

Hosta Happenings

The Newsletter of the Northern Illinois Hosta Society

ISSUE 106

MARCH 2019

2019 CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

- **March 10, Spring Potluck, Sleepy Hollow**
- **May 19, Spring Symposium & Plant Pickup, Friendship Park, Des Plaines**
- **June 1 & 2, Hosta Leaf Display & Plant Sale, Chicago Bot. Garden**
- **June 9, Hosta Garden Walk #1, Gurnee**
- **June 12 - 15, AHS & MRHS Convention, Green Bay, WI**
- **June 23, Hosta Garden Walk #2, St. Charles**
- **July 7, Hosta Garden Walk #3, Downers Grove**
- **July 12, Cantigny Hosta Garden Dedication, Cantigny**
- **July 14, Hosta Garden Walk #4, Lombard**
- **July 20, Annual Bus Trip, Rockford, Cherry Valley & Dubuque, IA,**
- **Aug 11, Hosta & Plant Auction, Community House, Hinsdale**
- **Sept, Fall Potluck & Annual Mtg**
- **Oct, Fall Symposium, TBD**
- **Dec, Holiday Party, TBD**

President's Letter

Here we are in Northern Illinois and 2019 weather has been as fickle as ever. Like they always say...if you don't like the Chicago weather today wait 'till tomorrow. Never has it been more true than in 2019. Living about 50 miles northwest of Chicago we have had about 20" of snow on the ground, temperatures dropping to -25 degrees then rebounding to upper 40's, now the snow is mostly gone and they are forecasting temperatures back down around zero and more snow as I write this. Wow, we are truly on a weather roller coaster ride so far this year.

Your NIHS Board has been working hard for "YOU". As you can see by looking at the Calendar at a Glance, we have another full year of events scheduled for you. First up is our Spring Potluck scheduled for March 10th at the home of Linda Lood in Sleepy Hollow. A great time to reconnect with your hosta friends and talk about your plans for the upcoming growing season. We will follow that up with our annual Spring Symposium on Sunday May 19th at Friendship Park in Des Plaines. See Janet Simpson's article for details. We have also lined up four nice hosta cultivars for members only purchase at the Spring Symposium. Please see that article below for details and ordering instructions.

Nancy Huck has been working hard on scheduling four garden walks for us this summer along with managing our

Continued next page



In this Issue:

Vendor Ads	2 & 9
Spring Potluck	3
Spring Symposium	4
Sponsor Plants & Order	5&6
Bus Tour & Order Form	7&8
New Board Member	9
Garden Walk #1	10
25-Year Members	11
Gardening with Hostas	12
Volunteer at Cantigny	13
AHS Convention	14
Winter Hosta Meeting	15
Fertilizer for Hostas	16
December Holiday Party	18
2019 Hosta & Perennial	20
Save & Estab New Sport	21
New Members	22
Officers & Directors	23

President's Letter *continued*

June 1st and 2nd Leaf Display and Plant Sale event at the Chicago Botanic Garden. We are expecting Jim Morrow and Jack Barta to be selling hostas and Jean and Scott Lundberg from Lundberg Nursery to be our vendors again this year. Lundberg Nursery specializes in the propagation and growing of hardy ferns for our region.

The American Hosta Society has their Annual Convention this summer in Green Bay, June 12 – 15. It will be a combined convention with the Midwest Regional Hosta Society. Barbara King is working with Cantigny Gardens in preparation for our National Display Garden dedication on July 12th. Mark Rekoske has put together another fine bus tour to Rockford, Cherry Valley and Dubuque on Saturday July 20th. Make sure you sign up for this wonderful event. We also have our annual Hosta Auction/Fundraiser on Sunday August 11th at the Community House in Hinsdale. Mark Zilis has graciously agreed to be our "auctioneer extraordinaire" again this year.

I need volunteer(s) for two of our final events- a host for the Annual Meeting in September and a host for the Holiday Party in December. If you are willing and able to help us out with either of these events, please contact me directly (kraus6311@comcast.net).

As many of you may have heard NIHS will be hosting the 2020 Midwest Regional Hosta Society Convention here in Lisle as we did in 2013. A Planning Committee has been organized as we move forward with our plans for this event. Putting on such an event requires a lot of time and people. At all of our 2019 events you will see volunteer signup sheets. I am hoping that we can get a large contingent of our members to help us make this the best MRHS convention possible. We need to show everyone what the NIHS is made of and what we are capable of doing.

Thank you for your support. Stay warm and stay healthy. Hosta-la-vista, **Mike Kraus**



Garden Center – Arboretum – Botanical Gardens



Open House and Hosta Walk
June 7-8-9

Artisan Market—September 7

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

hornbakergardens.com



4-Season Event Center

Weddings
Corporate Meetings
Events

events@hornbakergardens.com



**Rich's Foxwillow
Pines Nursery, Inc.**

After 31 years in business, 2019 will be the final year!

