

The Green Hill Gossip

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email: HostaBob@gmail.com

Back to basics: Hosta fact sheet

By Bob Solberg

Editor's note: Sometimes we wander so far down the road of life that we lose sight of our beginnings. Our reality has become based on the premises and assumptions formulated through years of traveling. Frequently we assume that everyone we meet along this road shares the same basis in fact, where in reality new travelers see the landscape very differently from those of us that have been on this journey for decades. Along the way, we grieve at the sight of once proud gardens now in ruin while others only see neglect.

We assume they know the history of Hostadom, but they can only see what we have built, the finished product, not phases of construction. Sometimes it is time to get back to the basics, to tell the old stories again so we can all try to share in the same view of the hosta world. In the end, we still may not agree on how we see everything but at least everyone will have all the facts. Here is what we think we know, now.

1. Hostas have lily-like flowers but are members of the agave family. For years hostas were considered in the lily family based on the structure of their flowers. With the advent of DNA testing hostas because of their uniqueness have either been put in their own family, the *Hostaceae*, or lumped into the asparagus family, the *Asparagaceae*, in the agave sub-family *Agavoideae*. Hostas and agaves have the same chromosome numbers. Think of them as similar plants, one adapted to moist forests and meadows and the other adapted to dryer conditions.

2. Hostas are perennial annuals. Hostas have an annual life cycle. They emerge in the spring, make new leaves and roots, produce flowers and seeds, and then go dormant for the winter. They have a seed-based biology, tall flowering scapes, easy for bee pollinators to find, that scatter seeds away from the mother plant. They have perennial crown tissue that stores energy over the winter and forms dormant buds to repeat the process year after year. In the care of a good gardener, hostas are immortal.

3. Hostas are shade plants. Some say hostas tolerate shade but I think they prefer some shade. They would like more sun, however, than most of us give them. They appreciate light but their leaves will burn in the direct sunlight of a hot summer. Morning sun is usually a great placement for hostas or areas of the garden with bright indirect lighting.

4. Hostas are drought tolerant. Yes, amazingly hostas will survive the most extreme drought but not without some damage to the crown resulting in smaller plants the following year. Hostas will dry rot in hot, dry summers and sometimes emerge as little tissue culture like plants in the spring. In fact, hostas love water. I do not know if you can water them, too much. In fact you can grow them in a shallow stream or in a

pot in a pond. In very rainy summers, their foliage might develop fungal infections but the next spring their spot free leaves will emerge bigger and better than ever.

5. Hostas are native plants. Hostas are native plants in Japan, China, Korea, and Russia. *H. ventricosa* has even become naturalized in some parts of the United States. There are between 20 and 40 species of hostas in the wild depending on whether you are a lumper or a splitter but many are rarely used to produce new hosta cultivars. Here are the hosta species that really matter to horticulture and hosta collectors.

H. montana, *H. sieboldiana*, *H. fluctuans*, and *H. nigrescens* are the parents to most large hosta hybrids. *H. sieboldiana* is the origin of almost all blue hostas. *H. plantaginea* is the origin of all fragrant-flowered hostas. *H. sieboldii* is the beginning point for hosta variegation, although many new variegated hostas have *H. sieboldiana* ('Dorothy Benedict') as a parent.

Purple pigments in the leaf petioles and scapes of hostas can be found in the Japanese species of *H. longipes*, *H. kikutii*, *H. hyopleuca*, and *H. pycnophylla*. Red pigments, especially the ones I have isolated in the leaves of hostas, primarily come from the Korean species *H. yingeri*, *H. tsushimensis*, and *H. clausa* as well as the Japanese species, *H. sieboldii*.

Small and miniature hostas are hybridized generally from *H. venusta*, *H. nakaiana*, *H. longissima*, *H. gracillima* and *H. sieboldii*. While useful in hybridizing, *H. ventricosa* and *H. lancifolia* are traditional landscape plants useful in mass plantings, borders, and ringing trees.

6. Hostas are huge. Giant hostas are spectacular. There is nothing quite like seeing a garden of seven foot wide hostas, taller than your belly button. They are like skyscrapers, amazing structures that we cannot quite fathom how they came to be. We really do not know how, where, or when that tiny seedling that became 'Sum and Substance' first appeared on earth but it exceeded all our expectations. Now it's the bigger the better, and 'Empress Wu' has become the new hosta synonymous with huge. I am impressed every summer by the giants; every garden no matter how small should have a few.

7. Hostas are tiny. Miniature hostas are cute. Some minis are small because they come from small parents but some are small because they do not grow well. I like the vigorous ones even if they have to be divided every once in a while to keep them in their designated space. 'Tears of Joy' is an upright twisted tiny leafed hosta from *H. venusta* parentage. The leaf twisting is caused by some strange mutation that has also reduced the flower petals so that the flowers appear tiny and yellow, with just the pollen on the anthers visible. Hostas of



Hosta 'Leapin' Lizard'

extreme sizes, large or small, are equally amazing.

8. Hostas are low maintenance, carefree plants. True, plant a hosta and walk away from it and it will survive on its own. If you want to maximize your hosta's potential and your enjoyment of their company, then a little fertilizer in the spring, irrigation in dry times, and maybe a little weeding and mulching will make a big difference. Half of the fun of gardening is helping your hostas prosper.

9. Hostas do need to be fertilized. Many hosta gardeners tell me that they never feed their hostas. Maybe they all have deep rich soils but hostas like all plants need specific nutrients in ample supply to make their own food. For hostas, nitrogen and magnesium are the most important for producing large, high quality leaves. Try a foliar feed of liquid fertilizer in the spring a couple of times and see if your hostas don't look happier.

10. Hostas are virtually pest and disease free. Hostas can be, and I do not mean in a virtual internet kind of way. If you are careful how you obtain your new hostas you can probably avoid foliar nematodes and Hosta Virus X, the two pest problems that get all the research money and bad press. That leaves slugs, sticks, and fungus, all temporary flaws on hosta leaves that will not reappear the next spring. I think it is unreasonable to want your hosta leaves to remain unblemished all summer; after all they do live in the real world.

11. Hostas are "deer candy." The number one threat to Hostadom is deer. They have had an enormous effect on the

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Dixie comes to town



May is always our busiest month at Green Hill Farm. Most of our customers want their plants shipped that month, especially if it has been a long cold winter like this one. We also have lots of visitors to the nursery on Fridays and Saturdays in May when the hostas are at their prime. Memorial Day, May 26th this year, brings our annual hosta festival with free hot dogs, drinks and cookies as well as the annual hosta hybridizing tour. Yes, May is a very busy month.

This year it will not just busy but crazy!!! On May 30th and 31st Nancy and I are hosting the Dixie Regional Hosta Society meeting just down US 1 in Wake Forest, NC. On Friday we will have garden tours, including one large personal hosta collection, a trip to the North Carolina Farmers Market to see their amazing produce and plant offerings and then to the world renowned J. C. Raulston Arboretum. Friday night is the annual auction and maybe a surprise speaker.

Saturday, will include more home gardens in the Wake Forest area as well as a trip to Green Hill Farm for lunch. A short lecture on hostas hybridizing will be given at 11:00 AM and plants will be available for sale. After lunch we will return to the air conditioning of the hotel for a lecture by nationally known local garden writer Bobby Ward and then Kim Larsen, hosta collector extraordinaire from St. Paul, MN, will

share her favorite hostas with us. Of course, there will be vendors at the hotel also. It will be two full days of hosta fun.

Want more information about the Dixie Regional Hosta Meeting? E-mail me at HostaBob@gmail.com or Call: 919-309-0649.

Finally, take my advice, never move a nursery. I am sure that you can abandon one and start over fresh with much more ease than to try to disassemble hoop houses and reassemble them. Forty-three miles might as well be four hundred when you have the lousy weather we have had the past three years. Then of course, life gets in the way.

I wish I could report that we were completely settled but maybe in another year, after all we do have a business to keep afloat at the same time. I don't want to give you the wrong idea, we love the new setup; it just still looks new. I will feel better when the grass finally covers all the red clay and the last couple of hoop houses are finished.

So come see the hostas this spring, they are really the stars of the show anyway. We will have conifers and ferns for sale also, just for fun. We may be a little worn out by the end of May, but I'm sure we will all have a great time, just the same.

Be sure to visit our site at ... www.HostaHosta.com

Editorial: Back to the Future

By Bob Solberg

I don't like change. I do not embrace new technology but I live in the future of Hostadom. I guess you might call me old school but I am not, I have a "not so smart phone" now. I am just stubborn, resisting change that I do not create myself.

Green Hill Farm, like so many nurseries began in my backyard. When I finally moved it three whole miles from home after the first 9 years, it was like having a secret hideout. I liked not having interruptions and getting my work done in peace and quiet. For years there was no phone there but eventually the business grew and we needed a phone to conduct business like a real company. I fought the answering machine, and then the fax but eventually they were sitting on my desk in the office and had to be checked every day.

The Internet has been the greatest bane of my existence. Yes, it is a wonderful reference source and the answer to almost all my questions but I hate e-mail! It is more convenient than writing letters but not nearly as efficient as talking on the phone. Plus everyone in the world has access to my e-mail address because we are a business open to all. Now there is Facebook that I try to post on regularly but it too often becomes only rarely. I tried Twitter but only other folks on Twitter who wanted followers, followed me. Let's see, check the answering ma-

chine, check my e-mail, check Facebook, forget Twitter and check a forum or two. Then go to work, ugh. (We have finally silenced the fax machine; it is just for outgoing messages.)

On the marketing side, we used to have a list, now we have five or six and a 12 page newspaper. And then there is the website that I resisted as long as I could. It is another full color catalogue that is constantly changing. We have five times as many advertising opportunities as compared when we just had direct mail, *The Hosta Journal* and the newspaper but they are all more expensive and less effective. All this change has filled my work hours with more computer work and less time in the nursery. I hate it.

In fairness I could write about how e-mail and the Internet has made communicating with our international customers much easier, shipping to them hasn't changed that much, however it is still an adventure every time. I could write about the worldwide exposure we get from our website but would have to mention all the competition also. I could even write that Nancy's cell phone can keep the office open 24/7 where ever we happen to be, but I often wonder if that is a good thing. Life is much more complicated and I am a simple man.

Enough whining. I guess the point I am trying to make is that Hostadom is much more complicated now too. As much as we have all fought it, time has carried us along into the fu-

ture, a little at a time, almost unknowingly. We have all grown up with the times and embraced a time when thousands of hostas are available on-line with just the swipe of a credit card or a PayPal account. Price, in this Walmart economy, has become more important than size or quality. I do not think it is a conscience decision, the world just changed and we went with the flow.

Hostas for sale are now almost all grown in containers, not in rows in the ground, even in huge nurseries. They are grown in containers in lots of gardens, too. The well proven idea that hostas grow best in the earth has come into question. We have learned that the world is a scary place for hostas left on their own in the ground and many good gardeners protect their hosta friends in a pot. Trees are no longer our friends.

To stay ahead, or more likely to keep up, hosta specialists, growers, collectors and society leaders, are running away from our recent hosta past as fast as we can. Stop for a minute and look at Hostadom through the eyes that just discovered this magical utopia. Imagine you have only two hostas, not two cultivars, two hostas that a family member passed on to you. They have grown well for you in your yard and you think you might like to have some like you neighbor's that are not all green. You ask them for a division and they refuse, (some things never change in Hostadom.) Where do you go

to find more? If you answered Amazon.com you might be right, you know they will get free two day delivery.

They may Google hostas and choose one of the advertised sites at the top of the page and find something in their price range, making their selection on the photos alone. They may run down to Lowes and learn that hostas cost \$4.95 for the small pots and \$9.95 for the larger ones and at Walmart they are even less money for full pots of hostas but with much less attractive foliage. They may ask their neighbor where they got their hostas and probably find out that they came from a family member.

They will be overwhelmed with hosta sites that have five hundred or more hostas. They will be amazed when they come to my site and find one hosta could cost \$50. The might stumble across the AHS site but quickly hit the back button, too much, too complicated. They will probably choose the wrong hosta for the place they want to put it, or it will arrive so tiny it won't flourish for several years and they will get discouraged with hostas and plant a Knock Out® rose or two. Then they will study travel brochures.

How do we reach these folks that love and want to grow hostas?

Now suppose you have 25 different hostas this time, gathered from home improvement centers, local nurseries or the Internet. You con-

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Yellow Hostas

I have said many times that as hosta folks we all seem to go through the same series of predictable phases of collecting. Variegated hostas especially those with white or yellow colored leaf centers first attract us. Then we get the inevitable hosta blues that may last for years, filling our gardens with every blue hosta we can find, searching for the bluest of all. Then one spring all that blue looks a little too peaceful and calm and suddenly gold fever strikes. Yellow hostas are all we see. This infection usually lasts only for a year or two at the most.

By now our hosta collector's eye has matured and, believe it or not solid, green hostas become very interesting. Puckers, ruffles, and the subtle shades of green interest us more than riotous color. Then our interest wanders one of many ways. For me, crazy as it sounds, I am not a big fan of variegated hostas. Streaked hostas do not increase my pulse rate. White-centered hostas fill me with dread; I fear for their lives. I like

solid colored hostas best and of them I have a thing for the yellow ones.

It probably began when I started growing hosta seeds.

Grow some seeds of a yellow hosta and you will germinate yellow ones, blue ones, usually, and green ones. What a deal. I started with 'August Moon', still an underused parent, but it was when I began to create my own line of yellow hostas that I really fell in love with them. There is always something special about your own kids.

So here is the somewhat ironic tale of my love for yellow hostas. It started with two really nondescript late flowering hostas. I am crazy busy running a nursery through the month of June but things slow down to near normal in the heat of July. Only then can I turn my full attention to hybridizing hostas so I have always used late flowering hostas as parents primarily. (My 'August Moon' seedlings were produced from a re-blooming plant in the nursery.) So, it was a cross of the fairly newly discovered at the time *H. yingeri* and a yellow form of *H. tsushimensis*, now called 'Ogon Tsushima', that was the starting point for most all of my bright yellow hostas.

