mini and small hostas in a variety of containers and even have 'Lemon Lime' growing in a

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2008 Conventions & Events

AHS Annual Convention, St. Louis, Missouri - June 11 to 14, 2008. This is the 40th Anniversary of the American Hosta Society.

Midwest Region Hosta Society will be in Schamburg, Illinois, July 10 - 12, 2008.

Registration forms for each convention are available on line at respective web sites and we will have copies available if interested in attending.

2008 Chicago Flower and Garden Show

March 8 - 16, 2008

**Stephens Convention Center - Rosemont, IL
- admission \$12**

Theme gardens, market place, seminars, hands-on workshops, photography garden plus Home Lifestyle Expo - DIY & Home Improvement vendors

Membership

American Hosta Society

Contact Sandie Markland, 8702 Pinnacle Rock Ct., Lorton, VA 22079-3029. Individual membership is \$30 per year, \$34 for family - join now - <http://www.hosta.org/>

Midwest Regional Hosta Society

Contact Pete Postlewaite, 21172 Andover Rd, Kildeer, IL 60047. Individual membership is \$20 for 2 years - join now - <http://www.MidwestHostaSociety.org>

We urge you to join both societies and we have back issues of the AHS Hosta Journal for which includes the membership application. This is an outstanding, volunteer produced, hosta publication.

Hosta and Garden Web Sites

Hosta Library - <http://www.hostalibrary.org/>

Hosta Forum – questions/answers - <http://forums.gardenweb.com/forums/hosta/>

Wade & Gatton Nursery – a must visit - <http://www.pal-metto.com/hosta/wade/wade.html>

Country Arbors Nursery - membership gets you a 10% discount on Hostas - <http://countryarbors.com>

Green Hill Farms, Bob Solberg - www.HostaHosta.com

Chalet Leads Design Of University Of Illinois Heritage Garden

Chalet, a third generation Chicagoland landscape, nursery and garden center business, has been chosen to lead the design of a garden celebrating the legacy of Illinois citizens in the green industry. Work on the University Of Illinois Heritage Garden will begin in 2009 at the University of Illinois Arboretum in Champaign, Urbana.

“Chalet is honored to be involved in a project that showcases the unique contributions and achievements of Illinois plantspeople in a beautiful and educational garden at a university that is at the forefront of the United States green industry,” says Robert Milani, senior landscape architect for Chalet. “This has been an incredible opportunity to give back to the university and to leave a legacy for the future.”

The garden will serve as a gateway and point of orientation for visitors to the arboretum. Planting beds will be divided into different types of gardens: perennial and ornamental grass meadows, conifer collections and mixed shrub and tree borders. Visit Chalet’s Web site at www.chaletnursery.com. The website has an artist’s rendering of the design if you’ve not yet seen it.

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tree stump. It has been there for eight years. In most of my containers I mix hostas with companions like Ajuga ‘Metallica Crispa’, Tatting Fern (Athyrium Frizellae), and even small annuals. Some mini hosta favorites that I grow in our rock garden are; ‘Pandora’s Box’, ‘Surprised By Joy’, ‘Medusa’, ‘Teeny-weeny Bikini’, ‘Blue Mouse Ears’, ‘Green Eyes’, ‘Crepe Soul’, ‘Chickadee’, ‘Kinboten’, and ‘Thumbnail’, to name a few. Like peanuts, you can’t have just one.

Slugs are a bigger problem for small hostas than large ones. My way of combating the “damn slug” is by spreading a topping that forms a barrier. My formula for this very successful topping is a mixture of ground egg shells, ground sea shells, and chicken grit. An occasional sprinkling of Sluggo also helps.

In closing I will quote Bob Solberg: “Miniature hostas are cute, little babies that will grow in a thimble. They often run in herds through rock gardens, around ponds, or along the edge of a path. Minis are especially happy in containers, strawberry pots, troughs, or even whiskey barrels. Hundreds can live comfortably along a driveway. Just give them water.”

What Do GIBOSHI and FUNKIA Mean

By Mike Chambers

We all see words in our hosta readings and in our hosta names and we wonder, what does that mean? Much of what we do not understand is botanical Latin. Etymology is the science of word history and the basis of most botanic classifications and names is rooted in Latin. However sometimes we see the Japanese botanical terms attached to hosta names. So let’s just look at a few words that we see in our hosta world that hosta lovers often ask, “what does that mean?”

