

Hosta Happenings

The Newsletter of the Northern Illinois Hosta Society

ISSUE 122

MAY 2022

2022 CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

- **June 4-5, Leaf Display & Plant Sale, Chicago Botanic Garden**
- **June 8 - 11, 2022 AHS National Convention, Minneapolis, MN**
- **June 18, Hosta Garden Walks (Two), New Lenox**
- **June 25, Hosta Garden Walks (Two), Winfield & St. Charles**
- **July 9, Hosta Caravan , Dixon & Sycamore**
- **July 14-16, 2022 MRHS Convention, Hostas Chicago Style, hosted by NIHS, Lisle - Save the Date!**
- **August 14, NIHS Picnic & Annual Hosta Auction, Cantigny Park**
- **September TBD, Annual Meeting**
- **October 16, Fall Symposium, Cantigny Park**
- **December TBD, Holiday Party**



President's Letter

What a Great time of the year! It's May and our hostas are taking shape. The pips emerged in early May. They were taking their time, too much time, to grow. Little by little they tease you with what they are going to look like this year. Then a few 80 degree days and to our delight they jump out of the ground.

Once again in 2022 the sponsor plant program was a success. For the second year all sales were handled electronically through our website. The program is not set to make money for NIHS. We were able to obtain 4 cultivars from two of our member vendors at wholesale prices and pass those discounts on to you as members of NIHS. If you have never participated, you may want to consider participating in 2023.

As you review the Calendar at a Glance you will note our next activity is our Annual Leaf Display and Plant Sale at the Chicago Botanic Garden. Due to the pandemic we have not held this event since 2019. Zoe Ingersoll is our new Manager for this event. Please read through our article below for details.

Zoe has also set up 4 garden walks over two days this June. This is a great way to see what other



In this Issue:

President's Letter	1
25 Year Members	2
Leaf Display at CBG	3
Hosta Garden Walks	4
Hosta Caravan Tour	6
Convention Volunteers	7
Picnic & Hosta Auction	8
Cantigny Garden	10
Hostas Chicago Style	12
AHS Convention	14
Dave's View	15
Winter Symposium	16
Spring Symposium	19
Dandelions	20
AHS Auction Results	21
Working with Nature	22
NIHS Board Members	24

Continued next page

President's Letter *continued*

members are doing with their gardens and see old NIHS friends and meet some new ones. This is one of the highlights for our summer activities so don't miss them.

Read through Mark Rekoske's article regarding our Car Caravan to Dixon, IL with a buying opportunity in Sycamore. Immediately following that is the long awaited 2020, no 2021, no 2022 Midwest Regional Hosta Society Convention July 14 – 16 in Lisle. Don't miss out on this event. Last time NIHS hosted this convention was in 2013. Read Barbara King's article for details regarding your opportunity to volunteer and to participate in the fun. It is going to be a Don't Miss event.

Each year we have our annual meeting at a member's home. Pre- pandemic it included a pot luck dinner. Ron and Judi Asselborn have hosted this event for a number of years and have done an incredible job. Although the last 2 years we had no pot luck dinner, the event went on without a hitch plus we had the opportunity to stroll through their beautiful gardens. Since Ron and Judi will not be available to host this year's event **We Need You!** to host this event in September. The Annual Meeting typically is held the 2nd or 3rd Sunday in September. Please contact me directly, kraus6311@comcast.net, if you could host this event. If the COVID situation allows, we will restart our annual Holiday Party in December. But only if the Board sees it as safe to do so. Again, anyone interested in hosting the Holiday Party should contact me.

NIHS has welcomed many new members over the last couple years. A good way to make new friends is to volunteer and become more involved with NIHS activities. You will be welcomed! Please speak with a Board Member to discuss your interest or contact me. We would love to see more members involved with what NIHS has to offer and enjoy the FUN.

May your hostas be full and your gardens colorful.

Hosta-la-vista,

Mike Kraus

Congrats New 25-Year Members!



- **Randall & Jami Flaws**
- **Sandra Lee Klausman**
- **Ed & Irene Marquardt**
- **Daniel & Beverley Romag**

When planting your cats make sure to space them 6 inches apart so they have room to grow.



*Courtesy of East Tennessee Hosta Society newsletter
April 2022*

PARTICIPATE in LEAF DISPLAY JUNE 4 & 5 AT CBG By Mike Kraus



Hosta Leaf Display at Chicago Botanic Gardens June 2019

It's that time of year, our hostas are emerging. Everyone is anxiously awaiting to see how much larger our plants are than last year. We enjoy hostas & it's time to share the beauty of our gardens. After a 2 year hiatus, our annual Leaf Display and Plant Sale at the Chicago Botanic Garden in Glencoe is scheduled for June 4th & 5th this year. The NIHS mission is to share knowledge of hostas and to promote their use in the landscape. How better to do this than to display the most beautiful hosta leaves from our gardens. Hundreds of CBG visitors will walk through our display and enjoy our hosta experience. Some will even buy hostas from our member vendors. Attendees also have the opportunity to vote for their favorite hosta leaf.

DONATE LEAVES: We need your donations of leaves from your best hostas. Here is what you need to do:

- ◆ Identify your best looking hostas.
- ◆ Select the best (most typical) leaf and cut it cleanly within 48hours of the display. Be sure to leave the petiole long enough to put into a vase as shown in the photo.
- ◆ Write the name of the hosta on the petiole with a waterproof Sharpie Ultra Fine Point tip pen or securely label the leaf in some other way. All leaves must be identifiable and labeled.
- ◆ Thoroughly wash any dirt or debris from the leaf and put it in cool water to keep it fresh. Clean the hosta leaf with wet cotton balls.
- ◆ Repeat this process for as many hosta leaves as you wish to bring to the display.