That first cross produced two hostas that I named, 'Whiskey Sour', which favored its *H. tsushimensis* parent, with bright yellow spring color and puckers, and 'Sun Catcher' that looked more like *H. yingeri*, with heavier substance and more sun tolerance. While unique, they looked like they could be improved so I crossed them together with their siblings, a F2 cross. They tended to become green in hot weather so I wanted their prodigy to stay yellower longer and they

also had bright red color on about half their petioles. I thought it would be nice to enhance that, too. So I was selecting now for two colors, yellow and red.

The two best seedlings from the F2 cross became 'Strawberry Banana Smoothie', again the most *H. tsushimensis* looking seedling and 'Sun Worshiper', the *H. yingeri* representative. The yellow was much better and the red now extended up the petiole to the base of the leaf blade. I loved the yellow but most visitors only saw red. Always sensitive to my customers' preferences, I realized that this bright red color was something new and should continue to be enhanced if possible.

As luck would have it, I had also been fooling around with some rather ratty looking second generation seedlings from *H. clausa normalis*. I wanted that bright red color on the base of the flower tube to find its way into the flowers of my seedlings.

Why not try to put it on the leaf petioles, too? One yellow seedling had good red petioles but lacked vigor, substance, and wanted to run all over the garden. I decided to cross it with 'Strawberry Banana Smoothie' and its siblings. I had now, more or less unwittingly, crossed three Korean species, combining their genes for producing red in hosta leaves.

Maybe 100 seedlings resulted from four crosses. The crosses with 'Strawberry Banana Smoothie' proved the most interesting and resulted in a great diversity of leaf shapes, from narrow to round. The addition of the *H. clausa normalis* genetic material had not only intensified the red in the petioles and flower scapes but also pushed the red up into the leaf along the midrib. Four hostas from this cross made it into trade, little 'Smiley Face' with its unusual thick, round leaves and pink scape and petioles, 'Lemon Ice', the largest of the four, with bright red emerging buds and bright yellow leaves in spring, 'Peach Salsa', with its light yellow leaves and bright red scapes, and my favorite, 'Mango Salsa', not quite as yellow but with more narrow ruffled leaves with good substance and blood red petioles and scapes full of pretty purple flowers.

From the first cross of this long line of yellow hostas several of the seedlings showed some red color on the tips of leaves, at least for a few weeks in early spring. Some of the seedlings from the other three crosses of the 'Strawberry Banana Smoothie' siblings and the *H. clausa normalis* seedlings produced hostas



Hosta 'Strawberry Banana Smoothie'

with persistent red on the tips of leaves and in the case of 'Beet Salad' a thin red edge on the leaf margin. 'Beet Salad' is green, not yellow but has located red pigment in the vein that surrounds its leaves and has wonderful dark red scapes. It also passes red edges on to its seedlings!

So what started as a plan to create hostas that stayed bright yellow in the shade became the quest for the red leaf hosta. Ironically, it is a green hosta, 'Beet Salad' that seems to have gotten us there, but that is a story for another day. For me, every spring I fall in love with my bright yellow Korean hostas again. It doesn't hurt that they are accessorized in red but unlike many of you, I still see the yellow first, and last.



Hosta 'Lemon Ice' emerging



Hosta 'Smiley Face'



Hosta 'Peach Salsa'



Hosta 'Mango Salsa'

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sider yourself a gardener but still probably have more lawn than mulched beds. You would like to have a few more, different hostas but you have exhausted your local sources. Where do you find more?

What you need is not another trip to Google but a guide to walk with you through all the wonders of Hostadom. You need a hosta buddy. Most of our customers come in pairs, learning as much from each other as they do from me. It is hard to find a hosta buddy on the Internet that can shop with you but internet hosta buddies are real and help promote hostas. Forums, hosta specific or general gardening are a great source of help. We need to cultivate those assets. It is that one more thing we can never get to for people like me, however.

A local hosta club could also be one such guide. I speak at lots of local hosta clubs and try very hard to make my presentation at a level for the least and most experienced folks in the room. My talk on growing hostas is best suited for these occasions which I can adapt to local conditions. But frankly, hosta club members are not at the beginner's level. Most know what tetraploid hostas are or at least that they exist.

In the past, we were all beginners really, even the so called experts. They had just been at it longer. We have now learned so much about all the tricks that hostas can do that, again unknowingly, we have much more hosta knowledge than we realize. There is now a huge gap between hosta club members and hosta gardeners with 25-50 different hostas. For example:

We assume they know all hostas are not the same size.

We assume they know white-centered hostas are hard to grow.

We assume they can recognize deer damage.

We assume they care about HVX.

We assume they know about minis and "mice".

We assume they know what a sport is.

We assume they label their hostas.

We assume they will become hostaholics.

We assume they know what a hosta division is.

We assume they know that hosta liners are not meant to be planted directly in the garden.

We assume they will all someday join us in Hostadom, for the love of hostas.

We assume they will go with the flow like we have. We assume too much. How do we reach these folks that want to know more about hostas?

Say you have a large shade garden with a wide diversity of plant material but lots and lots of hostas. You may even consider yourself a hosta collector. You have mastered finding new and exciting hostas and have come to grips with the amount of money you have begun spending on plants. How do you make the next step and become an active member of Hostadom? Attend a hosta meeting? Maybe the better question is, why would you want to?

What makes the AHS attractive to you? I joined because it was the only real source, in order of importance, of information on where to buy hostas, of color photos of hostas and intelligent articles about hostas. I joined for the plant. I stayed for the preservation of Hostadom, this

great love of hostas and hosta folks. The AHS no longer is the best source on where to buy hostas, Google is, or color photos of hostas, Google is again. Hosta information is everywhere. I just counted, I have 25 hosta books in my bookcase, and I probably am missing a few. Information about hostas is all over the Internet, where everyone appears to be an expert, including me.

We call it the hosta society for a reason. The common love for a plant can foster love for one another. But as humans sometimes people become the reason that we come together, hostas come second or third. We bring in speakers of all kinds to our National Meetings but rarely is one of our hosta superstars the banquet speaker. They seem too much like friends and we would rather hear someone who has a book, a local radio show and is entertaining, nothing too serious. Yes, hostas are the friendship plant but sometimes those friendships get in the way of us promoting the plant. Remember, you have a large shade garden with a wide diversity of plant material but lots and lots of hostas. You have no friends in the room and you are coming to learn about hostas at the highest level. What are you looking for?

It is time to get back to basics. We all started at the bottom and worked our way up in hostas. Now we need to bring others along the same path. Yes, times have changed and just like in business there is a lot more competition but we need to grow up the next generation of hosta experts. So, I am back to talking to local garden clubs for no compensation, just the hostas I can sell. Master Gardener groups and talks to young nursery professionals at trade shows are great opportunities; they all love hostas. Local garden

centers need speakers so that they can survive the home improvement center onslaught. Almost anyone reading this little newspaper can give a short talk about hostas to any of these groups. You are all experts to them.

It is also time to sing the praises of hostas and not fester on all the little problems they may have. (I guess, even the optimist in me does not think deer are a little problem.) The good so outweighs the bad. And please leave society politics behind the curtain. Think of that new hosta want-a-be in the back of the room that has come for high level intellectual hosta discourse and not of the problems of the day. Please keep club business in the board rooms and not have it fill 45 minutes of every local club meeting. It's show time, let's talk hostas.

Finally, here is one last little story that opened my eyes to how far we have come and how far we are now from that gardener with two hostas. Nancy and I were vendors at the Duke Gardens plant sale last April. We had our usual spread of miniature hostas on a table as well as some larger ones on the ground. There were many plant collectors present as well as young couples pushing strollers. We were asked again and again what those little plants on the table were. Some wondered even if they were herbs. I came to understand that even seasoned plant collectors did not know that miniature hostas existed. Fortunately, we had a demonstration dish of three little hostas so they could see how to use them. They proved very popular, once everyone knew what miniatures were and how cute they could be. This year we are going to teach them about mouse madness!

Please be positive, you never know who is watching. Hostas are supposed to be fun.

the Joys of Shade Gardening

Shade gardening, some folks really make it look easy, but it has always been a never ending battle for me. Don't get me wrong, I love my trees and the cool shade they provide for my house and garden. I just hate fighting their ever expanding root systems. Even the "good" trees like oaks and hickories will eventually suck a garden dry in the dog days of summer. I have become resigned to their superiority and just pray that my beeches and oaks will give every new hosta I plant in the garden three years to fulfill its destiny before slowly strangling the life out of it. There you have it, the joys of shade gardening, boy I am glad that's out of the way!

So where am I going with this, this time? I really do love living in the woods, I think it is in my DNA, and I love to surround myself with plants that interest and amaze me. Shade gardening is a very natural thing for me and probably you, too. So, let's put a shade garden together, right here on this piece of paper and in your mind's eye.

Whether we start with an empty woods or just a few trees, any shade garden will be greatly dictated by the existing vegetation. In other words you will have to work around the trees. If you are blessed with many trees, it is best to remove a few, actually a few more than you think you should. Don't worry they will fill in the bright spots overhead faster than you would like. Selecting to remove the trees with the most aggressive root systems seems like a good plan but usually tree position takes precedence. The shade created by these trees should be dappled but consistent. Bright morning light is preferred over strong afternoon sun.

If you have been given a garden with just a few large trees, then island living is in store for your hostas. The roots of large trees are much more aggressive out by the drip line than near the trunk. There is plenty of good living space, probably pretty shady space however, near the trunk of a large tree. You might need to raise the beds there, but be careful not to put too much soil over the roots and never near the

trunk. Given a choice, I would take the forest over a couple of handsome old trees. There is more flexibility there.

Now, let's fill up our wooded space with a shade garden. What comes first is a path. You need a way to walk into the garden and a way to get out. You need a cart path to the compost pile and maybe room to get a truck in to prune those pesky trees after a storm. I like paths that curve and vary in width, creating narrow passages and giving the illusion of greater distance. I like paths that disappear round a corner or are hidden entirely from view when the garden is viewed from below.

I have mossy foot paths; there is no grass in my small garden. Probably six or so species make up my moss lawn and are probably at their best in February, bright green in the dead of winter. Moss must be kept well watered in summer and weeded periodically but when settled in is pretty self-sufficient and in my garden now invasive. Every couple of years now we need to edge the beds and remove the expanding patches of moss that will suffocate small wild flowers and even miniature hostas.

Your paths can be of any material that is functional, prevents erosion, and does not scream for attention. Your eye should be attracted to the wonderful plant material in the beds and not be distracted by a bed of shiny white rocks. Mostly though, your paths should be functional. They should handle a cart where necessary and they should get you quickly from here to there if there is the need. They should most of all provide the path that best shows off the charms of your garden, from the tiny treasures to the unexpected vistas. Most garden paths are one way streets, offering visitors the perfect angle to see your creative design. Walk a garden backwards one time and you will be amazed at the difference.

Once the garden paths have been outlined in your mind, or better yet laid out with garden hoses, now it is time to obstruct them. If a path curves, there should be a rock or a shrub that makes it curve. I like rocks and small stacked fieldstone walls to follow a path's edge, but maybe just on one side. I want it to look natural and see the handiwork of the gardener at the same time. If your garden is more formal then the walls may be of brick or mortared stone. It does not offend me even if the entire garden is walled, (not a bad idea in these times of the great deer invasion), brick walls provide a wonderful vertical space for climbing plants.

Large and small rocks can be used as specimens in the beds, mimicking the shape of large hosta clumps. Instead of a clump of three

hostas, why not try two hostas and a rock. Rocks compete well with tree roots and are drought resistant. Some gardeners think that rocks even trap water beneath themselves for hosta roots to find. Moss now covers most of my rocks which adds the illusion of ancientness to my garden but I think I will have to pull some of it off this spring so I can again see the roughness of the rocks beneath.

Save a few rocks for a water feature or two. Even my small garden has two small plastic ponds with frogs and fish and more birdbaths than I can count. Water reflects the garden and gives it depth. Running water adds a further dimension stimulating equally ear and eye. I like low maintenance frog ponds and the start a jumping frog gives you as you draw near. Koi ponds require better water quality and may become the main attraction for your visitors. They are also usually large enough to allow a window of bright light into the garden as the sun moves across the sky.

Finally, there needs to be places to sit. The cool and calm of a shade garden demands that you linger, breathe deeply, and take it all in from a specially selected spot. I like the old fashion concrete benches. They age well, even supporting a little lime loving moss at their bases. Benches provide a place to rest but are not so comfortable that you are tempted to overstay your welcome. Some garden furniture however is easier to fall into than climb out of and a visitor may be reluctant to make that great a commitment. Comfortable garden chairs are best served with a tall, cool beverage.

Next we need to provide a good home for our plants. It's funny; hostas are good in beds... raised beds, and pots, too. But before we go there, here is a little story from the tropics. I like to say that my father invented what he called the "hill" in Miami. We lived up on the piney ridge on solid coral rock. To plant fruit trees holes were routinely dynamited into the rock and then filled with soil. As my dad became more and more infatuated with collecting palms, generally shallow rooted plants, he



Hosta 'Lime Ripple'

deciphered a new method of planting in raised beds. He brought in dump truck loads of soil from the glades and I enthusiastically hauled it across our acre lot, artistically sculpting it into serpentine beds. On these "hills" we planted our palms that thrived above ground level.

I have used raised beds ever since in my shade gardens in the woods. I try never to cover more than one third of any of my structural trees' root systems with soil but can pile it as high as two feet between tree trunks. My beds have a verticality to them, more like miniature mountain ranges than hills. These beds fill the spaces between my paths and surround my ponds, providing amended soil free of tree roots, if just temporarily, to give my hostas and their companions a good head start in their fight with the tree bullies.

I like to use a loamy soil as a base with some clay and some sand. If you can make

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

BACK TO BASICS: HOSTA FACT SHEET, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

growth of the popularity of hostas in the past decade. Serious hosta growers in areas where deer are too numerous need to get a fence or use repellent regularly to prevent those varmints from turning your beautiful hosta clumps into celery stalks. Hostas are evidently very nutritious to other mammals as well; voles and even the occasional crazed squirrel will eat hostas. Keep up the good fight!