Gibashi is actually the Japanese word for Hosta. And most hosta species came from Japan, Korea and China. Sometimes you still see the word in hosta literature.

Funkia- This was the original name for hostas when they first arrived in the US in the mid 1800s. Then later the name was changed to Plantain Lily. Both names are now obsolete and *Hosta* is the official name.

Latin terms:

Aurea- Golden

Alba- White

Elata- Tall (Hosta ‘Nigrescens Elatior’, the very tall version of hosta species nigrescens)

Marginata- Margined ...so Albo-marginata is a white margined leaf

Maculata- Spotted or mottled middle ... so Aureo-maculata would be a leaf with gold spots or streaks.

Glaucus- Blue and waxy, like the blue haze on a fresh grape

Grandiflora- Grand or larger flowers than the normal plant

Picto- Painted or multicolored **Rugose**- Rough, wrinkled or crinkled

Japanese terms:

Ogon- Yellow or gold

Shiro- White

Aoba- Green leaf

Hime- Small

Kifukurin- Yellow edged

Other terms:

Cultivar- a CULTIVated VARIety, a plant cultivated/hybridized by someone, not a species

Tissue Culture- Propagation in a laboratory of many plants by using a small tissue fragment of a mother plant.

Sport- A line of plants vegetatively propagated from a single mother plant; also called a Clone.

Abiqua- This is a forename on many registered hostas. Abiqua is a creek in northwestern Oregon, near Portland. Walden West Nursery has a nursery near this creek and has named over 25 of their registered hostas with this forename.

(Abiqua Drinking Gourd, Abiqua Delight, Abiqua Moonbeam.)

Lakeside- Lakeside is also a forename for over 120 registered hostas from Lakeside Acres Nursery. Mary Chastain’s home and nursery is on a lake near Chattanooga and she gives all her registered hostas this forename.

From the Mid-South Hosta Society

It All Started with a Hosta

Editor: Life is interesting in the way that two people, many times with totally different interests, meet each other and through the hobby, or work, of one of them find common ground and become a couple for the rest of their lives. The following is a story of one such couple in our society. This article was written by one of them and published in the Fall 2000 issue of The Hosta Journal. I hope you enjoy this article as much as I did.

Sometimes it seems as though life's biggest turns and swings are formed out of the impetus of its 'smallest events. And so it was with my own life. Married 25 years with two nearly grown teenage children, I suddenly found myself alone and facing life as a single parent. It was a time of swirling emotions. To fill some of the hours and pass the time, I turned to what I euphemistically called yard work, which, to my engineer's way of thinking, meant carefully controlling the height to which I set the lawnmower blade. I joined a support group, extracting far more support than I provided I'm afraid, and met a number of people in my community who were real gardeners, who actually knew one plant from another.

One day, I casually mentioned to one of the members that I had need of "some plants" to cover an area underneath a large red oak tree that didn't seem to want to support any of my favorite lawn cover. Offhandedly, I suggested to her that a neighbor had recommended a plant called a hosta, whatever that was, and did she know where to get them? A few days later, she drove up in front of my house with a trunkload of big, green, leafy plants and laughingly told me that she happened to have "some knowledge" of host as. Fair enough, I agreed to plant them and, in return, thought perhaps I'd take her out to a dinner or two. The rest of that relationship, as they often say in the stories on television, is history, and My Faithful Companion and I have now been married for more than six years.

For my introductory foray into an AHS National Convention (Atlanta 1994), we drove my sports car, a hopelessly impractical implement of transportation. We had to fit our luggage behind the seats because ensconced in the trunk area were six precious plants My Faithful Companion called *Hosta* 'Embroidery'. Consternation turned to amazement when I learned of the price of these leafy offerings, so valuable because

Member Survey

Did you send in your member survey? If not please mail to Cynthia Helms, our VP Programs or bring it to the March meeting. It will help us plan for 2009.

Thanks for sending in your survey. The IPHS Board

they had been grown for years and years and were certified to be true to form. I was sure we'd be bringing all six of the plants back home, convinced that nobody in proper possession of his or her faculties would pay such a price for a little green slip of a plant that hardly seemed worth \$5. In our first half-hour at the hotel, however, my hosta education commenced. I learned that I was in the company of royalty! Everybody knew My Faithful Companion and she knew everybody, and it seemed that all the "everybods" were waiting for her to appear with these pitiful green weeds. Syndicates were formed, bidding took place, secret deliberations held and I learned a second thing: no passion I had ever seen was more powerful than the love of these people for their plants and gardens. Because I was with "someone," I too was treated like royalty, or at least I thought that was why I was treated so well.