NIHS members will be at CBG on Friday June 3rd between 9:00 and noon and on Saturday morning, June 4th, from 8:30 to 10:00 to accept your leaves and help set them up for display.

GET YOUR LEAVES TO CBG: If you cannot get to CBG, you can drop off your leaves with one of the following

members. Please contact them in advance for your leaf drop off.

Thursday Drop-off:

Linda Lood, Sleepy Hollow

Barbara King, Batavia

Mike Kraus, Crystal Lake

Friday Drop-off:

Nancy Huck, Bensenville

June Vandervest, Downers Grove

VOLUNTEER AT THE EXHIBIT: To sign-up for a morning or afternoon shift between 10:00 am and 4:30 pm Saturday and Sunday contact Zoe Ingersoll at (630) 677-5477, zoeingersoll1216@gmail.com. As volunteers we have free parking while we work at the exhibit. Before or after your shift you would be able to stroll through the gardens. We are currently in need of volunteers for morning and afternoon shifts.

VISIT DISPLAY & BUY FROM OUR VENDORS: Lou Horton each year presents a seminar Saturday at 1:00 pm with tips on growing hostas. Whether or not you donate leaves or volunteer, come to see the display and buy some great hostas from our Member Vendors Jim Morrow and Andrea & Justin Geske. The Geske's now own Uniquely Hostas and they will be a great addition. *This also is a great way to identify those cultivars you just must have in your garden.* Andrea, Justin and Jim will have some of the newest cultivars coming on the market that you will not find at a garden center. Take a look at their hosta inventory and invest in a few. HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!

Hosta Garden Walks

Saturday June 18, 2pm - 5 pm

Two-fer in New Lenox

Bill & Leslie Brandt's Garden

We have approximately 350 Hostas and counting. Hostas have become the focal point of the landscaping with other shade loving plants to complement the designs. My favorites tend to be larger and more colorful varieties though I like the smaller more rare cultivars as specimen plants. The Brandt's pics below left.



Jeff Alton's Garden

Our ravine lot required us to terrace our gardens. The added benefit of these terraces and the change in elevation is it allowed us to create a series of private garden rooms each with a different theme and plant selection. The rooms include the Asian terrace, woodland garden, breakfast terrace, sunken garden, and the porch lawn. Due to the tree canopy we selected plants suitable for this shade to part-sun area with an emphasis on flowering trees and shrubs. *Jeff Alton's pics above & below on right.*

Directions to Jeff Alton's, 1200 Hickory Creek Drive, New Lenox - from the Brandt garden walk 2 houses to 1200 Hickory Creek Drive.



Directions to both gardens From the north and west suburbs travel South on I-355. Take Exit 1 toward US-6 E /Maple Rd. Turn left on Maple Rd, turn Right onto N Cedar Rd, Turn left onto E Francis Rd , turn right onto Hickory Creek Dr to 1180 (Brandt Garden) & 1200 Hickory Creek Drive (Alton Garden, 2 houses away).



2nd Hosta Garden Walk

Two-fer in St Charles & Winfield

Saturday June 25, 2pm –5pm

Molly & Dave Zacker Garden, St. Charles

I, like probably many of you, inherited my love for gardening from my mom. While growing up, I thought gardening was strange; I could not fathom having a love for plants, much less digging in the dirt.

Fast forward 40+ years, my love for our gardens is a passion. In many ways, it is a haven, providing an escape from life's hectic pace. We sought out plants from local nurseries, plant sales and "gifts" from friends. Over the years, we have added and restructured all of the beds, filling them with native plants, a variety of perennials and lots and lots of hostas.

We hope you enjoy our garden and please promise to pull a weed along the way... *Zacker garden pics above right.*



Driving Directions to Bertini garden Woods Drive, Winfield— from intersection of Il Rte 38 and Winfield Rd (near Cantigny Park) head west on Il Rte 38 0.2 mile & turn left on Normandy Woods Drive, your destination is on the right.

Evelyn & Don Bertini Garden, Winfield

I started my gardens with a few hosta seedlings, hydrangeas, yucas, bee balm, pulmonaria and ferns from a wonderful new neighbor. We now have over 500 varieties of hostas, along with tulips, daffodils, irises, peonies, hellebores, solomon seal, jack in the pulpit & trilliums in the spring.

The rest of the growing season we have coral bells, phlox, lilies, coneflowers, daisies, honeysuckle vines, clematis vines, dianthus, lady's mantle and many other plants.

When August arrives, we have toad lilies, turtle-heads, asters, anemones & mums. Now our gardens have rock lined paths with many benches for a serene and tranquil setting. *Bertini garden pic on left.*

Continue to **Zacker garden** St Charles— from the Bertini garden head west (left) on Il Rte 38 & continue into Geneva. After crossing the Fox river turn right on Il Rte 31. After crossing Il Rte 64, Turn left on Timbers Rd to on the right.



Hosta Caravan Tour & Fun!

July 9 to Dixon & Sycamore

By Mark Rekoske

It is not too late to sign up for the NIHS's second Hosta Caravan. We will visit two gardens in Dixon IL, the gardens of Joan Lemme and her next door brother, Joe Franklin. We will also be hosted by Blumen Gardens in Sycamore IL which will offer caravan participants a 20% discount on all purchases made that day, just for mentioning the NIHS 2022 Caravan. Join us for a summer day in the country out in Dixon which is about 1.5 hours west of Wheaton just off I-88.

Joan Lemme gardens on a 10 acre partly wooded property where she and her late husband, Gene, built their home in the 1970's. Gene favored gardening in the sunny areas of the property and took a strong interest in hybridizing daylilies. Today Joan has retained thousands of the daylilies that will be nearing peak bloom when we visit. In the wooded areas of the property Joan maintains a hosta garden of hundreds of varieties that number over 5,000 plants. In 2006, the Lemme garden was awarded the **Chicago Tribune's Glorious Garden award**. An octogenarian, Joan reports that she still gets excited over the return of the gardening season each spring. & calls her garden Hosta Heaven.