12. Hostas with blue leaves are shade lovers. Since almost all blue hostas can be traced back to *H. sieboldiana*, a hosta that prefers a cooler spot in the garden, blue hostas are very reliable in shade. Some hybrids, like 'Halcyon' can, however, grow well in a good deal of sun but with some leaf damage if temperatures are extremely high.

13. Hostas with yellow leaves are not sun lovers. Yellow hostas, because they have less chlorophyll than green hostas, need more light to produce their food. Thus, it would make sense that they would prosper in more sun. Unfortunately, many gold hostas are children of *H. sieboldiana*, the shade lover, and cannot handle hot sun. Many gold hostas are also from *H. sieboldii* and *H. tsushimensis* and some of these are more sun tolerant especially in the North.

14. Hostas with fragrant flowers demand sun and water. All fragrant-flowered hostas can be traced back to *H. plantaginea* as a parent. *H. plantaginea* grows best in a sunnier location, (but not the full sun of the Walmart parking lot), with lots of water. I grow my fragrant-flowered hostas on a deck that gets mid-day sun in pots sitting in saucers of water.

15. Hostas grow best in rich, well drained, moist soil. Not all of our gardens have "rich, well-drained, evenly moist soil" no matter how much soil amending we do. If not, the solution may be to grow your hostas in pots! In a container, the gardener can control the soil, light, water, and nutrition for its hostas. From Zone 7, maybe Zone 6, south, there is no winter protection needed for potted hostas, just maybe for your expensive ceramic pots.

16. Hostas make great cut flowers. Scapes of hosta flowers are great in flower arrangements. Cut the scape after a couple of flowers have opened, place in water, re-cutting the scape every few days, and the flowers will last for up to two weeks.

Does cutting your hosta scapes induce more hosta leaves? No, the growing point of the shoot that made the leaves is now on the top of the scape making flowers. Allowing seed set however might take some energy from next year's plant so cut the scapes after they begin setting seeds, after several flowers have opened, or when the scapes become unruly, grabbing at garden visitors.

17. Hostas can be propagated by division. We all know that hosta clumps can be divided in half, in quarters, or even down to single divisions using a sharp Ginsu knife. I like to do this in August after the hottest weather has past so that the divisions can regrow new roots before dormancy. Others pre-

fer to divide their hostas in early spring as they emerge but usually only in half or maybe quarters, if it a large clump. The tissue culture process is just dividing hostas in test tubes in the present of growth regulating hormones. In TC, hostas can be divided every 4-6 weeks instead of 2-3 years in the garden. It is because of tissue culture that hostas are so affordable. Think how long it would take you to amass 100 divisions of your favorite hosta seedling by garden divisions. I bet you would have to charge a lot for them.

18. Hosta tetraploids are improved hostas. Hostas that are chemically converted from their normal two sets of chromosomes to double that number (4 sets) have their advantages and disadvantages. Converted tetraploids have shorter scapes, larger flowers, thicker leaves on more compact plants, and maybe richer colors. Unfortunately, they are smaller plants generally, except for white-centered forms, have shorter roots and grow more slowly. There is some good and some not so good. Someday, because of their greater genetic variability tetraploid hybrids may produce great advances in hosta hybridizing but it looks to be a slow process.

19. Hostas grow best north of I-80. I think they do. The combination of cooler summers with lower light intensity, longer days, and a shorter growing season allows hostas to be grown in more sun without heat stress. The more tropical *H. plantaginea* and its children, however, may actually grow better in the South if given ample water and light.

20. Hostas will grow in Florida. Not all hostas need a cold dormancy to flourish. Many hostas will grow well in the panhandle of northern Florida but 'So Sweet' is almost evergreen in Orlando and further south. Hostas can be grown in Los Angeles also, but all do better in pots than in the ground.

21. Hostas grow larger year after year. All hostas have a maximum size based on their genetic composition but hosta clumps do tend to increase in the number of shoots year after year. After, maybe a decade some hostas will only produce shoots from the edge of the crown, leaving a "fairy ring". Some older hosta clumps start to wander around the garden, opening up, looking more like a forest than a tree. I do think there are limits to growth, but they are dependent on changes in the garden environment and the enthusiasm of the gardener.

22. Hostas have interesting names. All horticultural plants have "fancy" names given by their originators. There are over 8000 hostas with names that we have recorded and really many more in hybridizers' gardens across Hostadom. I do not know if any other plant has such interesting and entertaining names, so much so that many hostas are purchased for the name alone. There are song names, food names, names of friends, and somewhat risqué names. Great names make for great hostas. Just look at the "mouse mania" that the name 'Blue Mouse Ears' has generated.

23. Hostas have interesting flowers. Hostas are not grown for their flowers, but some should be. There are of course fragrant flowers that fill our August evenings in the garden with delight. There are a few double flowers, too, more curiosities for me than any-



Hosta 'Sourpuss'

thing else. Now hostas are beginning to have flowers with different colored stripes, dark purple, red, and black. Yellow and blue flowers have been reported too. Soon you may be buying hostas for their unusual flowers as well as the pretty foliage, believe it or not.

24. Hosta hybridizing is fun and easy. It can be, but it can be difficult and frustrating, too. Hosta seeds are easy to germinate and grow into nice little plants. Some hostas set seed easily, but usually the ones you really want to set are obstinate. If you want to give hosta hybridizing a try, cross a blue hosta with a yellow hosta. The result will be green, blue and yellow seedlings. Streaked hostas make good pod parents, yielding variegated prodigy. You can even sow the seeds in the garden in the fall and they will jump out of the ground in the spring. Give it a try, it really is fun.

25. Hostas are red, too. The quest is on for red hostas. We now have hostas with completely red or purple petioles and scapes. There are hostas with purple up the midrib into the middle of the leaf and even a little red on the leaf margin. The ultimate goal is to have hostas with red leaves that stay red. They are coming, I can't wait.

26. Hosta collecting is addicting. If you are reading this little newspaper, then you are either enjoying the hosta high, trying to collect in moderation, or have quit this week for the umpteenth time. Hosta collecting creates a positive feeling in a world of negativity. It is a good thing. Just stay positive and don't spend all the grocery money.

27. Hostas come with friends. Hostas have been correctly called the "Friendship Plant." Some of the best friends that I have found their way to me because of our mutual interest in hostas. Some I have pursued and some have chosen me, but with all, our relationship goes much farther than just the plant. It may be because we met under the therapeutic effect of hostas in a shady garden.

28. Hostas are our friends. I believe there is a spiritual relationship between hostas and humans. We really do love them in some magical way. We share our lives with them, the joys of spring, the stress of summer, the sadness of autumn, and the hope-filled dreams of winter. They are friends that give back

more than they take. They make us feel good about ourselves.

29. Hostas emerge magically in the spring. No one can argue that this is the number one reason we grow hostas. For three or four weeks in the spring, hostas entrance us. We get caught up in the spirit of spring renewal, freshness and purity, resurrection. Hostas more than any plant I know relish in this explosion of rebirth. Picture a seven foot clump of 'Sum and Substance' expanding rapidly enough to make a full clump from bare soil in 2-3 weeks. You can almost watch it grow. And when those huge leaves begin to unfurl, goose bumps will run up and down your spine.

In spring we all do the hosta dance, running to the garden two, three or more times a day, looking for new shoots. We count the eyes and calculate the profit. We help the minis emerge by removing a leaf or that extra mulch we gave them as a blanket for winter. We suffer when a twig pokes a hole in a perfect leaf. We wander out into the garden and are lost for hours, transported to hosta heaven.

Maybe we wish that we could be like hostas and have a fresh start every year. On New Year's Eve we like to think we have that magical power reserved for immortals, but by February we realize that we all carry the past into the future. Then comes March and April and we do the hosta dance and it is another year of hope in the garden. Last summer seems years away. This is why we grow hostas, first to share their joy and their confidence in the future and second to share it with each other.

30. Hostas are supposed to be fun!!! We live in a critical world. We see the glass half empty more than half full. We see the slug holes in our hostas and not the perfect leaves. We abandon old favorites for the newest hosta sport that appears on-line. We are uncomfortable in a world that moves too fast. All time slows down in the shade garden when we look and listen to what the hostas have to say. Life, yes, is filled with disappointments but hope springs eternal. Happiness is really contentment, accepting our circumstances. The hostas know this better than we do as they sit patiently and peacefully in the shade. Hostas are supposed to be fun, hosta folks, too.

THE JOYS OF SHADE GARDENING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

marbles from a handful of your prospective soil it has too much clay, if it falls easily through your fingers it is too sandy. Clay is good because it holds moisture but there must be some sand, larger particles, in between so that the water can percolate deep into the new beds. Choosing the right soil is important and often your choices are limited but check more than one supplier before having 15-20 yards dumped in your driveway.

Almost any organic matter makes a good amendment for the soil for your new beds. Compost, peat moss, pine bark, manure, one or all, are wonderful. Living in the South, I prefer pine bark, since it is slow to break down and usually weed free. I use it as a mulch also, just a thin layer applied every couple of years.

I have also added gravel to beds in the past to discourage voles and aid in drainage with various results. I generally incorporate a little fertilizer, (10-10-10) into a new bed to feed the pine bark I have added and help get things going.

The vision of the garden should now be coming into view. All the above improvements to your woods may be classified by landscape architects as hardscape. It is non-living and to some extent permanent. It is also expensive, large outlays of cash for rocks, walls, path material, benches, and soil. Buying plants, the reason you did all this construction in the first place, will seem like shopping at your favorite discount wholesaler in comparison. Buying plants is the fun part, no work at all and I will not spoil the fun of it for you by telling you which plants to buy. Grow what you like, not what I like, and hopefully more than a few hostas will find

their way into your shade garden.

I do feel obliged to ramble on about plant placement philosophy however. Our native deciduous forests tell us that plants should be layered vertically in a shade garden. From the ground up there are groundcover species, herbaceous plants, shrubs, understory trees, and canopy trees. A good shade garden should have all of these in my opinion. The trick, however, with all these layers of plants is to manage shade in a shade garden. Old forests with a closed canopy do not let enough light fall to the forest floor to allow many herbaceous plants to flourish. They tend to congregate at the forest edges or in areas opened up by a fallen tree. Early spring wild flowers are the exception. They appear and bloom in full sun before the canopy leafs out and are dormant again by summer.

Most of the plants you will want to grow need part sun, at least some strong light for an

hour or more each day. Hostas are no exception, enjoying a healthy dose of morning sun in most climes. To accomplish this I like to have my tree canopy level very high with a few open areas to let in strong sunlight for an hour here and then later, an hour there. I also try to keep my understory tree layer pruned very low, preferably eight feet or less. My shrubs are also miniatures or miniaturized by pruning. This allows light to fall all the way to the ground and to my waiting hostas. The trick is to get lots of indirect light into a shade garden but also some strong direct sunlight for short periods of time.

Finally, I like to fill the five layers of plants in my shade garden with varieties that give the garden seasonal interest. I know of no plant that is at its prime at all times during the year, most are spectacular for a month or two and

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The Local Gossip 2014

By Bob Solberg

'Guacamole' is 20 years old

Believe it or not *Hosta* 'Guacamole' is 20 years old this year. That's right, twenty years has quickly flown by since Green Hill Farm introduced its flagship hosta. In that time 'Guacamole' has been selected AHGA Hosta of the Year in 2002, won a Benedict Garden Performance Award of Merit, and has probably found a place in your garden. I would guess millions have been sold in specialty hosta nurseries, garden centers, and home improvement centers worldwide. For me it is the perfect beginner's hosta, successfully growing no matter where it is planted and how much it is ignored.

If I were to introduce 'Guacamole' today, I would probably patent it but in 1994 patents were more of a negative than a positive for a new hosta. Many nurseries would not buy patented hostas because they could not propagate them. Twenty years later we live in an era of plant patents, trademarks, and branding. Hostas that are not "big market" plants and even some outright losers are now patented to protect marketing rights.

Fortunately, in 1994 nurseries were willing to pay \$10 per plant wholesale for great new plants like 'Patriot' and 'Guacamole'. Some wholesalers bought several hundred plants to sell but also to propagate. Those days are now gone. Hosta specialty nurseries will still pay \$10 or more for a new introduction

that they can then sell right away for two or three times as much but wholesalers now all rely on smaller, less expensive hosta liners or bare root plants from Holland.

For many hosta suppliers, exclusivity is what they are selling. This is why patents, trademarks and marketing programs have become so important. In the battle for market share patents allow you to control the marketing of a hosta for 20 years.

A plant patent is in effect for 20 years only if it is policed and enforced. Licenses are issued for the propagation and sale of patented hostas. Parent holders or the folks that manage them for the owners must find and keep unlicensed nurseries from producing their plants. If they do not then the patent is no longer in force.

A plant patent is tied to a specific hosta cultivar, in my case 'Orange Marmalade'^{PP16,742}. Trademarks on the other hand are tied to a certain name, like SILVER STARTM but not to a specific cultivar. An "improved" form of a trademarked hosta can replace the originally introduced cultivar, although this has not occurred with hostas to my knowledge.

Marketing plans, like PROVEN WINNERS®, a registered trademark, rely on the exclusivity created by plant patents. Growers outside the program cannot produce these plants and nurseries that sell these plants must adhere to the terms of their licensure. This includes the required use of program pots and

labels and maybe limited areas of marketing.

So in short, hostas have become big business in the past 20 years. With the large home improvement centers gaining a larger and larger market share in the retail nursery business, their large suppliers have become more and more competitive as profit margins have dwindled. Product exclusivity has become the reason to choose one supplier over another. A plant patent does not however guarantee a high quality hosta and in the end buyers for the "box" stores must choose plants they think will sell quickly. In the end, a hosta like 'Guacamole' is still in demand in these markets because it is attractive, has a good name, and is easy to produce. No patent necessary.

