

Prairie Hosta Herald

March 2006 Volume 3 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.

March 25, 2006

The Illinois Prairie Hosta Society March Seminar. Saturday, March 25, 2006, the IPHS will hold its monthly meeting and seminar in the Tony Noel Center at Parkland College from 8 AM to 12 PM. A business meeting and announcements will begin at 8:30, followed by a presentation on the IPHS hosta garden project at Allerton Park. Following the business meeting and announcements, our speakers will begin around 9:15. There will be three speakers, each with PowerPoint presentations. The proposed schedule is as follows:

8:00 Doors Open & Refreshments

8:30 Business Meeting and Announcements

9:15 Mary Ann Metz, 'How To Use Hosta In the Landscape: Design & Form'

10:15 Break & Refreshments

10:30 Sandy Mason, U of I Champaign County Extension Unit Educator, Horticulture & Environment, 'Native Plants in the Shade Garden'

11:30 Rick Schroeder, '2005 AHS Cleveland Convention and 2006 AHS Convention Pictorial'

Parkland College is located in the northwest part of Champaign. Take Bradley Avenue west to Duncan Road (Prairie Gardens is on Duncan Road), a 4-way stop, go north about 1.4 miles to the entrance into Parkland College. Turn right and the Tony Noel Center is the first group of buildings located on the right. Park on the east side of the main building and enter the east door.

Officers for 2006

President - Barb Schroeder

1st Vice President - Programs - Deb Guardia

2nd Vice President - Membership - Rick Schroeder

Secretary - Ann Stout

Treasurer - Mary Slack

Board Member at Large - Micha Ronquest

Board Member at Large - Sue Welke

Membership - Single \$10, Family \$15, \$25

Commercial per calendar year.

For more information contact

Vice President - Membership:

*Rick Schroeder, 1819 Coventry Dr, Champaign, IL
61822*

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

Committee Chairs

Audit - Fritz Drasgow, Barb Schroeder, Ann Stout

Hospitality - Siska Kallio

Newsletter- Rick and Barb Schroeder

Philanthropic - Marcia Jurgens

Plant Raffles - Larry Hoffman

Publicity - Bev Cotter

Special Projects - Mary Ann Metz

Please volunteer and help these chairpersons.
The more help the easier the tasks.

Future Meetings

April 22, 2006 - Allerton Park Visitors Center, Monticello, IL - Meeting with Carol Stoddard as speaker, Planting in the new Hosta Garden, Box lunch for all that attend.

May 20, 2006 - Annual Hosta and Companion Plant Sale, Bev Cotters on Valley Brook in Champaign.

June 20, 2006 - Tuesday Night at 6 PM - A Garden Adventure - Dodds Drive Gardens of M. Slack, D Guardia and K. Meyer will be open for visitors. Dianne Noland, Host of WILL Illinois Gardner, will be the speaker. Note this is an evening meeting for those than cannot make Saturday mornings.

July 8, 2006 - Saturday bus trip to Peoria and Hornbakers in Princeton, IL.

July 22, 2006 - 5-Acre Farm Daylilys - Rod Kromer and Jim Wuersch will host a meeting at their daylily farm near Tolono, IL.

August 22, 2006 - Tuesday Night at 6 PM - A potluck and plant exchange hosted by the Schroeders on Coventry Drive. Note this is another evening meeting.

September 23, 2006 - The Jurgen's in Arthur, IL host the last meeting of the summer. We will have a garden tour followed by an Amish Lunch.

October 28, 2006 - Annual Meeting at Stone Creek in Urbana.

Put these dates on your calendar. More information will be forthcoming for each meeting along with directions to get there. Note the evening meetings, we hope to see many of you that can't make the Saturday morning meetings.

Illinois Prairie Hosta Society Newsletter by Email

For those of you that get your newsletter by snail mail if you'd like to receive your newsletter in color, by email, send your request to: bschroeder@insightbb.com include "IPHS Newsletter by Email" in the subject line.

New Members

We welcome the following to the IPHS:

Laura Hartman, 700 W. Grand Ave, St. Joseph, IL (Hostas must be taking over St. Joe)

Glenda Danner, 210 S. Ellen, Homer, IL

Dennis Ricketts, Avalon Acres Hosta and More, 11125 E 1125th Ave, Effingham, IL

Pot Donations

The Plant Sale Committee needs 40 pots (quart to gallon sizes) by March 15th to prepare for the annual Plant Auction and Sale. If you have extra pots to spare, please contact Deb Guardia (351-8321) or Rick & Barb Schroeder (359-2868). Thanks!