Joan Lemme garden, above and Blumen Gardens, below.

Joe Franklin and his wife, Ida, garden next door on a smaller property than Joan's and his style of gardening is quite different. Unlike the expansive, informal gardens next door, Joe specializes in bonsai and meticulously maintains his gardens in a more formal, precise manner. He grows an extensive collection of perennials and woody plants. In addition, Joe and Ida plant an extensive vegetable garden each year.

Joan Lemme suggests **spending lunch** at Dixon's Riverfront Park off US Hwy 52 (Galena St) on the east bank of the Rock River. Pack a picnic lunch or pick up food at one of the takeout restaurants opposite the park.

Blumen Gardens is located on a converted industrial property near downtown Sycamore. It is located at 403 Edward Street, just blocks off of IL Rte. 64 (State Street). Blumen Gardens includes 4.5 acres of perennials, shrubs and trees for sale. Blumen also displays a huge inventory of garden art, accessories, planters and home décor items. **On the day of our visit, caravan participants will receive a 20% discount on all purchases by mentioning the Northern Illinois Hosta Society car caravan.**

Please join us on the Hosta Caravan. The gardens will be open from 10:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Blumen Gardens will be open until 5:00 p.m. To participate, please send me an email **by June 24th** so I can tell our garden hosts how many visitors to expect. Attendance, of course, is free. I will provide addresses and driving directions by return email.

WHO CAN HELP AT THE CONVENTION? VOLUNTEERS STILL NEEDED!

By Barbara King

If you thought you missed the opportunity to get in on the fun of volunteering at the MRHS convention, think again. We would love to have more volunteers who can help out by doing something they enjoy. This NIHS-hosted event takes place July 14 – 16. Here are some examples of what you could do:

- ◆ Help set up and serve pizza at Thursday evening's Pizza Party at Cantigny Park
- ◆ Greet and direct visitors at one of the tour gardens Friday or Saturday
- ◆ Help in the Hospitality Suite Friday, or Saturday evening
- ◆ Serve as usher at the Friday or Saturday afternoon seminars at the hotel
- ◆ Help with setup or takedown of vendor rooms, leaf show or other events
- ◆ Check in and place auction plants for preview; help at auction Friday evening
- ◆ Staff a shift at the concierge desk; it will be open throughout the convention



There are also other ways to help, and remember that volunteers who want the full convention experience are entitled to a reduced registration fee that will let them visit all the tour gardens, attend all the seminars, and have two excellent 4-course dinners at the hotel—features that are not available without the badge received after registering.

Additional information about the convention can be found at midwesthostasociety.org. For more details on volunteering and to sign up, contact Barbara King. Hope you will be joining us!

2022 Special Events



Open House & Hosta Walk on June 10-11-12
 Hosta Expert Bob Solberg on Sunday, July 24
 Artisan Market on Saturday, September 17



 **HORNBAKER**
GARDENS, Inc.
 Garden Center – Arboretum
 Botanical Gardens

Over 350 hostas in stock!

April 10 – October 10
 Princeton, Illinois
 (815) 659-3282

hornbakergardens.com

NIHS Summer Picnic and Hosta Auction - NEW!