People frequently ask whether I regret not patenting 'Guacamole.' I still believe that patenting it in 1994 would have restricted its distribution and I was able to maintain exclusivity and those \$10 wholesale prices for 3 full years. More importantly, 'Guacamole' put Green Hill Farm on the world stage as a leading producer of new hostas. Even now when being introduced to someone not familiar with our nursery, I just mention that we introduced 'Guacamole' and it usually gives me some credibility. In 2002 when 'Orange Marmalade'^{PP16,742} was ready to be released, times had changed and I patented it. It too can now be found in the home improvement centers through exclusive marketing. Sometimes, you have to change with the times.

'Curly Fries' named 2016 AHGA Hosta of the Year

Our unusual little, yellow, agave-like hosta, 'Curly Fries', has been selected the American Hosta Growers Association Hosta of the Year for 2016. It was also selected as one of the top 25 hostas on the American Hosta Society 2012 Popularity Poll as well as their 2012 Mini Poll. I had no idea how popular it would be but of course I am thrilled.

Nothing seems to come without a little controversy these days. (Some may suggest that I may have even created this one.) The question has come up, again, "Is 'Curly Fries' really a mini?" I always thought it was a small but through a technicality it is registered as a miniature for leaf show purposes. Size in leaf shows is determined by the area of a typical leaf, length times width. Anything 6 square inches or smaller is a mini.

Very narrow-leafed hostas, like 'Curly Fries' (6" X 1") are considered minis although they are larger plants. I have suggested the idea of having a biological standard to judge size instead. One often used is anything 'Blue



Hosta 'Curly Fries'

'Mouse Ears' size or smaller is a mini. 'Curly Fries' makes a larger clump and thus is a small.

Size aside, the selection of 'Curly Fries' to all the above is very good news for hosta hybridizers. In the past, it is hosta sports that climb the popularity polls and are selected Hosta of the Year. Seedlings do not fare as well. Neither do small plants, or solid colored hostas. 'Curly Fries' is a small, solid yellow seedling with interesting leaves and lots of personality. It should give all of us seed growers hope that that little unique seedling in the seedling tray we like so much, if given a good name, can rise to the heights of hosta popularity. So keep up the good work.

'Sourpuss' goes for \$720 in AHS National Auction

It was an auctioneer's dream. Three groups of bidders, really cartels that had massed their piggy bank savings, were actively engaged. The bidding started to jump \$25 at a time, like ping pong, bouncing back from one bidder to the next. All three bidders hung in there almost until the end when the final bid for a huge division of Dave Chopko's 'Sourpuss' hit \$720. The room erupted with applause and Dave just grinned.

The American Hosta Society National

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Hosta 'Guacamole'

Planting Instructions ...

Hostas perform best when planted with ferns and other perennials in prepared beds. They can also be tucked into the landscape on a hole by hole basis if an area of at least 2-3 feet wide is prepared to a depth of 9-12 inches. When planted in the woods with wildflowers it is important to remove all surface tree roots within 2 feet of each hosta clump.

Bed Preparation: The most important ingredient in successful hosta growing is bed preparation. Good hosta soil should remain moist after a good rain yet drain well. It should have enough organic matter to provide plenty of air spaces for vigorous root growth but be firm enough to discourage voles and other rodents. It should have high fertility and a light covering of mulch to keep the soil cool in summer and retain moisture. Here is how we do it at Green Hill Farm.

First the area to be planted is completely tilled with our old Troy Built tiller to its maximum depth of 8-9 inches. We remove all the surface tree roots that the tiller finds. If the soil is poor and/or hard, we will frequently add 4-5 inches of purchased top-

soil, a good sandy loam, and till it in to the existing soil. Then 3 inches (about 30% of the total bed) of organic matter is spread over the bed and tilled in with some 10-10-10 fertilizer to "feed the bark". We usually use coarse pine bark nuggets in our beds that are locally available in bulk, but well-rotted sawdust, compost or manure will also work well. The coarser the organic material is the larger the air spaces in the soil will be and the longer they will remain in the soil.

The addition of gravel gives the bed mass, moderating soil temperatures as well as making it firmer. Also, it is a vole deterrent. If you can dig in your bed easily with your hands then the voles can too. We no longer spread gravel over the entire bed and till it in to a depth of 4-5 inches, although it has worked well for us in the past. We just add gravel where we plant our hostas and other perennials that voles might eat.

Finally, after a good rain to settle things a little, the bed is ready to plant.

Hole Preparation: Hostas do not grow deep into the soil, usually no deeper than one shovel depth or so. Wide holes are

better than deep holes, since hosta roots usually extend as far or further from the center of the plant as the foliage does. Dig a hole wide enough to accommodate all the roots of the hosta to be planted without cutting or folding them. Make a small mound in the bottom of the hole to rest the crown upon and cover it with about an inch of 3/8 inch gravel, either crushed granite or pea gravel. Take the bare rooted hosta and run its roots down the hill. Cover the roots and crown with another inch or so of gravel, making a hosta and gravel sandwich. Loosely fill the hole with soil that has been amended with some slow release fertilizer or manure (especially if planting in the spring). Do not pack the soil around the plant. Water thoroughly and mulch with a thin layer of pine bark, shredded oak bark or whatever is your local favorite. Remember to keep the mulch off the hosta petioles in order to discourage fungal diseases. Also, deep mulches encourage voles.

When to plant: Hostas can be successfully planted any time that the ground can be worked. The best times to plant hostas are when they are actively making new roots, in the spring after the first flush of leaves has hardened off and in late summer once the hottest weather is past. Here in North Carolina that is usually early May and late August. Most plants that we ship to retail customers are sent during those op-

timum times. Planting at these times allows the plants enough time to establish a good root system before the droughts of summer in the first case and before they go dormant for the winter in the latter.

Containerized hostas can be planted with a minimum of shock throughout the spring, summer and into fall. They should be completely bare rooted before planting and their roots untangled. If your hostas arrive bare root they will probably appreciate being soaked in a bucket of water for several hours to rehydrate them before planting. Pinching a leaf or two will also reduce desiccation shock and usually stimulate another flush of leaves. Hostas usually acclimate completely to their new homes in 1-2 weeks and should be kept moist during that period. A topdressing of fertilizer will also encourage rapid new growth.

Finally, for hostas to achieve their maximum potential, the soil must be able to readily take up the water and nutrients that they need. Good bed preparation in the beginning makes all the difference. This however is not the end of the process. Over time tree roots will invade your beds robbing your hostas of water and heavy rains will compact the soil making it hard for any water to penetrate deep into the bed. Alas, then the beds will need reworking. Remember, a garden is never completed; it is always a work in process.

Hosta 'Brentwood Blues'



Hosta 'Baby Booties'



Hosta 'Tilt-A-Whirl'



Hosta 'Megan's Angel'



Hosta 'Plum Pudding'



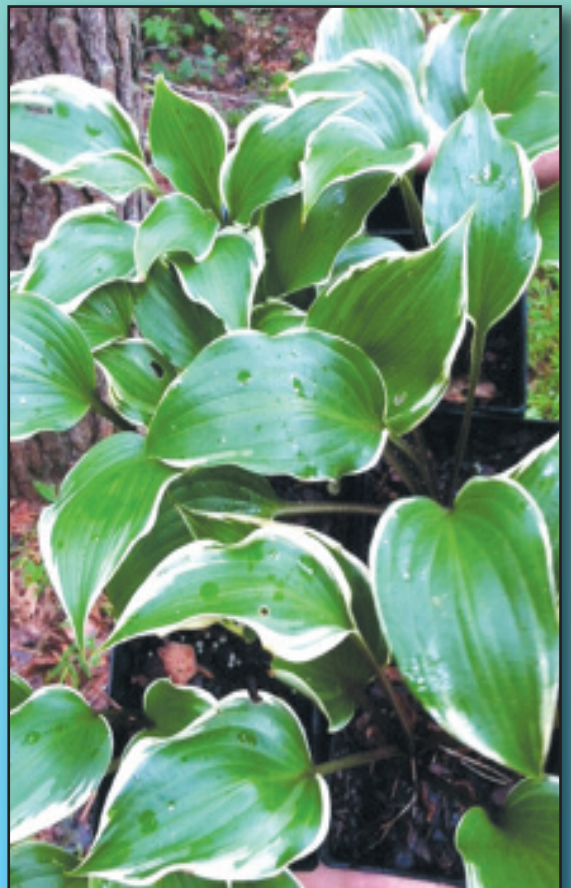
Hosta 'Lightning Flash'



Hosta 'Smash Hit'



Hosta plantaginea 'Poseidon'



Hosta 'Secret Treasure'



Hosta 'Pudding'



Hosta 'Chorus Girl'



Hosta 'Neutrino'

THE LOCAL GOSSIP 2014, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Auction is one of the main fund raisers to fund *The Hosta Journal*. It is held at the National Convention each June. It's about more than just raising money however; it is educational. A little story is attached to each of the hostas up for bid and nuggets of knowledge are gathered by even the most expert of hosta collectors. There are always hostas in the auction that I have never seen before, and some I hope to never see again.

The auction is also very entertaining. The long time auctioneers, Mark Zilis, Tom Michelletti, Don Dean, Mike Shadrack, Kim Larson and I, add humor to the fast paced proceedings that is sometimes aimed at the plants themselves but more frequently at each other. It is quite a show, 3-4 hours of good family entertainment, and it is free and open to the public. Yes, you may overpay for

a hosta or two but it is after all a charity auction; all for a good cause. Catch it when it comes to a city near you, like Cedar Rapids, Iowa this summer.

Green Hill Farm to Host Dixie Regional and AHS National Convention

It all took place very late at night, after a few adult beverages. To quote Jimmy Buffet, "It was too much Tequila, or not quite enough." Nancy and I were sitting with our usual Saturday night Hosta College cronies, several who are on the AHS Board, chatting casually about the difficulty in finding people to host the AHS National Convention. I was listening out of the one ear and discussing something else more interesting, like hostas, at the same time.

As background, putting on the National Convention has become a big job, too much for many local hosta clubs to undertake

alone. As a result the National, the AHS, has offered to do large portions of the work to help out, so much so that in theory two individuals can hold the meeting with AHS help. Such was the case last year in Milwaukee, which by the way was a rousing success.

So there we sit last March, again I repeat very late at night after a few adult beverages, and the topic rolls around as to who will host the 2015 National Convention, just two years away. Normally, three or four years lead time are needed. Oh yes, I chaired the 1991 National Convention and co-chaired with Tony Avent the 2001 meeting with the support of the now defunct Carolina Hosta Society. After the 2001 convention Nancy told me she would divorce me if I ever volunteered to do it again. So, with the club gone and the threat of divorce hanging over my head, I only casually paid any attention to the discussion at the other end of the table.

Suddenly I heard, "We'll do it!" I could-

n't believe my ears. Nancy had signed us up, meaning Nancy and me, to host the 2015 Convention. Fortunately, I never threatened to divorce her. I know now it will come to pass June 18-21, 2015 in Raleigh, NC, and we'll do the best we can and hope to see you all there.

But that is not the end of the story or the full extent of our insanity. As a warm up, a trial run, I thought it might be fun to hosta the Dixie Regional, this year. We could work out the bugs and have a good time too. The Dixie meeting is very flexible and we have done that a couple of times before and it was not too overwhelming. Nancy thought I had lost my mind this time. It will be May 30-31, 2014, closer to home in Wake Forest, NC. We'd love to see you then also.

Finally, a plea for help. If you would like to do a little something to help out please let us know, especially for the National. We promise to make it fun. Thanks.

Spring 2014 Complete Retail Hosta Listing

♥ indicates our introductions

"New and exciting!!!"

New Medium to Huge:

NEW 'Sourpuss' (D. Chopko) - (Sport of 'Lemon Meriangué') - Huge, (30" X 64") This fantastic sport of 'Lemon Meriangué' is the pride and joy of Dave Chopko. It not only makes a huge clump of green foliage bordered in yellow but brought the huge price of \$720 at the AHS Auction last summer. Be sure to give this one half a day of sun, lots of and fertilizer, and then stand back. \$50

♥**NEW 'Tilt-A-Whirl'** (Solberg 2013) - ('Corkscrew' X 'June') - Small, (11" X 18") Sometimes things do work out the way you planned. I wanted to take my hosta 'Corkscrew' and give it blue foliage, so I crossed it with 'June'. This small, upright, highly twisted hosta is the result. Perfect in a pot. \$50 limited

NEW 'Leapin' Lizard' (D. & M. Beilstein 2013) - ('Splashed Leather' X 'Treasure Island') open pollinated) - (Medium, (12" X 30")) This medium-sized hosta has it all. The attractive green leaves are highly ruffled, folded, and heavily puckered. Every leaf is a little different resulting in a wild and crazy hosta. This seedling of Doug Beilstein's is not only a First Look winner but a sure show stopper in the garden. \$45

NEW 'Lightning Flash' (D. & M. Beilstein 2013) - ('Color Fantasy' X 'Alabama Gold') X 'Venetian Blue') - Small, (9" X 16") We are introducing this flashy little hosta just for fun. It is another of Doug Beilstein's seedlings that has very narrow blue leaves with cream streaks. It is vigorous and yes, it does produce streaked seedlings. It will make you smile. \$35

NEW H. plantaginea 'Poseidon' (M. Zilis 2010) - (Sport of *H. plantaginea* 'Athena') - Large, (20" X 45") This hosta is the best variegated sport of *H. plantaginea* in the trade today. It has wide, bright white leaf margins, even white edges on the flower bracts as well as the 30+ petaled flowers of 'Venus'. It is much more vigorous for me than other variegated forms and likes several hours of bright light and lots of water. I think this is a great hosta. \$35

NEW 'Chorus Girl' (D. & M. Beilstein 2013) - ('Goddess of Athena' X 'Blue Veil') X ('Neat Splash' X 'Gosan Sunproof') X 'Golden Friendship') - Small, (11" X 21") I am always attracted to cupped and puckered hostas and I especially like little ones. This little beauty makes a tight clump of bright gold leaves that are held upward toward the sun. A seedling of Doug Beilstein, it is a great plant for hybridizing. \$30