President's Message

March is here and another IPHS season is beginning. This is our second full year and should be a good one. Each year we get better, more ideas, more members, and more experience. Our first meeting is going to be March 25th at Parkland College. We have great speakers on the program and lots of things to discuss. Last month we sent out our first newsletter of the season, that got me even more anxious to get into the yard. In this newsletter we have included the condensed budget for the 2006. We are doing very good. Even with some very special programs we still expect to end up in the black.

Our membership is growing – we had 14 new members in 2005 and this winter we had 15 join for the 2006 season. Unfortunately we have several that have not renewed for 2006 and if you are one of them this will be your last newsletter. As of March 1 we have 90 members, including those that have not renewed. That is a big jump from the 18 that started the group in June 2004.

Spring is sprung so let's all get over to Parkland and learn more about our favorite plant – the Hosta.

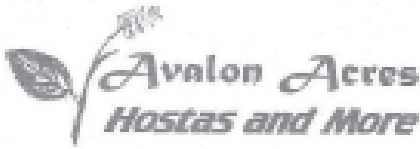
See you on the 25th.

Barb Schroeder

Allerton Project

Recap: Last year Ann Stout was contacted by Allerton Park representatives for assistance in the development of a hosta garden. Design, plant donations, installation and educational information were all requested. At that time Susan Weber and Mary Ann Metz volunteered their design expertise and many people in our club volunteered to donate plant material and labor for installation as well as educational assistance.


This is an exciting opportunity for our club to get active in the community, to promote our club and the addictive world of hosta and to dig in the dirt. Susan and Mary Ann will have a design to share with the club at the next meeting. All members are encouraged to consider donating plants and can bring a list of what plants they would like to share.



DONNY RICKETTS
Web Site - ahostas.com
11125 E. 1125th Ave (217) 536-9443
Effingham, IL 62401 ahostas@effingham.net

Country Arbors

IPHS members receive a 10% discount on all merchandise at Country Arbors, located on East Windsor Road, Urbana. Country Arbors is located about 1.5 miles east of Illinois Route 130. Plan now to visit Shane this spring for your new plants, rocks, yard ornaments or any other garden needs.



**HORNBAKER
GARDENS**
"The Princeton Perennial People"
Princeton, Illinois
www.hornbakergardens.com
(815)659-3282

Reserve Now!

The Hosta Finder 2006 contains 150 pages with 3,100 listed cultivars available. Individual hosta, prices from each nursery, cultivar size, color, flower color and credits are included in this publication. Over 4,100 cultivars are listed in the reference section. Reserved copies will be available by pick-up or at the April 22 meeting. Cost of the Hosta Finder 2006 will be \$11 each (minimum club order 10) or \$13 (less than 10). The deadline for ordering has been extended to March 25.

Hosta 'BlueberryTart' is a 2006 introduction from Bob Solberg and is this year's *exclusive* club hosta from Green Hill Farm. This cross of 'Blue Cadet' and 'Fall Bouquet' is a small hosta with very blue foliage and a distinctive folded leaf shape. It makes a cute, tight mound perfect for today's smaller hosta gardens and blooms in July with small pinky, purple flowers. 'Blueberry Tart' is the first in long line of new "long season" blue hostas from Green Hill Farm that hold their color well and grow vigorously in hosta gardens everywhere. 'Blueberry Tart' is specially priced at \$25 + \$1 shipping each.

Deadline for ordering will be May 5 and the bare-root plants will be available at the May 20 meeting.

To reserve either of these items, contact Mary Slack at 217.356.3127 or meslack@insightbb.com.



"Blueberry Tart"

Bob Solberg of Green Hill Farm

To Divide or Not to Divide?

One of the most often asked a hosta question is, "When do I divide my hostas". Traditionally the answer has been, "In the spring, just as they are coming out the ground".

Spring may be the easiest time to divide hostas with all their foliage out of the way. And spring is the time of year that we are all in the mood to clean up the garden and envision the way we want it to look in summer. It is only natural to want to dig those hosta clumps and spread them out all over the garden especially when we see how many more divisions there will be in each clump this year then last.

Honestly, spring is not a bad time to most hostas, especially those that multiply the fastest and are in the greatest need of being divided. But there are dangers. So what is the best time for the hosta? Let's look at how a hosta grows and see when it might like to be divided.