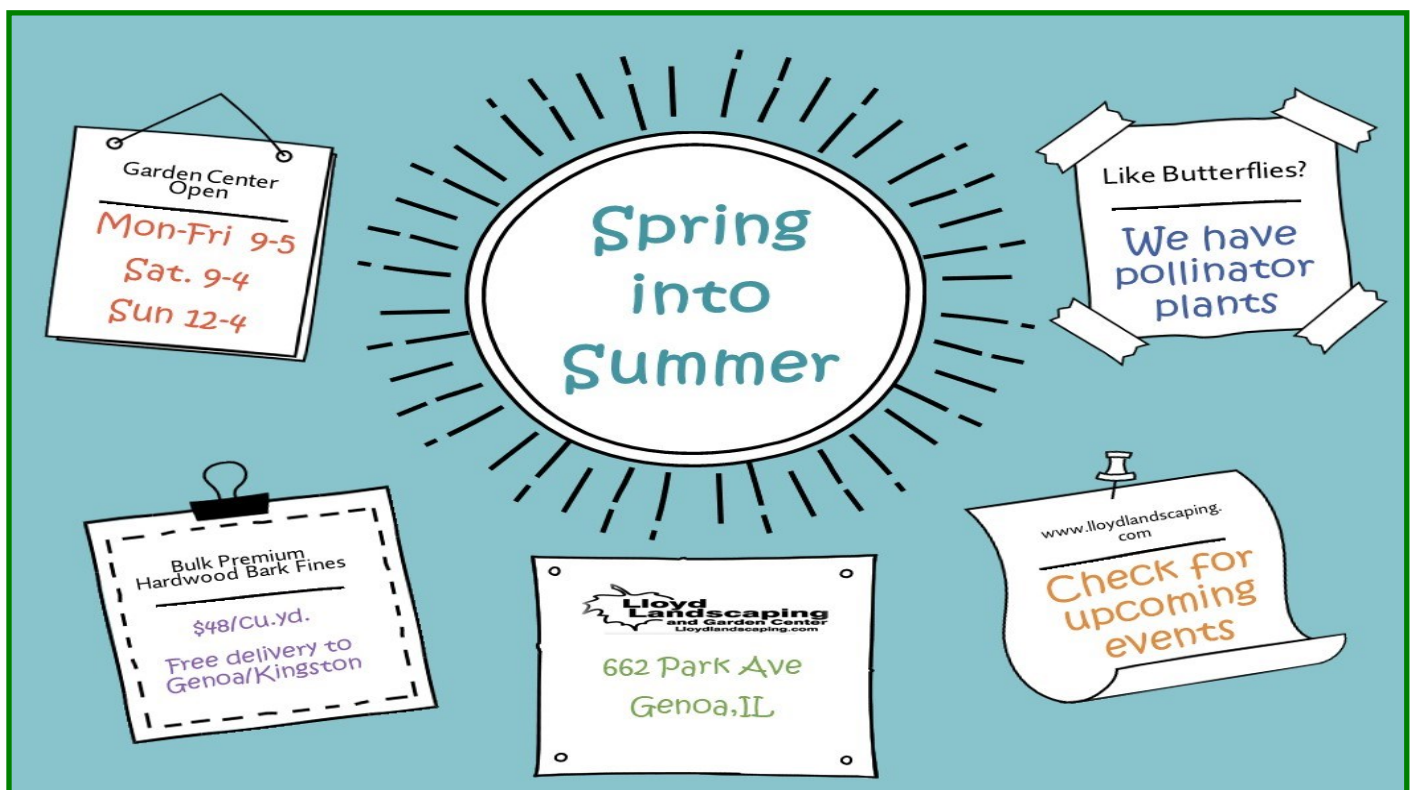
By Mark Rekoske

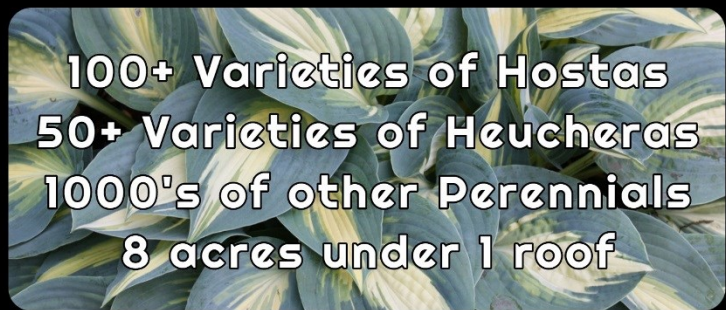
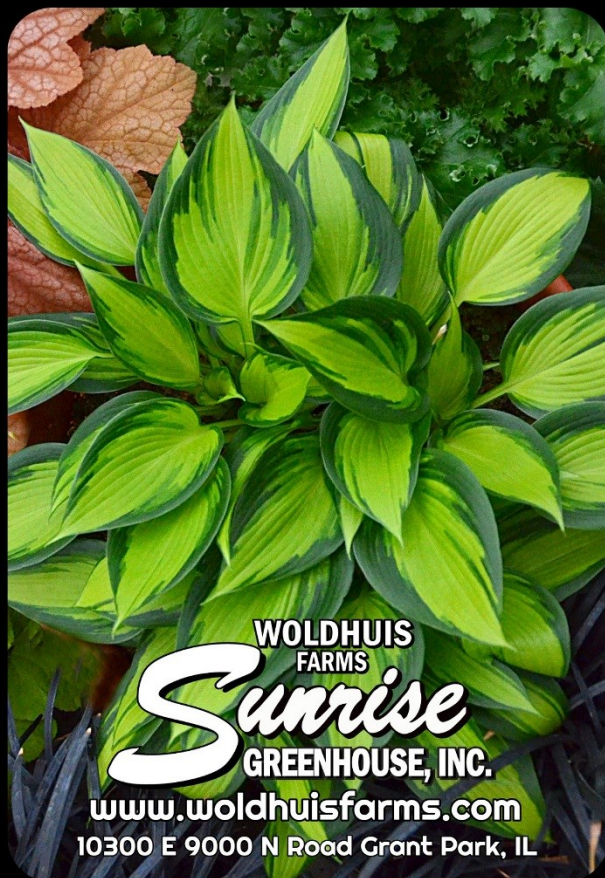
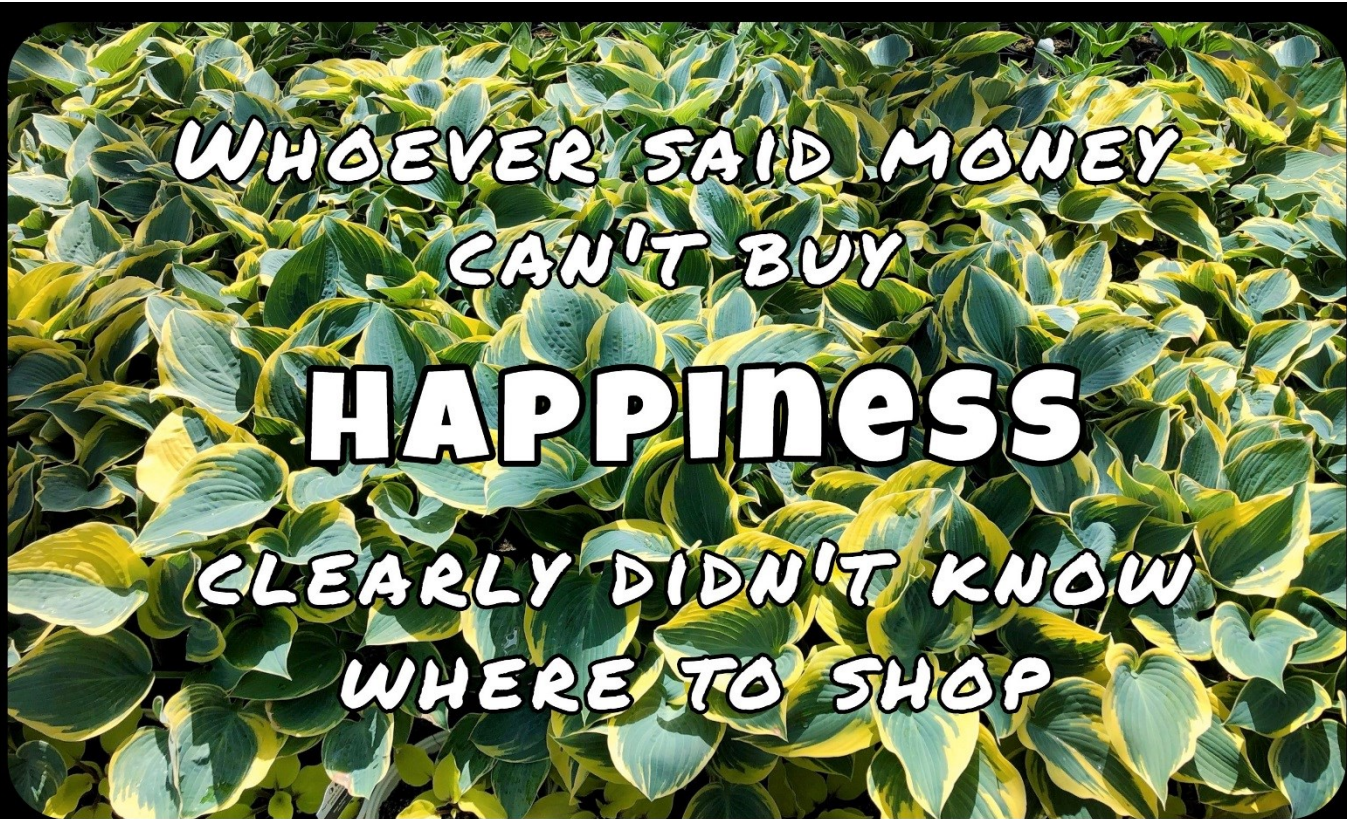
Join the fun on **Sunday, August 14th** at the Cantigny Park Picnic Pavilion for a potluck picnic and plant auction. The Picnic Pavilion is located just north of the Cantigny Park visitor center parking lot and includes a picnic shelter that can accommodate about 100 attendees. NIHS will supply a main course, beverages, utensils and plates. Please **bring a dish to pass and serving utensils**. There are many good cooks among our members so we can be assured of an outstanding picnic lunch!