NEW 'Lakeside Paisley Print' (M. Chastain 2006) - (Seedling) - Small to Medium, (12" X 30") This may be Mary's most interesting variegated seedling of all. The highly ruffled, cupped blue-green leaves have yellow variegation in the leaf center that explode like fireworks from the petiole. The result is a leaf with a dark broad margin with feathers of yellow shooting up and out. Purple flowers appear in June. I finally broke down and had to have this beauty. \$30

NEW 'Megan's Angel' (D. & M. Beilstein 2009) - (Sport of streaked 'Blue Angel') - Huge, (22" X 54" or larger) This one of Doug Beilstein's is a sport of the classic 'Blue Angel', named for his daughter. The huge blue leaves emerge with this wide, soft yellow border that will become white by late summer. It grows well and has the same wonderful near white flower display as its parent. It will grow large enough to fill a whiskey barrel. \$30

♥**NEW 'Plum Pudding'** (Solberg 2011) - ('One Man's Treasure' X seedling) - Medium, (16" X 24") A seedling from our purple hybridizing line, this medium-sized hosta has unusually dark green rounded leaves with very good substance. Rich purple

scapes and flowers appear in September. Seed is very easy to set. It is a customer favorite and great for hybridizing or displaying in a container. \$30

NEW 'Bridal Falls' PPAF (J. van den Top, Walters Gardens) - (Sport of 'Niagara Falls') - Large, (24" X 40") This tall beautifully arching hosta is the white-margined sport of the classic 'Niagara Falls'. It has the ruffled piecrust edge of its parent and grows quickly into a magnificent clump. The flower scapes appear first as rising stars with whitish bracts before revealing their lavender flowers in June. This one is destined for greatness. \$25

NEW 'Potomac Glory' (R. Whitmore 2002) - (Sport of 'Potomac Pride') - Large, (20" X 40") This yellow-centered form of the classic 'Potomac Pride' make a large, sturdy, spreading clump. The leaves have a metallic glint to them when grown in morning sun that demands attention. It has large lavender "spider" shaped flowers in June. It is a very distinctive and attractive addition to the hosta bed. \$25

♥**NEW 'Secret Treasure'** PPAF (J. van den Top) - (Sport of 'One Man's Treasure') Medium, (16" X 28") This is a special hosta from Jan van den Top in Holland. Nancy fell in love with it when we visited Jan two summers ago. It is a beautiful white margined sport of 'One Man's Treasure', a great blend of rich purple petioles and scapes, dark green leaves and bright white margins. Makes a great pot plant!!! \$25

NEW 'Smash Hit' (Zilis) - (Sport of 'Orange Marmalade' PP#16742) - Medium, (14" X 30") This sport of 'Orange Marmalade' PP#16742 has a much wider blue-green margin than its parent indicating that it is probably tetraploid and will grow a little better. The leaf center is still bright yellow in the spring, turning orange, and then near white. It has lavender flowers in July. It is distinctively different. \$25

♥**NEW 'Cherry Flip'** (Solberg, Zilis) - (Seeding 48/49 X 'One Man's Treasure') - Medium, (16" X 30") This upright hosta from our purple petiole hybridizing program has nicely rippled green leaves. The petioles are maroon on both sides on this seedling. Very fertile purple flowers appear late in summer and may extend into fall. Perfect in a pot. \$20

NEW 'Fragrant Queen' PP#19508 (J. van den Top, D. Eechnaute 2008) - (Sport of 'Fragrant King') - Medium, (16" X 25" or larger) I love all fragrant flowered hostas but this tetraploid one has it all, a very wide white margin, great substance, and large highly scented flowers in July and August. It also grows well. It is one of the showiest hostas on the market. \$20

NEW 'Lakeside Dragonfly' (M. Chastain 1997) - (Seedling of unknown parentage) - Small to Medium, (12" X 30") A classic hosta from Mary Chastain, its wide white margins demand attention. It forms a fast growing, flat mound of highly colored foliage that is happy growing in the mini bed or in the front of the hosta border. Lavender flowers appear in late July. This one will give you instant color. \$20

♥**NEW 'Pea Pod'** (Solberg 2013) - (Sport of 'Sugar Snap') - Large, (22" X 40") This all green form from the 'Sweet Sunshine' line has dark green leaves that are cupped and puckered and surprise, surprise, near white fragrant flowers in July. It is sun tolerant and is the perfect replacement for a 'Tokudama' in southern gardens. \$20 or "Two for \$30"

NEW 'Rocket's Red Glare' (B. Stegman) - Medium, (12" X 30") This hosta is an excellent seedling from 'One Man's Treasure', I believe, with very shiny, bright green leaves and red petioles. There is a slight ruffle to the leaves. A fertile parent it blooms in late August. This one has great color. \$20

NEW 'Tropical Dancer' PP#21209 (J. van den Top, D. Eechnaute 2008) - (Sport of 'Spring Fling') - Medium, (14" X 26") This tetraploid sport of 'Spring Fling' has the same wonderful ruffling as its parent but has a much wider white margin so it stands out in the nursery or garden. It is sure to brighten up any dark corner of the garden. \$20

New Miniature and Small Hostas:

NEW 'Baby Booties' I have been very impressed with this great, true miniature hosta. Its leaves have a very showy white margin and a cute rounded shape. It is a seedling of Doug Beilstein's, a F2 cross of 'Swoosh' and *H. capitata*. It also grows very well in the nursery. \$20

NEW 'Brentwood Blues' This little hosta is a wonderful sport of 'Rhythm and Blues' from Steve Watson of Brentwood, Tennessee. It has bright white margins on blue-green leaves with well-proportioned flowers. It has a great combination of colors. \$25

NEW 'Cat and Mouse' PP#20862 (H. Hansen, Shady Oaks 2007) - (Sport of 'Blue Mouse Ears') - Mini, (3" X 6") This much sought after sport of 'Blue Mouse Ears' has a lighter, hazy yellow leaf center. It remains smaller than its parent making it just that much cuter. Lavender flowers appear in June and July. No "mouse" collection is complete without this little guy. \$25

NEW 'Church Mouse' (Walters Gardens) - (Sport of 'Blue Mouse Ears') - Mini, (8" X 14") This new sport of 'Blue Mouse Ears' has a narrow, light green margin that gives the plant a coarsely ruffled edge sort of like 'Embroidery'. It has typical lavender flowers in June on one foot scapes. This mouse is a little different. \$20

NEW 'Firefly' (D. & J. Ward 1996) - ('Pin Stripe' seedling) - Small, (7" X 16") This very bright narrow-leaved creamy white-margined little hosta has lots of personality. It is small enough for a container but also large enough for the garden. It blooms in July. Its shiny leaves flash in the evening. \$20

NEW 'Neutrino' (Japan, M. Zilis 2011) - (*H. venusta* seedling) - Mini, (5" X 16") This cute little hosta has heart-shaped leaves bordered in creamy white. A little slow to grow, it is perfect in a bowl or through. It flowers in late June or July. It is a tiny treasure. \$20

NEW 'Ruffled Mouse Ears' (M. Zilis 2011) - (Sport of 'Blue Mouse Ears') - Mini, (6" X 14") This sport of 'Blue Mouse Ears' has nice undulating blue-green leaves especially attractive as they emerge. Since we have had this "mouse" at the nursery, it has proven to be a faster grower than most. Here is one more for the "mouse house." \$15

NEW 'Surfer Girl' (C. Wasitis, Bridgewood Gardens 2000) - (Seedling of unknown parentage) - Mini, (4" X 12") This cute little green hosta has very wavy, surf-board shaped leaves. It makes a tight clump, and is easy to grow in a container. It has purple flowers in July. Give it a try. \$15

Medium to Large Hostas:

'Almost Heaven' (D. & M. Beilstein 2012) - (Seedling of MCBS #2 Red Seedling [Mary Chastain seedling] X OP) - Small to Medium, (14" X 30") This is a cool hosta from Doug Beilstein! It has three distinct colors in the leaf, a white center and a wide bi-color border of dark green and chartreuse that produces plenty of energy so that this small hosta grows very well. It really needs a special place of its own where garden visitors can pause and enjoy its beauty. \$25

'Bailey's Cream' (Beilstein 2009) - ('Sea Prize' X 'Blue Angel') - Medium, (20" X 36") I like different hostas, especially different colors on new leaf shapes. This hosta has both, from its clean pure white margins and Irish green centers to its not quite round, shiny leaves. It looks a little "unhosta", maybe more tropical, and I like that. Nice lavender flowers in mid-summer. \$20

♥**'Barbara May'** (Solberg 2004) - [*H. pycnophylla* X 'Harvest Dandy') X ('Blue Arrow' X 'Sea Fire')] - Medium, (14" X 30") This beautiful blue hosta has everything you want, great bright blue color with abundant white wax on the top and bottom of the leaves, interesting, almost triangular leaves with delicately ruffled margins, strong veins and good substance. A "long season" hosta that holds that blue color well, producing light lavender flowers in July and August. \$12

Our New Hostas for 2014



'Sourpuss'
'Tilt-A-Whirl'
'Leapin' Lizard'
'Lightning Flash'
H. plantaginea 'Poseidon'
'Chorus Girl'
'Lakeside Paisley Print'
'Megan's Angel'
'Plum Pudding'
'Bridal Falls' PPAF
'Potomac Glory'
'Secret Treasure' PPAF
'Smash Hit'
'Cherry Flip'
'Fragrant Queen' PP#19508
'Lakeside Dragonfly'
'Pea Pod'
'Rocket's Red Glare'
'Tropical Dancer' PP#21209
'Baby Booties'
'Brentwood Blues'
'Cat and Mouse'
'Church Mouse'
'Firefly'
'Neutrino'
'Ruffled Mouse Ears'
'Surfer Girl'

'Blue Legend' (K. Anderson) - Large, (28" X 60" or larger) Most very large blue hostas are well, not very blue. 'Blue Legend' is an exception. It is a very large hosta with very waxy blue leaves that resemble *H. montana* and its strong venation. It has many light lavender flowers in June. See how big you can grow this one from Minnesota. \$20

♥**'Blue Ridge'** (Solberg 2009) - (Sport of 'Frost Giant') - Large, (28" X 66") This large sturdy, blue-green hosta quickly makes a stately upright clump in the garden. It also grows well in Southern gardens, holding up well into late summer. Its straight scapes produce near white flowers in June. Large plants!!! Limited. \$20

'Blue Tooth' (D. & M. Beilstein 2011) - ('June' X 'Azure Snow') - Large, (18" X 36") I love hostas that have long, narrow leaves with lots of veins. This powder blue hosta has both, leaves 11.5" X 4.5" and 12 pairs of veins! It also has light lavender Bird of Paradise-like flowers in August. It makes a large symmetric mound. \$20

'Blueberry Waffles' (Sandy Brown 2008) - ('Spilt Milk' X 'Abiqua Drinking Gourd') - Very Large, (30" X 68") This is the one you have all been waiting for!!! Maybe it is the huge almost perfectly round leaves, or their deep blue color, the color of blueberries, with all the perfect puckering, or maybe just the impressive mound of foliage that makes it the perfect specimen, (probably all three), but this is a spectacular hosta that you can't get out of your mind. It flowers with its *H. sieboldiana* kin in June. It's destined to be one of the hottest hostas of the year. **Special \$25**

'Brutus' (D. Beilstein 2007) - ('Sea Drift' X *H. venusta*) - Very Large, (36" X 65") 'Brutus' is a huge-leaved, dark green monster that is a little unruly. At maturity, every leaf has an intricate pattern of ridges

THE JOYS OF SHADE GARDENING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

then give way to another that will surprise and charm the eye. Any plant that is grown for its flowers has a peak time of bloom.

Hostas are not immune from this either although we would like to think so. There are spring hostas and there are summer hostas, maybe a fall hosta or two also. Very few hostas look great all season. So I want a variety of plants in my shade garden that will together give me a reason to go and sit on my concrete bench any day of the year.

Again I will not tell you what plants to grow but here are some examples of what I like just to flesh out the concept. My hellebores are

spectacular from January to March depending on the weather. They tend to like to be dry in the summer so we have banished them from the heavily watered hosta beds and now they flourish across the driveway at the edge of the woods. I also love my little bulbs that bloom before any hostas dare to show their eyes. Crocuses are great because they are all gone before the hostas emerge as are my miniature daffodils. 'Jet Fire' and 'Tete-a-Tete' are reliable bloomers for me in the shade and I can cut their messy foliage when the hostas begin to leaf out.

I think every shade garden needs some native wildflowers to usher in spring. They too are usually up and gone before the hostas or at least do not seem to mind sharing their space with them. April is filled with the excitement of

watching, hour by hour, my hostas jumping out of the ground. By May they have filed their allotted places and bring a wave of color over the garden floor. The hydrangeas are the next group of showoffs. They vary year to year but provide a large leafed back drop that stops the eye as it glides over the sea of hostas.

We have lots of ferns as groundcover and specimens. A few drastically pruned Japanese maples provide clouds of red and yellow foliage anchoring the beds. Miniature mountain laurels with their rich green color and seemingly hand painted flowers demand close up inspection. Fall brings reblooming azaleas, sasanqua camellias in full bloom, and maybe a few crocus flowers. By then the hostas are shot and there comes a time when I wish the frost would just hurry along and take them. The

conifers then begin to take on their winter colors and start to stand out. Finally, in winter, the moss is at its peak and the garden is still very green and inviting.

I will add only one more suggestion to this discussion; take it easy. A small garden well-tended is more rewarding than a large garden that becomes a maintenance headache. Making new beds and filling them with special plants is fun but weeding and watering them can almost become a full time job. A shade garden is supposed to be relaxing, not work. Start slow and remember eventually those nasty tree roots will invade your new beds, they will steal the water and fertilizer meant for others and the beds will need to be reworked. But now, just sit back and enjoy the shade, and take another sip of that tall, cool drink for me.