Our next adventure of the 1995 National Convention in Washington, D.C. beckoned with a bevy of gardens to be seen, plants to be sold and friendships to be renewed. This time we drove an entire truck full of plants, making an adventure out of the drive and looking forward to selling hostas to the conventioners, sort of like truck farming. I got my first look at a Hosta Show, and my first chance to sell plants for My Faithful Companion's company. I recognized a few faces, was recognized by many more, and when asked questions about plants smoothly and suavely referred them to my "colleague," who extricated me from numerous embarrassing knowledge traps and gaps. At one of the garden tours, I sought our and found a fellow car buff, thinking I would wile away the time until the bus left. As we talked of carburetors and camshafts, I surprisingly found myself hearing the siren song of walking through beautiful foliage and allowing the ambiance of the gardens to wash over me. What's

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this?

The 1996 National Convention in Portland was a much more serious trek from our home in Campaign. Can you imagine three days in a plant filled van, selecting motels on the basis of the weather outside them and always making sure that the plants don't dry out or wilt? This time, I was a participant in the Hosta Show, with, of course, the guidance and counsel of My Faithful Companion. A shock: I actually won a number of ribbons and prizes for my leaves! I found that the challenges of preparation, display and organization appealed to my engineer's mind, but still hadn't a clue as to why the name of each leaf simply had to have an "H." in front of it. This was a hosta convention wasn't it? All was right with the world: it rained in Portland as advertised, we sold all the plants and I actually remembered a few names-both plant and people. Bonus: on the way home, we filled the now-empty van with wonderful rocks for our own backyard garden and pond (which I now know must be characterized as a water feature.

The AHS National Convention in Indianapolis came next, and now I was in a town I knew. When/if I became bored, I could always go over to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway and do some consulting work for one of my clients. My Faithful Companion and I never got there. Friendships were again renewed, and now the people I'd seen at other conventions were my friends, too. I found myself looking forward to the whole scene: the gardens, the Hosta Show, the dinners, but most of all the wonderful people I'd met who had taken me under their wing as a novice hosta guy. Dangerously, I found myself thinking about things that My Faithful Companion and I could do in our own garden, planning structures and beds.

At the 1998 National Convention, in Peoria, things came together as in peering through a telephoto lens until the image suddenly jumps into focus. I still didn't know an *H. sieboldiana* from a bowling alley, but I did realize that there was more to hostas than the green ones, the blue ones and the yellow ones. I learned the names of the awards, helped select the table to eat at when the banquets were held, and pointed out a plant or three to My Faithful Companion, who, occasionally, regaled in the pure accident of my getting one right. When you're hot, you're hot! I actually selected and purchased a plant from another vendor, setting some kind of a benchmark and destroying my hosta virginity, or is that

hostaginity? It was time to admit that I was well and truly becoming hooked!

Last year's convention in Ann Arbor felt like the slipping on of an old shoe. I knew many conventioners by name and they knew me; it was like a gathering of the Alamo guards. Though it was to be the last year of My Faithful Companion's employment at her farm, she approached it with enthusiasm and charm, as always. And so did I. So many of our (can I now say "our"?) friends expressed dismay that she and I wouldn't be selling plants at future conventions. Condolences were given, promises to get together were made and it seemed more like the end of the beginning rather than the beginning of the end, as Winston Churchill might say. Several Hosta Colleges in Ohio, six national conventions, innumerable trips out to My Faithful Companion's farm and lots of digging, weeding, changing, moving and carrying later, I can now sum up what happened over this past six years.

Mary Ann and I have been the luckiest of people: we've found many things to enjoy together. I never envisioned that one of them would be gardening in general, and hostas in particular. What drew me in, caught me in the light and trapped me forever was the passion that every hosta person I have met has exhibited for that green friendmaker in all of its varieties. The enthusiasm for what they are doing, the pure joy that shines through their gardens, and the beauty they bring to their own lives and to others are seductive. I've met people of taste, people of simplicity, people of great education and elegance, and people with none of these characteristics; the common denominator has been passion and a willingness to share. In no time I was an insider, and it all happened so seamlessly and effortlessly because of the people involved.

I guess it all started with a hosta, didn't it?

By Dan Metz

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