Lunch will begin promptly at Noon, but please **plan to arrive early by 11:15 am** to socialize, drop off your auction donations, and visit the AHS National Hosta Display Garden at Cantigny Park maintained by NIHS. After lunch, beginning at 1:30, we will hold an in-person auction of some of the most desirable hostas donated by NIHS members. I'm asking each attendee to donate one or two hostas that you would be proud to present as a gift to a fellow gardener. Due to time constraints we will be auctioning less plants at Cantigny Park versus the previous auctions in Hinsdale.

Bidding will be friendly, but I remind everyone that our auction is the NIHS' only fundraiser of the year - so feel free to get carried away! We plan to advertise the auction beyond our membership and encourage you to invite friends and neighbors to attend the auction as well. **Participation in the picnic lunch will be limited to NIHS members only so non-members should be invited to arrive after 1:00 pm.**

Further details will be provided in our next newsletter, but please save the date and plan to **dig your donations soon** so that the plants look their best at the auction.





BEAUTIFYING THE CANTIGNY PARK HOSTA GARDEN

By Barbara King

The cadre of NIHS volunteers that cares for the Cantigny Park Hosta Garden has been hard at work since the end of April. They have braved cold, wet weather to tackle their most dreaded and daunting first assignment of the season—to clear out the scilla that overgrow the hostas every spring. When work started, many of the hosta pips were hidden by the long, grass-like scilla leaves and were at risk for being trampled before even exfoliating. It's been tedious work, but the removal phase is nearing completion.

Preparing the garden to be at its peak during the Midwest Regional Hosta Society Convention July 14 – 16 will then become the main focus for the volunteers. The convention is the first opportunity for the hosta



We're working to make the Cantigny Park Hosta Garden look like this in July for the MRHS Convention attendees!

2017 pics by Ron Asselborn

lovers from throughout the midwest who will be attending to see our National Hosta Display Garden. It received this AHS designation in 2016. Our volunteers will be planting new hostas and companions while also moving some of the older ones that are currently not in the best location to thrive. The final major task will be to mulch the whole garden.

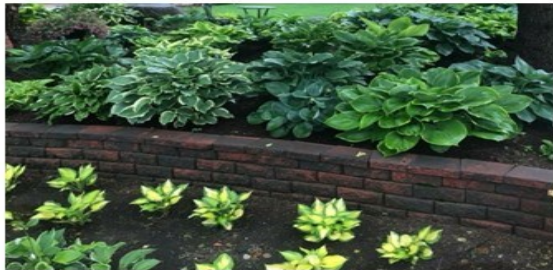
The Cantigny Horticulture Staff has been most supportive of the NIHS volunteers' efforts. Even before we stepped into the garden, they had cleared away a winter's accumulation of fallen branches, sticks,

leaves and other debris. They have installed several large pots filled with colorful spring flowers, and in the coming weeks they will plant two katsura trees in locations where additional shade is needed for the hostas.

More volunteers are always welcome! If you would like to become one, contact Barbara King.



2022 Open House Sale Dates!
May 28-29, June 25-26 and July 23-24
9am-3pm all days



Come visit us in Cherry Valley, IL
Open from Memorial Day thru Labor Day
Evenings and Weekends by appt ONLY
Call Mike at 815-509-9715

Email us for a list
and availability at
hugoshostahaven@gmail.com



EARTH FRIENDLY GARDEN MARKERS

Durable
Recyclable
Sustainably Made



MADE IN USA · PATENTED

*Custom Engraving & Custom
Printed Weatherproof Lables*

3 sizes / 8 colors



BIOMARKERS[®]
PREMIUM GARDEN PRODUCTS

info@mcgbiomarkers.com • 319-378-0077



YOU'RE INVITED! MRHS CONVENTION

JULY 14 – 16, 2022 - Lisle, Illinois



AFTER TWO POSTPONEMENTS of the Midwest Regional Hosta Society convention, the Northern Illinois Hosta Society is moving ahead with plans to host *Hostas Chicago Style July 14 – 16*. Don't miss the people, the fun, and the special features that will make you glad you signed up: Fabulous gardens in which hostas share top billing with other distinctive plants and garden designs, speakers you probably haven't heard before, two new cultivars from Bob Solberg as choices for a gift hosta, a Chicago-style pizza party, and more....