SPRING 2014 COMPLETE RETAIL HOSTA LISTINGS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

and valleys that draw closer inspection. It is topped by pretty purple flowers in early summer on tall scapes. It makes an impressive specimen if raised above ground level. 'Brutus' is a beast! **\$20**

'Bumblebee' (D. Savory 2000) - ('Honey' seedling) - Large, (19" X 52") This golden yellow hosta of *H. montana* heritage, has large heavily corrugated gold leaves. It has grown well for us here and shone brightly in the hoop houses. It has near white flowers in early summer on 30 inch scapes. It is a nice, large gold to try. **\$20**

'Catch of the Day' (Solberg 2013) - (Sport of 'Hoosier Harmony') - Large, (20" X 36") I guess we all like to go sport fishing; I do it occasionally with mixed results. Sometimes if you produce thousands of hostas in tissue culture you begin to create a better plant, one that grows better. This wide green-margined, bright yellow centered sport of 'Hoosier Harmony' grows well for me. I like to grow this one in a container on the deck so that it gets a little more sun and we can enjoy the fragrant flowers in August. **\$20**

'Cup of Grace' (Beilstein 2009) - ('Halcyon' X 'Breeder's Choice' op. seedling) Medium, (21" X 36") What do hosta folks want in a "dream hosta"? Frequently, they want it to be very dark green with white flowers. Add a very upright habit and highly cupped leaves and you have 'Cup of Grace'. This hosta is very well proportioned and exhibits classic grace. It is striking as the focal point of a mixed container. **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

'Dandy Lion' (D. & M. Beilstein 2011) - ('Green Piecrust' X 'Just So') - Large, (20" X 40") Everyone loves a hosta with large rounded yellow leaves. This hosta makes a compact mound and is ideal for cool Northern gardens. It has light lavender flowers in June and keeps its golden yellow color well. **\$20**

'Dragon's Eye' (W. Lefever, Solberg 2008) - ('Rip-tide' seedling) - Large, (22" X 36" or more) This large hosta has frosty, undulating gray-green leaves with tall purple petioles, very waxy white leaf backs. Lavender flowers appear on waxy purple scapes in August. Good in the garden or as part of your breeding program, (sets seed). **\$15 or "Two for \$20"**

'Dream Boat' (D. & M. Beilstein 2009) - (*H. nigrescens* op) - Medium to Large, (22" X 40") From the first time I saw it, the unusual cupping and color of this hosta, made it a favorite of mine. It's truly unique foot-long artichoke colored, upright leaves are boat-shaped, a small flotilla sailing in the wind. It flowers in July and August, is fertile and would make a great breeding plant. It is worth a look for sure. **\$20**

'Final Summation' (Solberg 2008) - (Sport of 'Sum and Substance') - Large, (20" X 60" or more) This is the dark green-edged sport of 'Sum and Substance' that for many years I have searched for all over the hosta world. It was selected for its wide green margins, superior rich colors and slightly cupped, very round, giant leaves. It has typical lavender flowers in July. **\$25**

'First Frost' (Scolnik, Solberg 2002) - (Sport of 'Halcyon') - Medium, (16" X 34") "Great hosta sports start with great hosta parents." 'First Frost' is a frosty white edged sport of 'Halcyon'. Blue leaves emerge with a sharp margin in the wonderful color of the center of 'June' and then turn pure white. Lavender flowers in July. It also holds up well in the garden until the "first frost". AHGA Hosta of the Year for 2010! **\$15**

'Frost Giant' (W. Lefever, Solberg 2008) - ('Galaxy' seedling) - Large, (28" X 66" or more) Big blue-green, sturdy, leaves that have a bright yellow margin that becomes cream in late summer make this a very stately hosta. Straight scapes produce near white flowers in June. It is a nice addition for that big hole in the back of the bed. **Large Plants \$25**

'Frozen Margarita' (Solberg 2003) - ('Fried Bananas' sport) - Large, (22" X 42") This hosta has very shiny, plantain-yellow leaves with a clean, variable white margin. It is a rapid grower that appreciates morning sun in the garden. Its light lavender flowers are very fragrant flowers in August. Cool and refreshing, served only without salt. **\$15**

'Ginsu Knife' (Solberg 2002) - ('Irongate Supreme' X 'Green Fountain') -Medium, (14" X 28") Imagine

a hosta with arching leaves with wide, irregularly cream-colored serrate margins that have large undulations and some twisting. It has white fragrant flowers in late July. A unique hosta that looks as good fountaining over a pond in the garden as it does at the head table of the Hosta Show. **\$25**

'Grape Fizz' (Solberg 2011) - ('Rhapsody in Blue' X *H. plantaginea*) - Large, (16" X 36") Here is a hosta with heavily substantiated green leaves that might look a little wild and crazy if grown in some sun but has the most wonderful large purple striped, gently fragrant flowers. It flowers late, in August, but is well worth the wait. I grow mine in a container on the deck. **\$15 or "Two for \$20"**

'Guacamole' (Solberg 1994) - (Sport of 'Fragrant Bouquet') - Large, (24" X 48") This large open mound of rounded gold leaves with a dark green margin is the perfect beginner's hosta. It is a fast grower if given some direct sun and one of the last to go dormant. Large lavender fragrant flowers in August, too. AHGA Hosta of the Year for 2002! **\$15**

'Honey Pie' (Solberg 2012) - ('September Sun' X *H. plantaginea*) - Large, (18" X 40") This may have been my favorite hosta this summer. Despite all the heat, boy did it grow. The honey colored leaves pucker with age and fragrant flowers follow in late summer. It is a large hosta, a cross of 'September Sun' and *H. plantaginea*, having the best characteristics of both parents. Give this one a little extra sun also. **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

'Jetstream' (D. & M. Beilstein 2013) - (Seedling of *H. yingeri* OP seedling) - Medium to Large, (26" X 40") I am a sucker for a waxy blue hosta. I also like hostas that make perfect clumps, with all their leaves neatly arranged in just the right place. This medium-sized hosta, with the help of a little morning sun, is the perfect combination of both. A seedling of Doug Beilstein, plant this one next to 'June.' **\$20**

'King of Spades' (Beilstein 2007) - ('Neat Splash' X 'Blue Moon') - Medium, (16" X 30") This unusual, medium blue-green hosta has extremely heavy puckering throughout its spade-shaped leaves. This eye-catcher forms a very tight clump in the garden and is a very tough, dog-proof plant. Lavender flowers in July. **\$15 or "Two for \$20"**

'Lemon Ice' (Solberg 2011) - (*H. clausa normalis* F2 seedling) X 'Strawberry Banana Smoothie') - Medium, (12" X 26") This is the beginning of the next generation of red and yellow hostas. It is the largest of this very excellent and varied group of seedlings and has bright yellow leaves with bright red petioles and scapes. It keeps its yellow color very well and will be better in the shade garden as too much light will bleach it white. It is the one that Mark Zilis selected to produce for his nursery. Nice purple flowers on red scapes in July. **\$15**

'Machete' (Solberg 2004) - (Sport of 'Ginsu Knife') -Medium, (16" X 28") This one is a very vigorous upright, fountaining green hosta that accentuates all the great features of its parent except the variegation. The leaves and petioles are large, highly ruffled with serrate margins that combine well with large, white fragrant flowers on very sturdy scapes in July and August. Limited. **\$20**

'Mango Salsa' (Solberg 2011) - (*H. clausa normalis* F2 seedling X 'Strawberry Banana Smoothie') - Medium, (12" X 20") Maybe the best of this red seedling cross, this hosta is sun tolerant, has unusual wavy yellow leaves and red on both sides of the petiole into the leaf and red scapes. It has lavender flowers, maybe with a little red, and is a great breeding plant, fertile both ways. Light years away from its sibling 'Smiley Face', an equally stellar hosta. **\$25**

'Millennium' (Wilkins 1995) - ('Herb Benedict' X 'Sage') - Huge (36" X 80") One of the best extremely large blue hostas because of its huge heavily substantiated, rounded, dark blue leaves, good growth rate and heat tolerance. Near white flowers open on tall scapes in late June. It is impressive in the garden or a large container. **\$20**

'Mojito' (M. B. Vanous, Q & Z Nursery 2008) - ('Avocado' sport) Medium-large, (16" x 36") This tetraploid sport from the 'Guacamole' family has rounded dark green, very heavily substantiated leaves

that are frosted with white wax in spring and shiny in summer. The very thick scapes have very large (larger than 'Guacamole') light lavender flowers that are very fragrant. Grows a little slower than 'Fried Green tomatoes' but still very vigorous. Large plants. **\$25**

'Mystic Star' (G. Johnson 2004) - (*H. yingeri* X 'Dorset Blue') - Medium, (10" X 32") This hosta caught my eye everywhere I saw it at the AHS Convention in New England. It wonderfully combines the substance and shine of *H. yingeri* with the rich dark blue color of the "Tardianas". It is a good-sized hosta but short enough to site near the front of the hosta bed. It is late flowering and I think very distinct. **\$15**

'Nate the Great' (Solberg 2003) - (*H. nigrescens* X 'Tokudama Aureonebulosa') - Large, (22" X 40") Tall and proud with large round blue-green leaves that are deeply cupped and puckered, this large upright hosta is worthy of the front of the bed. Lavender flowers on tall straight scapes top this one off in July. It is named for my son Nathan. **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

'Night Shift' (D. Savory 1991) - (Sport of *H. 'Daybreak'*) - Large, (22" X 50" or more) This large-leafed sport of 'Daybreak' has a dark green margin and great yellow color in the leaf center that lasts well throughout the summer. It makes a spectacular specimen clump as it spreads to fill a wide space in the garden. It blooms in July and August with nice lavender flowers. Great when placed near a walk. **\$20**

'Ocean Isle' (Chopko 2006) - (Sport of 'El Dorado') - Large, (22" X 48") This impressive hosta has long, thin pointed, wavy blue-green leaves with a wide, bright gold margin. The leaf center becomes a shiny, rich green color by mid-summer. It has very good substance, a high vein count, and light lavender flowers in June and July. Winner of Best Sport at 2004 First Look. It becomes better with age. (Named for our favorite North Carolina beach.) **\$20**

'Orange Marmalade' ^{PP16,742} (Solberg 2002) - (Sport of 'Paul's Glory') - Large, (18" X 42") Breathtaking mound of heart-shaped blue leaves with a center that emerges bright yellow, then turns an orangish gold before becoming pale yellow or white depending on the amount of sun. Lavender flowers in July. Beautifully variegated all summer! Yes, it really looks orange-yellow or yellow-orange, like the Crayola crayons. **\$20**

'Pacific Sunset' (R. Goodwin 2003) - (Sport of seedling) - Small-medium, (10" X 30") White-margined hostas are common but blue hostas with creamy white edges are much rarer. This medium-sized seedling of Randy Goodwin has a coolness to its appearance, a slight waviness and nice flowers in summer. It is a front of the bed hosta that should be admired at close range. **\$15**

'Peach Salsa' (Solberg 2013) - (*H. clausa normalis* F2 seedling X 'Strawberry Banana Smoothie') - Medium, (12" X 20") This bright yellow hosta has puckered leaves that are almost translucent, it glows! It is also a showoff with its bright red, not purple, petioles and scapes. Don't cut the flowers off this one. A sibling of my 'Smiley Face' and 'Mango Salsa', this one is a dappled shade plant that will brighten up any garden path. **\$20**

'Pearly Gates' (D. & M. Beilstein 2012) - (Seedling of Sea Prize X OP) - Medium to Large, (17" X 38") This one of Doug Beilstein's has wide pearly white margins that streak through the blue-green center of its leaves. There is a softness to these sturdy leaves that brightens and calms the garden simultaneously. It's very showy, and also grows very well. **\$20**

'H. plantaginea 'Doubled Up' (Solberg 2011) - (Tetraploid sport of *H. plantaginea*) - Medium to Large, (20" X 30") smaller and more compact than the species. Found in tissue culture stock at Green Hill Farm and tested for ploidy in Holland by Ben Zonn-eveld, this fully tetraploid form of the species has very glossy and rubbery leaves, makes a more compact clump, and has larger flowers and a unique fragrance. It makes a great pot plant for the deck or patio. **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

'Plum Nutty' (Solberg 2011) - ('Candy Dish' X [*H. pycnophylla* X 'Harvest Dandy'] X 'Raspberry Sorbet']) - Medium, (16" X 30") I may be crazy for introducing this hosta with its shiny, (no wax), long-

pointed leaves that are highly rippled but I really like it. It does have some purple on the petioles but is reluctant to set seed, (but does), for me since it flowers on nicely arching scapes in July here. You may have better luck. **\$20**

'Prairie Sunset' (M. Zilis 2009) - (Sport of 'Prairie Fire') - Medium, (19" X 48") This is a hosta that I have wanted to have for over ten years since I first saw it at Q & Z Nursery. The yellow color is warm and glowing and the contrast of the bright green margin defines the undulating leaf perfectly. The prominent veins give it strength and structure. It is a large, medium hosta. **\$20**

'Sharp Dressed Man' (Solberg 2005) - ('Francee' seedling) - Medium, (15" X 36") This one was a surprise, unique in both its leaf shape and coloration. The leaves are very thick with wide green margins and pure white centers with a wonderful streaking of a third lighter green color in between. It grows very well, never melting out or burning. Lavender flowers in July. It is both handsome and elegant, named for my son Michael. **\$25**

'Hosta rectifolia SILVER STAR™' (K. Muroya) - (Collected in Japan) - Medium, (18" X 24") Imagine finding this hosta in the wild!!! It is the best form of *H. rectifolia* to date and is brightly variegated, too. Its white-margined leaves and very upright habit make it the perfect hosta for the centerpiece in a mixed container of perennials, annuals or mini hostas. It has tall, straight scapes with purple flowers in late July. **\$20**

'Spring Shower' (Solberg 2007) - (*H. sieboldiana* X 'One Man's Treasure' F2 seedling) - Medium, (14" X 30" or larger) A welcoming sight in a special place in the garden, this light blue "Longiana" has classic heart-shaped leaves with strong venation and most resembles a "Tardiana". It has light lavender flowers in July. Try it next to 'Camelot.' **\$15 or "Two for \$20"**

'Stained Glass' (Hansen, Shady Oaks 1999) - (Sport of 'Guacamole') - Large, (15" X 32") A large, bright yellow-centered, dark green-edged sport of 'Guacamole' that comes out of the ground glowing. Certainly a classic hosta for the morning sun garden, it has large, fragrant lavender flowers in August. **\$15**