Hostas sleep all winter, they are dormant. They do not make new roots like other perennials do. In the spring their buds swell and the leaves emerge first. If the hosta was mature, these will be large mature leaves. If the hosta was grown in the sun, these will be narrowed leaves adapted for sun. A hosta grown in deep shade will have larger more rounded leaves adapted for shade. These leaves will emerge, expand and harden off in about three or so weeks depending on whether the spring weather is

cool or warm.

As the first leaves harden off and second flush of leaves begins to appear, the hosta will be making new roots from the base of the new shoot. Thus hostas do not make new roots until the first foliage hardens off or about three weeks after they emerge. Cool spring soil temperatures may slow or delay this root formation even longer.

So what is the danger of dividing hostas in the spring? Timing. In the spring when the weather is cool and the soil is slow to warm, your newly divided hostas will have large mature leaves and no new roots for weeks. What we call beautiful spring days, those of bright sun, cool breezes and low humidity, are very stressful for new hosta leaves. On those days the desiccation rate is very high and the new hosta divisions with their reduced and possibly damaged root systems, dry out rapidly. If the weather turns suddenly hot for even a day or two, the hosta leaves will burn. While this damage may not prove permanent, the clumps will certainly be reduced in size.

So, if you must divide your hostas in the spring, do not over divide them. Split the clumps in half or at most quarters. Divide only fast growing cultivars in spring that can recover quickly, avoid *H. sieboldianas* and 'Tokudamas'. Dig them with a fork not a shovel so as to damage their long roots as little as possible. Hosta roots only grow at the tip, if you cut the roots they rarely branch and will not get any longer. New roots will have to come to take their place.

When then do I prefer to divide my hostas? I like to do it in August or early September, at least 30

Future Conventions & Events

American Hosta Society - June 14-17, 2006 in Philadelphia, PA The 2007 is scheduled for Indianapolis with 2008 in St. Louis

Midwest Region Hosta Society will be in Milwaukee, WI on July 13-15, 2006. The 2007 convention is scheduled for Davenport, IA

Coles County Historical Society Garden Ramble, Memorial Day Weekend, Whiteside Garden west of Charleston, 11-5, \$6, call 217-345-3171 for info.

Champaign-Urbana Master Gardeners Garden Walk - Saturday June 24, 2006. Put this on your calendar now.

Hosta and Garden Web Sites

American Hosta Society – join now - <http://www.hosta.org/>

Midwest Hosta Society – join now - <http://www.midwesthosta.org/societycontacts.html>

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

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

Kleiss Nursery - in the country - <http://www.kleissnursery.com>

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

ILLINOIS PRAIRIE HOSTA SOCIETY BUDGET

For the Year January 1 - December 31, 2006

BALANCE January 1, 2006	3,414.98		
	INCOME BUDGET	EXPENSE BUDGET	NET BUDGET
Membership-Rick Schroeder	700.00	70.00	630.00
Plant Auction & Raffle at Meetings-Lar	250.00	0.00	250.00
General Purchase	250.00	385.00	(135.00)
Hospitality-Siska Kallio	0.00	50.00	(50.00)
Newsletter-Rick & Barb Schroeder	0.00	250.00	(250.00)
Programs-Debbie Guardia	6,100.00	4,982.50	1,117.50
Publicity-Bev Cotter	0.00	10.00	(10.00)
BALANCE December 31, 2006	7,300.00	5,747.50	4,967.48

days before the first frost date. The conditions then are more favorable to rapid root growth. The soil is warm and the air is more humid than in the spring. While people prefer the cool, sunny days of spring, hostas grow well on 85-90 degree days with high humidity.

Also, hostas usually put on a little growth spurt in August. Frequently, they will throw up a small flush of leaves as the temperatures moderate from the heat of July, especially if there has been rain. Many hostas at this time of year begin to actively grow again after their summer heat dormancy. Thus, hostas divided in late summer will make new roots quickly. Many fast growing hostas will make all new foliage before frost and hold it well into fall. Some may even bloom again.

The only danger in dividing hostas in August is excessive heat or extended drought. Keep newly divided hostas wet. Do not let them dry out for the

first two weeks. Removing some of the older, larger leaves or cutting the foliage back at the time of dividing will reduce water loss. Any leaves that suffer burned edges will be taken by the frost in a few weeks anyway.