What you've always expected from a hosta convention will be at this one, too: Reunions with hosta friends you haven't seen for a long time. Vendors with classic and new hostas, companion plants, and other items for your garden. A hosta leaf show and a seedling display. Good old-fashioned hospitality.

Convention headquarters will be the same as for the 2013 "Hostamania!" convention that everyone enjoyed so much. The name has changed from Lisle Hilton to DoubleTree by Hilton, but it's the same accommodating place that provides comfortable rooms at a great price, excellent food and super service. It's well-located near the Naperville exit from I-88. There's lots of free parking, nearby services, shopping, and points of interest.

The last MRHS Convention, in 2019, was part of the AHS Convention in Green Bay, but in 2022 it will once again be a stand-alone event not to be missed! Please join fellow hosta lovers from throughout the Midwest for *Hostas Chicago Style, July 14 - 16, 2022*. **Mark your calendars now and plan to be part of it!**

Details and registration form on MRHS website: <http://www.midwesthostasociety.org>



HOSTAS
&
SO MUCH
MORE

WASCO NURSERY

CHICAGOLAND'S LARGEST
GARDEN CENTER, WITH 8-
ACRES OF TREES, SHRUBS,
ANNUALS, PERENNIALS, HERBS
& VEGGIES. FULL-SERVICE
LANDSCAPE DESIGN AND
INSTALLATION.

41W781 Route 64 Saint Charles, IL 60175
630.584.4424 www.wasconursery.com

Thanks, NIHS!

We appreciate our
growing partnership.



MIDWEST REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY

The Midwest Regional Hosta Society represents Region 5 of the American Hosta Society that includes 9 states.

Membership in the society is \$20.00 for 2 years, which includes two issues per year of the newsletter. Please mail a check made payable to MRHS to:

MRHS Membership
Kathy Rustad
4011 10th Avenue NW
Rochester, MN 55901

Along with Name, Address, Phone, and email (Most correspondence is by email). For questions email MRHS.hosta@gmail.com.



CANTIGNY
PARK

GARDENS
MUSEUMS
GOLF

15151 Winfield Road Wheaton, IL
cantigny.org



@cantignypark | #cantignypark



American Hosta Society
National Convention
June 8 - 11, 2022
Minneapolis Marriott NW
www.HostaVision2022.com

REGISTER NOW!

A major part of the convention is participating in area Garden Tours by motor coach bus or a self-driving tour over the span of two days, with many gardens displaying over 500 hosta varieties. The accredited Hosta Leaf Show creates an opportunity for membership and the general public to see the plethora of variety in form and color the genus *Hosta* provides as a landscape plant. We will have multiple Vendors of both hosta and other garden materials. Last but not least is the Friday afternoon AHS Hosta Auction an annual fundraiser and one of the great places to find the more unique hosta available. See the schedule to view all planned events.



The
american
HOSTA
SOCIETY

www.americanhostasociety.org

Members receive three issues per year of *The Hosta Journal*, which includes color photos of hostas, reports on the national convention, scientific info concerning current research pertaining to hostas and advertisements of interest to hosta families.

Dues for one year are \$30 for an individual and \$34 for a family.



DAVE'S VIEW

By Dave Trollope



Golden times are here again!

A new spring brings lots of hostas emerging, but gold stands out at this time of year after the dull winter! Here are a few gold hostas to enjoy.

Relax on your patio on a warm spring evening with a martini, a 'Lemontini' & a 'Limetini'. Share the magical time with friends 'June' & 'Nancy'.

Ah, the Hosta Life!



Hostas pictured clockwise from top left -

- ◇ *H. 'Limetini'*
- ◇ *H. 'June Gold'*
- ◇ *H. 'Prairie Moon'*
- ◇ *H. 'Nancy'*
- ◇ *H. 'Effervescence'*
- ◇ *H. 'Lemontini'*

Winter Symposium
“Tips for the Lazy Gardener”
March 6 @ Cantigny Park



Pics by Stevie Meginness



Cindy Tyley warmed and inspired the NIHS hostaholics and guests on a snowy March Sunday. Her show 'n tell program inspired the audience with practical tips for more gardening fun projects!





SHADY HILL GARDENS

**Annuals, perennials,
herbs, planters
and more.**

All home grown!

Elburn, IL

630-365-5665

www.shadyhill.com



Northern Illinois Hosta Society

HOME ABOUT US CALENDAR MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTERS & FLYERS RESOURCES CONTACT US MEMBER'S ONLY



Some of our Programs, Events & Activities



Annual Membership Meeting- September 12, 2021

The purpose of this annual meeting is to discuss and approve the NIHS annual Budget and election of new officers to fill vacant positions. Our meeting is usually scheduled on a Sunday in



Sponsor Plant Pick-Ups-May 2021

You will be notified by email regarding your member purchases from March & April 2021 regarding pick up location

As Lou Horton, NIHS Past President, 2003-2011, has always said, "the Sponsor Plant Program is designed for the benefit of

New Member Welcome!!

Welcome to our newest hostaphile!