'Star Power' (D. & M. Beilstein 2009) - ('Komodo Dragon' x 'Super Bowl') - Medium to large, (20" X 48") Looking for an impressive upright yellow hosta with large heart-shaped leaves that are ruffled and somewhat puckered? This one from great parentage has good color and a sturdy stance that will brighten up any shady corner. It has lavender flowers in June and is fertile. **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

'Sugar Plum' (Solberg 2011) - (Seedling X 'One Man's Treasure') - Medium, (20" X 28") This is the one!!! The ultimate goal of breeding purple-petioled hostas is to produce an upright plant with rich regal purple color that runs up into the veins at the base of the leaf. Add a bright white back to the leaf and you have the perfection of the purple running all the way into the white. This is that dream plant. It has purple scapes as well and blooms in late August and September. It is a prolific seed producer. **\$30**

'Sugar Snap' (Solberg 2011) - (Sport of 'Sweet Sunshine') - Large, (22" X 48") This dark green centered sport of the yellow gold 'Sweet Sunshine' makes a great fragrant-flowered hosta even better. It is very vigorous of course, but also maintains the cupping and puckering in the now variegated leaves. It has the look of a 'Tokudama' with the bonus of near white fragrant flowers in June and July. **\$20**

'Summer Squall' (Solberg 2007) - (*H. sieboldiana* X 'One Man's Treasure' F2 seedling) - Medium, (14" X 32" or larger) Selected for its rich blue color and nicely folded leaves, this "Longiana" may be the best and bluest of the lot. It makes a strong statement in the garden, good substance and sturdy leaves and is a great breeder. It has 3 foot scapes of light lavender flowers in mid-summer. A great hosta! **\$20**

'Sun Shower' (Solberg 2007) - (*H. sieboldiana* X 'One Man's Treasure' F2 seedling) - Medium, (14" X 30" or larger) 'Sun Shower' was a surprise. A "Lon-

SPRING 2014 COMPLETE RETAIL HOSTA LISTINGS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

giana" in every way, it is a rich yellow in spring that catches every eye. It will fade a little 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. **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

♥**Sweet Sunshine** (Solberg 1997) - ('Sweet Susan' X 'Tokudama Aureonebulosa') - Medium to large, (16" X 36") Still a hybridizing breakthrough, this yellow-gold hosta has round leaves that are cupped and puckered like a 'Tokudama' but also has near white fragrant flowers in June and July. The best thing of all, however, is that it grows very well. I saw several nice clumps of it in New England. Now available again. **\$15**

♥**Tarheel Blue** (Solberg 2013) - ('Powderpuff' X 'Skylight') - Small to Medium, (14" X 32") A good blue hosta should have great blue color and hold that color well into the summer. This small hosta does both; it is my best blue yet. The secret is in the wax. A cross of two very waxy parents, 'Powderpuff' and 'Skylight', it makes a nice dense clump and stays blue here into July. Some morning sun will bring out the best in it. **\$30**

♥**Thunder Boomer** (Solberg 2007) - (*H. sieboldiana* X 'One Man's Treasure' F2 seedling) - Large, (18" X 38" or larger) This is the largest of my "Longianas" to date. Its stately, pointed, medium blue-green leaves are gently rippled, arching along the midrib, providing a calm elegance. It has good substance, sturdy scapes with a nice floral display in mid-summer and like all the other "Longianas" it is a great "long season" hosta, holding up well into the fall.

\$15 or "Two for \$20"

♥**Tropicana** (M. Zilis 2010) - ('Sea Prize' X 'Yellow River') - Medium, (19" X 40") This new seedling from Mark Zilis is a chameleon of color. It emerges in spring with a bright yellow leaf center bordered in white that later will become light green. New leaves will again be yellow, giving the plants two colors of leaves at the same time. It makes a medium-sized clump that will catch your eye in spring or summer.

\$15 or "Two for \$20"

♥**Winter Snow** (Winterberry Farms & J. Anderson 2003) - (Sport of 'Sum and Substance') - Huge, (35" X 70") This wonderful sport of 'Sum and Substance' makes a huge spreading mound of round 20" chartreuse leaves that have exquisite wavy white margins that are consistently evenly wide. It has the typical tall scapes and lavender flowers in July that generally need early pruning. It is more impressive than its parent to me. **\$15**

Miniature and Small Hostas:

♥**Appletini** (M. Zilis, M. Vanous 2009) - (Yellow sport of 'Blue Dimples' X 'Shining Tot') - Mini to Small, (6" X 14") A great new mini, maybe the best of the "tini" series from Mark Zilis, it has the bright yellow color, the shine, good substance, and cute leaf shape to make this fast growing hosta a star in the garden or in a container. It also has nice lavender flowers in July. **\$10**

♥**Blue Mouse Ears** (E. & J. Deckert 2000) - Mini, (6" X 12") A very tight mini mound of very thick, rounded, mouse-like, blue-green leaves. Lavender flowers on very short scapes in July. Cute as its name and now a classic! **\$10**

♥**Cameo** (Hansen, Shady Oaks Nursery 2002) - (Sport of 'Baby Bunting') - Mini, (4" X 12") 'Cameo' is back in the catalogue again. I just cannot seem to let it go, it looks so good in the nursery in summer with its widely bordered summer leaves. Try giving this cream-edged beauty a little extra sun and water and watch it flourish. It has purple blooms early and will re-flush for me in late July. **\$15**

♥**Cherish** (Shady Oaks Nursery 2002) - (Sport of 'Baby Bunting') - Mini, (5" X 10") From the same line as 'Pandora's Box', 'Cherish' is a pretty cream-centered true mini with a wide blue-green margin. It has purple flowers in June and again in August some years. This one grows! **\$15**

♥**Coconut Custard** (Solberg 2007) - ('Blue Cadet' X 'One Man's Treasure' o. p.) - Small, (6" X 14") This little yellow hosta has heart-shaped leaves that are frosted with lots of white wax in spring, making it rich and creamy. Top that off with bright purple petioles that extend up into the leaf. Well proportioned, frosted yellow scapes in July-August with pretty orchid-colored flowers. Its a delicate look on a sturdy plant. **\$15**

♥**Cookie Crumbs** (Solberg, Zilis 2002) - (Sport of 'Tiny Tears') - Mini, (5" X 10") Finally a clean white-margined mini reminiscent of *H. venusta*. This very flat mound of green heart-shaped leaves has a surprisingly wide white margin. It has purple flowers in June. **\$25**

♥**Corkscrew** (Solberg 2003) - ('Tortifrons' X 'One Man's Treasure') - Small, (9" X 22") Like its parent, 'Tortifrons', the leaves are dark green and contorted but unlike its parent, it grows very well making a full clump quickly. The small clump of upright and arching twisted, shiny dark green leaves produces lavender flowers in September and October, frequently on forked scapes. Winner of 2002 Best Seedling Award at First Look. One of a kind! **\$15**

♥**Cracker Crumbs** (Solberg 2002) - (Sport of 'Shiny Penny') - Mini, (6" X 12") The miniature bright gold leaves have a shiny, dark green margin that appears hand painted. Good substance, growth rate and lavender flowers in July. It is perfect for troughs. **\$15**

♥**Crumb Cake** (Solberg 2008) - ('Cinnamon Sticks' X 'Cracker Crumbs') - Small, (4" X 12") This rapidly growing hosta makes a very tight flat mound of honey-gold round leaves with mahogany petioles that are shiny, wonderfully wavy, and have very good substance. Its mahogany scapes have pretty lavender flowers in July. It is a cute little hosta tough enough for the garden but deserving of a very special spot. I just love it! **\$15 or "Two for \$20"**

♥**Curly Fries** (Solberg 2008) - ('Pineapple Upsidedown Cake' seedling) - Small, (5" X 16") Just look at the photo. I will add that the agave-looking leaves are stiff as a board and you can see that our award winning 'Curly Fries' is the most unique hosta to be introduced in some time. Best grown in half a day of sun, its highly ruffled narrow leaves emerge yellow and then fade to near white. The scape is deep purple, topped with lavender flowers. It makes a great container plant or grows very well in the garden. You just have to touch it. **\$20**

♥**Delona's Smile** (Solberg 2013) - (['Kinkaku' F2 seedling X Hercules] F2) - Small, (10" X 16") Sometimes you never know how things will turn out. This hosta was hybridized to be very yellow, have heavy substance, be sun tolerant, and be large. Well, three out of four ain't bad. It is everything I wanted but is small. Named for the late Delona Shockey you may have received one as the gift plant at the AHS Convention in Nashville. It is bright and cheery like Delona. **\$20**

♥**Dragon Tails** (Zumbar) - Mini, (5" X 8") This bright yellow mini is best grown in a little strong light to accentuate the tight rippling along the narrow leaf margins but too much will bleach it white. It makes a cute little tuft of foliage with pale purple flowers in July. It reblooms here for me on a second flush of summer foliage. **\$15**

♥**Frosted Mouse Ears** (M. Zilis, E. & J. Deckert 2006) - ('Royal Mouse Ears' sport) - Small, (7" X 18") This is the best wide creamy white margined form of 'Blue Mouse Ears'. The cute round blue leaves have a wide border that emerges bluish yellow and becomes white in part sun. Lavender flowers top its short, stocky scapes in June. **\$15**

NEW **Green Mouse Ears** (E. & J. Deckert 2004) - (Sport of 'Blue Mouse Ears') - Mini, (5" X 9") This miniature hosta has "mini mouse ears", greener and smaller than its parent. It maybe a little slower to grow also which makes it the perfect solid colored hosta to put with two variegated ones in your new mini bowl. Cute little scapes with lavender flowers appear in June. **\$15**

♥**Hideout** (Leonard Jones) - (Sport of 'Hidden Cove') - Mini, (4.5" X 11") This little fella 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. **\$15**

♥**Holy Mouse Ears** (M. Zilis, E. & J. Deckert 2006) - ('Royal Mouse Ears' sport) - Small, (6" X 16") Of all the 'Blue Mouse Ears' forms, this one is my favorite. The cute round leaves have a blue margin and an unique bluish yellow center that becomes creamy white in part sun. Lavender flowers top its short, stocky scapes in June. It is the baby of the family. **\$15**

♥**Itsy Bitsy Spider** (G. Johnson) - ('Hadsphen Heron' seedling) - Mini, (2.5" X 6") This hosta has a flat spider-like habit, short, narrow leaves with surprising substance. It is perfect for the trough or fairy garden. Light lavender flowers in July. **\$20**

♥**Lemon Zest** (M. Zilis 2009) - ('Shining Tot' X 'Gold Regal') - Mini, (5" X 12") This nice little, somewhat upright yellow-gold hosta has lance-shaped leaves with pretty good substance, and is a little different from most minis. It flowers late, in August and will nicely fill the front corner of your next trough. **\$15**

♥**Light Everlasting** (PSI-Shady Oaks Nursery) - (Sport of 'Eternal Flame') - Small, (8" X 16" maybe larger) This white-margined sport of 'Eternal Flame' has proven to be a very sturdy little plant. Its leaves have excellent substance and very wide margins, even on small plants. It is not a fast grower and will probably enjoy the extra loving care of a container at least for a year or so. I think it is a winner! **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

♥**Limey Lisa** (W. Zumbar, K. Walek AHS (R) 2009) - Mini, (6" X 21") This little hosta has unique limey green leaves, brighter in spring, that are round and deeply cupped for their size. It is very vigorous and makes a great garden plant, useful as a groundcover or from of the bed specimen. It has purple flowers in July. **\$15**

♥**Little Devil** (H. Gowen) - ('Swoosh' X *H. venusta* sport) - Mini, (5" X 12") This cute little white-margined mini has rich green-centered elongated leaves that have a nice little ripple. It is a rapid grower, perfect for a fancy container. Lavender flowers in late July and very popular. **\$15**

♥**Little Miss Muffet** (W. Zumbar) - Mini, (4" X 8") This little hosta is a classic *H. venusta* with little chartreuse heart-shaped leaves and pretty good substance.