One other aesthetic point. I would rather have my hosta garden look "divided" as it goes into fall when hostas are usually past their peak anyway than to see it that way all season long. Hostas divided in August will come up next spring in their new homes with more divisions, better proportioned leaves and established root systems. They will look better too. So save your heavy hosta dividing for those humid late summer days. It will be tougher on you, but your hostas will thank you in the spring.

From Bob Solberg's Growing Tips on his web site.

New IPHS Fundraiser

What: 'Visit by the Plant Experts'

When: By Appointment, June 1 – August 31

Details: Mary Ann Metz and Mike Weber will come to member's gardens to identify 'mystery' hosta, diseases and pests. They are volunteering their time to raise funds for the Illinois Prairie Hosta Society.

Donation: \$10, plus \$2.50 for each plant or problem identified.

Members (only) can sign-up on a first come, first served basis at the March, April and May meetings. After the May 20th meeting, Mary Ann and Mike will contact members to schedule appointments. Members will be asked for an estimate of the number of plants, and should restrict plants to only hosta.

If you have Nematodes, start early to Control Them

According to a talk given by Ran Lydell, you should start in the spring to control nematodes on any plants that are known to be affected. Here is his regiment:

Spring - 1st application: Di-Syston as in Bayer (brand) Advanced Rose and Flower Care, with fertilizer at 12-18-6. It's a granular systemic product that he gets at Home Depot

Mid and Late Summer 2nd & 3rd applications: Zerotol (1 T. per gallon of water).

Fall - 4th Application: Household bleach at 25% concentration.

The order of the application makes sense, fertilize in the spring and bleach in the fall. Ran says he is not sure which product is more effective or if anyone treatment is sufficient, but after this treatment, the affected hostas show no noticeable damage.

From the Hoosier Hostas Herald

2007 Hosta of the Year

The American Hosta Growers Association has chosen *Paradigm* as Hosta of the Year for 2007, crowing a meteoric rise for one of hostadom's biggest and most beautiful stars

Paradigm, a large dark green-edged sport of gold *Abiqua Recluse*, has heavy, dimpled leaves. Vigorous, it lives up to its name as superb example of today's hostas. Registered in 1999, it ranks 13th in national popularity.

Hosta of the Year must grow well in all regions, be widely available, in good supply and be priced \$15 or less. This year's AHGA honoree is *Stained Glass*. Earlier standard bearers were *Striptease* (2005), *Sum and Substance* (2004), *Regal Splendor* (2003), *June* (2001), *Sagae* (2000), *Paul's Glory* (1999), *Fragrant Bouquet* (1998), *Patriot* (1997) and *So Sweet* (1996).

From Hostas Hotline

Remember - 2006 Dues are due by the end of this month.

Hosta Tips

This is reprinted from Under the Shade Tree, newsletter of the Wichita Hosta Society. The information originally came from hostaguy.com, the website of a very nice nursery in Kansas called Made in the Shade Gardens.

Hail Damage — What to do? (editor's note this one's especially appropriate for all of us enduring the "Perfect Storm" on the west bluff) While hail is typically very localized, it seems like sooner or later we all get hit.

A particularly heavy hail storm can leave hostas shredded. So then what? There are two schools of thought. The first is to simply do nothing. As long as the foliage is still attached (however unsightly), it is still capable of continuing the photosynthesis process and will support rhizome growth. The other approach is to cut off the tattered foliage. In extreme cases this may mean you have little or no remaining foliage. However the dormant buds on the rhizome will be stimulated and new offsets along with a flush of new foliage will appear although it will be smaller than the original plant. Recent anecdotal evidence has shown that the plant will also be smaller the following year as opposed to the first approach of "doing nothing". Bottom line - it's really your choice. It's the short term play vs. the long term play.

Mulching your Hostas - Going hand in hand with maintaining proper soil moisture in your hosta bed is the proper application of mulch. Mulch will help conserve soil moisture as well as reduce competition from weeds. But don't overdo it. A depth of 1 to 2 inches of mulch is plenty. In fact going overboard with mulch helps create an even more inviting environment for slugs and also encourages fungal diseases. Backing the mulch about 3 to 4 inches away from the base of the hosta will also create a slightly drier microclimate which further discourages both slugs and fungal activity.

Is one type of mulch more preferable than another? Not really. We use pine bark mulch because it's reasonably attractive and relatively inexpensive. Since hostas' actually prefer a lower soil pH (optimally between 6.0 and 6.5), any type of mulch that adds to soil acidity (like pine park or pine needles) would be an added benefit.

From Great Expectations, Central Illinois Hosta Society