- ◇ Mark & Carol Mineur, Palos Heights
- ◇ Jim Esperson, Mundelein
- ◇ Kathleen Herter, Winnebago
- ◇ William Hessel, Lake Zurich
- ◇ Michael & Gail Raith, Skokie
- ◇ Claudia VandeLinder & Doloris Wood, Batavia

Join the Northern Illinois Hosta Society

Join the NIHS by going to our website www.NorthernIllinoisHostaSociety.org and scroll over on the navigation bar to Membership. You can pay your membership dues on-line on our secure server or print out an application form and mail to our membership secretary with a check payable to NIHS. Pls mail to: Stevie Meginness, Membership Secretary, 84 Dunham Place, St. Charles, IL 60174 with your check for \$25. Please include your name(s), address, phone #, and current email address.

Family membership dues of \$25 for 2 years include email versions of 5 newsletters.

Email us at NI.hosta@gmail.com. Call Stevie. Visit our website @ www.NorthernIllinoisHostaSociety.org and visit us on Facebook.



Evening Garden Inspiration
Spring Symposium
May 15



Pics by Stevie Meginness & Ron Asselborn



Cantigny Park in bloom—pics above, below & right.

Moon Gardens, Evening Gardens, White Gardens & Silver Gardens— these were the themes that Heather Prince intertwined with gorgeous pictures of romantic gardens. Who could resist falling in love with the Datura and white Calladiums!



Mark Rekoske (left) picked up his NIHS sponsor plants from Mike Kraus before the Symposium. The NIHS Sponsor Plant program bring great new hostas to members at reasonable prices.



Dandelions

By

June Vandervest

Right now the war on dandelions is in full swing. But did you ever think about how dandelions got here and how they became such a nuisance? The common Dandelion – *Taraxacum officinale* is native to Europe and Asia. It was imported as a food crop and carried here by immigrants to North America. By the year 1672, it was already well established in New England. The leaves are high in calcium, potassium and iron. They are best when young and tender and most flavorful in early spring before the first flower buds appear. The roots can be eaten as a vegetable too and have a turnip-like flavor in the early spring. The blossoms can be eaten fresh and are best when picked early in the season or processed and made into wine. Of course, only plants that have not been exposed to herbicides should be considered for table use.



In European countries like Italy, France and Germany this plant is still very popular and varieties with larger leaves are cultivated and sought

after. I have seen dandelion leaves for sale in the vegetable department in specialty supermarkets here. The common name that we know these plants by comes from the French “dent-de-lion”, or lion’s tooth, which describes the jagged shape of its leaves. Many central European people have used the little yellow flower heads to make dandelion wine each spring. There is even a Dandelion Festival held in Dover, Ohio each year at the Breitenbach Wine Cellars. They hold a children’s dandelion picking contest to find the biggest blossom, the tallest stem or just the



basket holding the largest number of dandelion flowers. Crafters attend and sell their wares which are created with dandelions in mind.

Dandelion flowers are very important to bees and other pollinators in the early spring when nothing else is blooming yet. After that little flower is finished blooming, its globe shaped seed heads act like a feathery parachute. Its soft, white hairs hold seeds that are easily carried by the wind. Just think, each plant can produce up to 20,000 viable seeds. So there are lots of potential new plants to replace the ones chemically or manually destroyed! Check out recipes here:

<https://www.finecooking.com/ingredient/dandelion-greens>

Editor’s Note: June wrote me “The “Dandy Lion” image (left) was my inspiration to write this article. “



6 Results of the American Hosta Society On-Line Auction

The AHS On-Line Auction was held January 16 – 29, 2022. Anyone interested in bidding was encouraged to register. Over 63 hosta plants as well as another 27 items were donated. When the bidding was completed, \$10,453 had been raised.

DVHS Newsletter, Spring, 2022

Here are some of the highlights. It was nice to see some brand new cultivars as well as some truly beautiful and distinguished older ones. Photos from the auction itself are no longer available. These photos came from the Hosta Library. www.hostalibrary.org



H. 'Crazy Hazy'. \$334. Donated by Mason Hollow.
NR. Introduced by Marco and Joyce Fransen.
Sport of *H.* 'Purple Haze'.
Photo: Gail Russo.



H. 'Sterling Medalion'. \$280. Original Stock. Donated by Don Dean.
Registered by Dean in 2014.
Pod parent was hybrid of *H.* 'Frosted Dimples' x
H. 'Sea Frolic'. Pollen from *H.* 'Purple Verticulated Elf'.
Photo: Don Dean



H. 'Lachman Legacy'. \$360. Original Stock. Donated by Steve Greene.
Registered by Bill and Eleanor Lachman in 2014.
Probably the last plant created by the Lachman hybridizing program.
Parentage unreported.
Photo: Steve Greene



H. 'Bloodline'. \$320. Original Stock. Donated by Doug Ruff.
Registered by Doug Ruff in 2019.
Hybrid of *H.* 'First Blush'.
Photo: Doug Ruff.



H. 'Pirouette'. \$190. Original Stock. Donated by David Teager
NR. Introduced by David Teager.
Parentage unreported.
Photo: David Teager.

Working with Nature, with Sustainable Practices

By Bob Streitmatter



Monarch butterfly

Each spring, we expend a great deal of energy on our gardens, but there are many ways to diminish some of that garden maintenance and enhance your garden's relationship with nature. That sounds suspiciously like a recipe for a weedy, hot mess, but it really isn't. By re-examining the garden and re-designing or using different practices, you can be a lot greener, with less labor...more time to enjoy your garden.

The first thing is attitude and your relationship with nature. Tending a garden involves give and take, compromise and respect. It's important to observe your garden, learn and let go sometimes, because the big caterpillar devouring the dill may be a Monarch (see above) or Zebra Swallowtail...just let them eat. Maybe, let things like Virginia Bluebells or Red Columbine spread and self-sow. Minimize lawn, maintaining only what you need. Lawn provides little benefit and treated-lawn is hazardous to many insects and wildlife. Try going natural and backing off some of the neatness; you can provide food, nesting and habitat with unmown grass, leaves, a wood pile, rotting logs, compost, mulch...