Little lavender flowers in June. It is a miniature 'Gold Edger' for the trough or that special mini garden bed. Do not plant next to 'Itsy Bitsy Spider!' **\$15**

♥**Mouse Trap** (Shady Oaks Nursery) - ('Blue Mouse Ears' sport) - Mini, (6" X 14") Best growing of the white-centered sports of 'Blue Mouse Ears', 'Mouse Trap' emerges with a pure white center with a few scattered green flecks. Summer leaves may green up in extreme heat so there is never any melting out! Lavender flowers on cute white scapes in June. It is the centerpiece of your hosta "mouse" collection. **\$25**

♥**Pixie Vamp** (D. & J. Ward 1996) - ('Pinstripe' seedling) - Mini, (6" X 12") This showy little hosta makes a perfect mound of bright green heart-shaped leaves bordered in snowy white. It has lavender flowers on purple scapes in June and July. Very vigorous in the garden or in a container. A favorite of Nancy's. **\$15**

♥**Smiley Face** (Solberg 2011) - (*H. clausa normalis* F2 seedling X 'Strawberry Banana Smoothie') Small, (7" X 16") This hosta just makes me smile. It has the cutest round leaves that are full of personality and a unique rich yellow color. It has pink petioles and surprisingly heavy substance. It makes a small tight mound perfect in a pot or a special place in the garden. Pink scapes and rich purple flowers with reddish tubes appear in July. It is fertile both ways. **\$20**

♥**Sugar Babe** (Solberg 1977) - ('Iron Gate Supreme' X 'Saishu Jima') - Small, (10" X 16") This is the smallest fragrant-flowered hosta that I know. Its narrow leaves have decent substance and a very attractive cream margin and often some streaking. It is stoloniferous and rapidly makes a spreading mound. Its unique rich purple flowers have a very strong sugary fragrance that you can smell from the garden path. Limited, never tissue cultured. **\$35**

♥**Tears of Joy** (P. Black & T. Johnson, Sebright Gardens 2005) - (Sport of 'Tiny Tears') - Mini, (4" X 13") This little *H. venusta* like mini has green leaves that are folded and twisted when they emerge. It is a fast grower and spreader, perfect for covering a container or trough. The flowers appear to be yellow, lots of pollen but no petals. It is different. **\$15**

♥**Tiny Bubbles** (Solberg 2008) - ('Corkscrew' X 'Lemon Frost') - Small, (8" X 16") This bright yellow harbinger of spring has arrowhead-shaped leaves with good substance but it is the closed orchid flowers that persist for weeks in mid-summer on perfectly proportioned yellow scapes that make this a very unique hosta. It is a very sturdy little plant that grows very well. **\$15**

♥**Tongue Twister** (Solberg 2008) - ('Iwa' X 'Blue Blush' o. p.) - Small, (8" X 18") With its dark green leaves that twist upward out of the clump, this great little hosta looks as fresh in October as it does in May. It has great substance, rich color, and is cute to boot. The light purple scapes produce light lavender flowers in September and light purple pods in October. My best "long season" hosta, still green here in late November! **\$15**

NEW **Wonderful** (R. Goodwin 2005) - ('Little Wonder seedling') - Mini, (3" X 6") This tiny hosta has teardrop-shaped yellow leaves that form a very cute delicate miniature mound. Hybridized by Randy Goodwin, it is a perfect container hosta or grow it as Randy does in a special bed just for minis along a walk. **\$15**

"Two for \$20":

♥**Crumb Cake** (Solberg 2008) - ('Cinnamon Sticks' X 'Cracker Crumbs') - Small, (4" X 12") This rapidly growing hosta makes a very tight flat mound of honey-gold round leaves with mahogany petioles that are shiny, wonderfully wavy, and have very good substance. Its mahogany scapes have pretty lavender flowers in July. It is a cute little hosta tough enough for the garden but deserving of a special spot. I just love it! **\$15 or "Two for \$20"**

♥**Cup of Grace** (Beilstein 2009) - ('Halcyon' X 'Breeder's Choice' op. seedling) Medium, (21" X 36") What do hosta folks want in a "dream hosta"? Frequently, they want it to be very dark green with white flowers. Add a very upright habit and highly cupped leaves and you have 'Cup of Grace'. This hosta is very well proportioned and exhibits classic grace. It is striking as the focal point of a mixed container. **\$15 or "Two for \$20"**

♥**Dragon's Eye** (W. Lefever, Solberg 2008) - ('Riptide' seedling) - Large, (22" X 36" or more) This large hosta has frosty, undulating gray-green leaves with tall purple petioles, very waxy white leaf backs. Lavender flowers appear on waxy purple scapes in August. Good in the garden or as part of your breeding program, (sets seed). **\$15 or "Two for \$20"**

♥**Grape Fizz** (Solberg 2011) - ('Rhapsody in Blue' X *H. plantaginea*) - Large, (16" X 36") Here is a hosta with heavily subenced green leaves that might look a little wild and crazy if grown in some sun but has the most wonderful large purple striped, gently fragrant flowers. It flowers late, in August, but is well worth the wait. I grow mine in a container on the deck. **\$15 or "Two for \$20"**

♥**King of Spades** (Beilstein 2007) - ('Neat Splash' X 'Blue Moon') - Medium, (16" X 30") This unusual, medium blue-green hosta has extremely heavy pucker

ing throughout its spade-shaped leaves. This eye-catcher forms a very tight clump in the garden and is a very tough, dog-proof plant. Lavender flowers in July. **\$15 or "Two for \$20"**

♥**Lemon Ice** (Solberg 2011) - (*H. clausa normalis* F2 seedling) X 'Strawberry Banana Smoothie') - Medium, (12" X 26") This is the beginning of the next generation of red and yellow hostas. It is the largest of this very excellent and varied group of seedlings and has bright yellow leaves with bright red petioles and scapes. It keeps its yellow color very well and will be better in the shade garden as too much light will bleach it white. It is the one that Mark Zilis selected to produce for his nursery. Nice purple flowers on red scapes in July. **\$15 or "Two for \$20"**

♥**Spring Shower** (Solberg 2007) - (*H. sieboldiana* X 'One Man's Treasure' F2 seedling) - Medium, (14" X 30" or larger) A welcoming sight in a special place in the garden, this light blue "Longiana" has classic heart-shaped leaves with strong venation and most resembles a "Tardiana". It has light lavender flowers in July. Try it next to 'Camelot.' **\$15 or "Two for \$20"**

♥**Thunder Boomer** (Solberg 2007) - (*H. sieboldiana* X 'One Man's Treasure' F2 seedling) - Large, (18" X 38" or larger) This is the largest of my "Longianas" to date. Its stately, pointed, medium blue-green leaves are gently rippled, arching along the midrib, providing a calm elegance. It has good substance, sturdy scapes with a nice floral display in mid-summer and like all the other "Longianas" it is a great "long season" hosta, holding up well into the fall.

\$15 or "Two for \$20"

♥**Tropicana** (M. Zilis 2010) - ('Sea Prize' X 'Yellow River') - Medium, (19" X 40") This new seedling from Mark Zilis is a chameleon of color. It emerges in spring with a bright yellow leaf center bordered in white that later will become light green. New leaves will again be yellow, giving the plants two colors of leaves at the same time. It makes a medium-sized clump that will catch your eye in spring or summer.

\$15 or "Two for \$20"

"Two for \$30":

♥**Honey Pie** (Solberg 2012) - ('September Sun' X *H. plantaginea*) - Large, (18" X 40") This may have been my favorite hosta this summer. Despite all the heat, boy did it grow. The honey colored leaves pucker with age and fragrant flowers follow in late summer. It is a large hosta, a cross of 'September Sun' and *H. plantaginea*, having the best characteristics of both parents. Give this one a little extra sun also. **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

♥**Light Everlasting** (PSI-Shady Oaks Nursery) - (Sport of 'Eternal Flame') - Small, (8" X 16" maybe larger) This white-margined sport of 'Eternal Flame' has proven to be a very sturdy little plant. Its leaves have excellent substance and very wide margins, even on small plants. It is not a fast grower and will probably enjoy the extra loving care of a container at least for a year or so. I think it is a winner! **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

♥**Nate the Great** (Solberg 2003) - (*H. nigrescens* X 'Tokudama Aureonebulosa') - Large, (22" X 45") Tall and proud with large round blue-green leaves that are deeply cupped and puckered, this large upright hosta is worthy of the front of the bed. Lavender flowers on tall straight scapes top this one off in July. It is named for my son Nathan. **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

♥**NEW Pea Pod** (Solberg 2013) - (Sport of 'Sugar Snap') - Large, (22" X 40") This all green form from the 'Sweet Sunshine' line has dark green leaves that are cupped and puckered and surprise, surprise, near white fragrant flowers in July. It is sun tolerant and is the perfect replacement for a 'Tokudama' in southern gardens. **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

♥**H. plantaginea 'Doubled Up'** (Solberg 2011) - (Tetraploid sport of *H. plantaginea*) - Medium to Large, (20" X 30") smaller and more compact than the species. Found in tissue culture stock at Green Hill Farm and tested for ploidy in Holland by Ben Zonn-eveld, this fully tetraploid form of the species has very glossy and rubbery leaves, makes a more compact clump, and has larger flowers and a unique fragrance. It makes a great pot plant for the deck or patio. **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

♥**Star Power** (D. & M. Beilstein 2009) - ('Komodo Dragon' X 'Super Bowl') - Medium to large, (20" X 48") Looking for an impressive upright yellow hosta with large heart-shaped leaves that are ruffled and somewhat puckered? This one from great parentage has good color and a sturdy stance that will brighten up any shady corner. It has lavender flowers in June and is fertile. **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

♥**Sun Shower** (Solberg 2007) - (*H. sieboldiana* X 'One Man's Treasure' F2 seedling) - Medium, (14" X 30" or larger) 'Sun Shower' was a surprise. A "Longiana" in every way, it is a rich yellow in spring that catches every eye. It will fade a little 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. **\$20 or "Two for \$30"**

'Infatuation' 2014 is the exclusive club plant!



the truck load of hostas that comes with me. The best way to attract new members and keep the ones you already have is to have a hosta plant sale. While as much as we like to say we are a "people" society, remember we are a hosta society first.

If sales are good are auctions better? This depends on the make up of your membership. If you have several members that are active bidders, then yes, auctions can be fun for the attendees as well as good for the club treasury. If you only have bargain hunters, then it may not be so good. These days it seems there are more bargain hunters than high bidders. Why not try a raffle instead? A raffle keeps everyone involved for the price of a raffle ticket and all you need is one ticket to be a winner. Nancy once bought over eighty tickets trying to secure a hosta photograph at the Midwest Regional, by far a majority of the tickets sold, and still lost. Raffles have a place for the high bidders and the bargain hunters and can be a good alternative or addition to an auction.

If auctions and raffles are good and hosta sales better, the best encouragement to join a hosta club and keep coming back is free hostas. Yes, absolutely free hostas. Door prizes are great. At my talks I like to donate a plant or two for door prizes. If they are given away at the end of the meeting, it keeps people in the seats. (Just kidding.) Some clubs also use free hostas as bribes to attend garden tours or rewards for a job well done for the society. We now have a free hosta every week at our local hosta sales at the nursery. You have to find it but it is absolutely free.

The point I guess I am trying to make is that I rarely see anyone leave a hosta meeting where there are plants available, free or otherwise, without one or two. Hosta folks love hostas!!! That is where our exclusive new

hosta and our list of other recent introductions come in. These are plants that most all of your members have not yet acquired or are good plants for beginners and giveaways.

Our exclusive club hosta this year is 'Infatuation'. It is one of the rising stars of our red petiole hybridizing program. Waxy, blue hostas with rich cranberry petioles are a rare treat when you discover them and infatuation quickly leads to desire. This hosta has the added benefit of having wavy leaves that move gently, even on the calmest days. Late blooming but it is an easy plant with which to hybridize. I just might be in love. 'Infatuation' is \$25 per plant with a minimum order of 10 plants. Supply is limited so order early.

Other new hostas include 'Chorus Girl' and 'Lightning Flash' from Doug Beilstein. 'Lakeside Dragonfly' and 'Lime Ripple', a new large ruffled gold hosta from Ed Schultz are other colorful additions to our

list. We also have some of our best sellers like 'Plum Nutty', 'Peach Salsa', and 'Tarheel Blue', our bluest hosta at wholesale prices. 'Ruffled Mouse Ears' and 'Surfer Girl' are new minis, too. If you would like more information about our 2014 club offerings, you can call Bob or Nancy at the nursery, 919-309-0649 or e-mail us at HostaBob@gmail.com. Remember, all these hostas are pictured in the "Hosta Club 2014" section of our website, www.HostaHosta.com with our complete Club List.



Hosta 'Infatuation'



Each year Green Hill Farm offers a special new hosta introduction exclusively to hosta clubs for their members. This year 'Infatuation' is the 2014 exclusive club plant! This usually gets us in a little trouble with some of our other customers, but we will not offer this hosta on any of our wholesale or retail lists. The only way that you can get 'Infatuation' this year is through your local hosta group. In this way, we hope to increase the membership of local hosta clubs.

Let me elaborate a little on that. We live in changing times where the social and educational organizations of the past, plant clubs and societies, are in competition for membership with the new social media of the Internet. While both offer hosta information, discussion, and even personal relationships to some degree, hosta clubs can offer "hands on" interaction with people and plants.

Have you ever noticed that the attendance is greatest at those hosta meetings where hostas are sold? When I give my lectures across the country, I like to flatter myself to think that all those hosta folks have come to hear me talk. In reality, they probably come just as much or more for

A word from Nancy

By Nancy Solberg

I can't stop talking about container growing. And even though most of my containers have hostas in them, the diversity doesn't stop there. My favorite things to combine with hostas are dwarf and miniature conifers. I typically start with two mini or small hostas and then add a conifer. I'm very attracted to the young version of *Chamacyperis obtusa* 'Habari'. It looks like a saguaro cactus in an evergreen tree form! It can take a little bit of shade, and I try to use hostas that can handle a little more sun to go with it. In shaded corners in which I have dish gardens, I use more *Cryptomeria* varieties since they need a little shade to prevent burning. I frequently use *Cryptomeria japonica* 'Tenzan' and 'Black Dragon'. They have the perfect shape for dish gardens when young.

Another one of my favorites are the hemlocks. There are many dwarf and weeping forms of *Tsuga canadensis* that are very attractive, and they love the shade and moisture that we give to our hostas. A favorite of mine is 'Little Joe' which has white foliage in our garden. A win, win situation. In my sunnier areas, I grow small trees and



shrubs in large containers. You can move them around whenever you are in the mood, and they are easy to water and fertilize so that the tree roots won't compete. After several years, when the conifers get too large for the dish or container, it's time to start over. The conifers can then go into a larger container or into the ground, and the hostas can be reworked into another dish with fresh soil and fertilizer. The fun is endless.

As some of you already know by keeping up with Facebook, Bob and Cody put in a wonderful raised bed for me at the new nursery. We filled it with everything we could think of and ate fresh vegetables all summer. We had tomatoes, green beans, radishes, onions, leeks, carrots, Brussels sprouts, herbs, and much

more. All in a 6' x 22' garden! And with the help of 8 layers of Remay (a strawberry frost cloth), we have had fresh lettuce all winter, despite the single digit temperatures we have had these long and cold months. Since then, Bob has doubled the size of the garden. Now I need to get some topsoil and horse manure brought in, and we will get to have twice the fun this year.

What excitement after living in the shade for the last 24 years! (I'm sorry hostas.) I'm sure there will be more pictures on Facebook this summer.

I thought I'd update those of you who know Cody. He is home from college right now getting ready to study abroad in Trier, Germany for four months. I will miss him greatly, but I am so proud and happy for him to have received this wonderful opportunity. Last summer (after his freshman year) he earned a research grant that got him time back in Austria and Germany. He plans to major in German and Psychology. I don't know where Cody will end up living once he is done with his education, but you can bet I know one thing, he will have a couple of hostas growing there!