Taking a different approach to your planting and plant palette can have a huge impact. Avoid high-maintenance annuals, or plant fewer and concentrate them in planters by the front door for impact. Know your plants and place the right plant, in the right place, always matching it with environmental conditions and spatial constraints; poor placement often leads to poor growth and/or constant pruning to keep it from covering a window. Never plant something considered to be an invasive species; lists can be found online. I've listed a few easy, low-maintenance plants; many are native, but they're all hardy and adapted to central Illinois, with little susceptibility to severe problems.

Trees: Hawthorn, Oaks, Serviceberry, Crabapple, Common Witch hazel, Pine, Sumac, Spruce, Fir, Pawpaw, Hickory, Walnut, Ironwood, Hornbeam

Shrubs: Barberry, Bayberry, Boxwood, Chokeberry, Dwarf Lilac, Filbert, Gro low sumac, Hydrangea, Spirea, Shrub Rose, Viburnum, Vernal Witch hazel, Yew, Bottlebrush Buckeye

Perennials & Grasses: Aster, Bleeding Heart, Bugbane, Black-eyed Susan, Bluebells, Bluestar, Butterfly Weed, Catmint, Coneflower, Coreopsis, Cranesbill, Daylily, False Aster, False Indigo, Ginger, Globe Thistle, Goldenrod, Grasses (especially native), Hosta, Joe Pye Weed, Lead Plant, Lily-of-the-valley, Lilyturf, Milkweed, Obedient Plant, Peony, Tree Peony, Sedum, Siberian iris, Trillium, Pachysandra, Solomon's Seal, Solomon's Plume, Yellow Coneflower

Go organic & avoid pesticides, using natural processes, beneficial insects, bacillus, and dormant oils. At the very least minimize pesticide-use and never use neonicotinoid pesticides because they're proven to be harmful to pollinators. Always consider alternatives, using the least toxic option and treat in early morning, when pollinators are less active.

Use mulch (i.e. composted leaves, mushroom compost, shredded hardwood or compost) to control weeds, retain water and moderate soil temps. In addition, it helps improve your soil, feeding the soil ecosystem as well as your plants.

Compost! The environmental benefits of

Continued next page

Working with Nature, with Sustainable Practices continued

composting include:

- Enriching soil, helping retain moisture and suppressing diseases and pests.
- Reducing the need for fertilizer, by encouraging beneficial bacteria and fungi that break down organic matter and create nutrient-rich soil. We seldom look at bacteria in a positive way, but our existence rests upon microbial processes in soil. Healthy soil is very much alive, and teaming with millions of tiny organisms. Some, like earthworms and insects, are visible, but most are microscopic, like nematodes and bacteria.
- Reducing methane emissions from landfills and lowers your carbon footprint. Composted kitchen scraps, leaves and grass clippings, can be used as a mulch or soil amendment. Before planting, mix 4-6" of compost into new beds; or spread a 1-3" layer over existing beds. For container plants, sprinkle a layer on top and/or add compost to your container mix; to save money, I use a mixture compost & old container mix in the bottom half of larger pots. Sheet Composting (aka Lasagna Gardening) is one of the best ways to expand or start new beds.

Conserving water is imperative in many arid regions, but water's a precious resource everywhere and conservation is environmentally beneficial. Water your garden only when needed and don't commit yourself to rigid schedules (i.e. avoid watering with a rain forecast). Water in the morning when it's cooler and less windy, to diminish evaporation losses. Occasionally check for leaks in hoses and connections to eliminate waste; and avoid watering pavement by adjusting sprinklers. Harvest rainwater with rain barrels under the downspouts; I water planters all summer long with rainwater.

Common oak moth caterpillar



Lastly, choose drought-tolerant

plants or incorporate shade in problematic dry areas; it's a great way to conserve water over the long term.

In fall, leave plants that have winter interest (like grasses and Autumn Joy Sedum) and contribute to the ecosystem. Letting things remain will provide habitat and food for overwintering wildlife/pollinators. Rather than discard what was cut back, stack it, compost it or mulch with it. It's a way of tidying up, but retaining insects, and their eggs.

Observe & learn from your garden. Monitoring things gives you a better understanding and enables you to solve issues before they become problems...work with nature. Learning more is never a bad idea...attend a Park District Program, get a guidebook and learn to recognize different insects, butterflies and pollinators, or check out the following organizations and references:

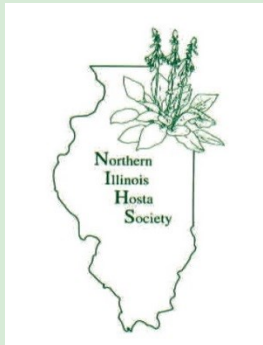
- National Wildlife Federation, Xerces Society, Illinois Natural History Survey, Pollinator Partnership, USDA Forest Service ww.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/
- Bringing Nature Home: How you can sustain wildlife with native plants, by Douglas W. Tallamy <http://www.bringingnaturehome.net/>

"In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks...When you tug at a single thing in nature, you find it attached to the rest of the world." John Muir

NIHS Membership Secretary

84 Dunham Place

St. Charles, IL 60174



The Northern Illinois Hosta Society is dedicated to educating the public and promoting the use of hosta in the landscape. NIHS serves the people of Northern Illinois and surrounding areas.



Don't miss Bill Brandt's Hosta Garden Walk on June 18 in New Lenox!



Officers & Directors

President

Michael Kraus

Vice President for Program

Mark Rekoske

Membership Secretary

Stevie Meginness

Recording Secretary

Linda Lood

Treasurer

Gary Blauser

Hospitality Chair

Judi Asselborn

Newsletter Editor

Ron Asselborn

Publicity Director

June Vandervest

Directors –At—Large

Zoe Ingersoll

Mark Meginness

*Ev & Don Bertini
invite you to their
glorious garden on
June 25!*