All 1 gallon hostas \$5 each or 5 for \$20.

Specimen conifers, beeches, ginkgos, and Japanese maples

40% off container trees & shrubs
30% off in-ground and b&b stock

Unusual conifers and deciduous trees abound at Rich's Foxwillow Pines Nursery, like weeping pines and spruces, angular ginkgos, majestic dawn redwoods, soft-needled firs, columnar beeches, graceful hemlocks, and wispy false cypresses. Myriad sizes, shapes, textures, and colors add interest to any garden space.

Natural companions in shady gardens, hemlocks with their soft, feathery foliage contrast nicely with hostas. Hemlock cultivars come in weeping, mounding, irregular, or upright forms. Each tree is unique and has character, some looking like angels or shaggy dogs, others resembling abstract sculptures.

Spring hours starting March 11th: Monday-Saturday, 8am-4:30pm.

11618 McConnell Rd. Woodstock IL 60098
815-338-7442

coniflora@richsfoxwillowpines.com
www.richsfoxwillowpines.com



SPRING POTLUCK AND WHITE ELEPHANT SWAP

SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 1:00 pm

Host: Linda Lood in Sleepy Hollow.

EVERYONE IS INVITED to the first NIHS gathering of the year at the Sleepy Hollow home of Linda Lood to enjoy the fellowship of visiting with old friends, food from excellent NIHS cooks, and the fun of a swap.

All of us will need to bring our dishes needed to complete a great meal: appetizer, salad, side dish or dessert. Tableware and beverages will be provided. **Be sure to contact Linda by email at llood14@gmail.com or call her at (847) 426-9021 no later than March 7** to let her know you will be coming and what you will bring.

The tool and accessory swap is an NIHS tradition that is lots of fun when you get in the spirit. All you need to participate is a USED garden item you no longer want—DO NOT BUY something new! Here's how it works:

1. Bring a USED garden tool, accessory, yard ornament or any other garden-related item.
2. Wrap or package it in a way that disguises it or misleads observers as to what it is, and bring it along.
3. At the swap, each contributor gets to make a choice from among all the treasures.
4. After everyone has opened a package, re-swaps may occur.
5. If you still don't like what you got, take it home, wrap it up and bring it back next year!

WE HOPE YOU WILL COME AND JOIN THE FUN!



HOW TO GET THERE: Your destination: 223 Hilltop Lane, Sleepy Hollow

Driving Directions:

From the east, south or west proceed north 0.3 miles on Randall Road from the intersection with I-90. Turn right at the second cross street onto Saddle Club Drive for 325 feet and turn right onto Arlington Parkway. Continue onto Pimlico Parkway about 0.5 miles and follow it until it becomes Hilltop Lane. Continue on Hilltop Lane about 0.4 miles to 223 Hilltop Lane on the right side of the street. If traveling from the north follow Randall Road south to the second left after Hwy 72 and turn left onto Joy Lane for 0.6 miles and then turn right onto Hilltop Lane and proceed about 0.5 miles to 223 Hilltop on the left side of the street.

Please park on only one side of street along Hilltop and Saratoga. 8 cars will fit in driveway.

Special Spring Symposium Program & Sponsor Plant Pick-up

Sunday May 19 at 1 p.m.

Come join us for a special Spring Symposium program on Sunday May 19th, 1:00 at the Friendship Park Conservatory, Des Plaines. With experts Beau and Nancy Kimball of Woodstock we will explore elements of art and architecture in the garden. Come along for the ride as Beau and Nancy provide an entertaining and informative behind the scenes look at the antiques and garden design world. The Kimballs will share their stories and insight and give you an amazing glimpse into the world of architectural and garden elements based on their 30 years of experience.

Beau & Nancy are antique and style experts who have traveled the world buying & selling architectural artifact and garden antiques. In their beginning, Beau managed Salvage One in Chicago which grew into the largest architectural salvage company in the U.S. Nancy spent her early career at Ralph Lauren and Leslie Hindman Auctioneers. Together they purchased a farmstead near Woodstock which they transformed into one of the best garden antiques stores in the country. It is the headquarters of their growing garden elements business, which features an exclusive line of hand-crafted custom-made planter boxes and armillary spheres.



The Kimballs have been profiled numerous times on television, radio and in print including: their own half hour segment on HGTV's The Good Life, Garden Design Magazine, Better Homes & Gardens, Country Living and The Chicago Tribune. They were honored for a second time by Chicago Magazine in their 2017 "Best of Chicago Edition".

Please see the following page for the NIHS Sponsor Plants that you can order for pickup on May 19 at the Symposium. Also the **Sponsor Plant Order Form** is on page 6.

Driving Directions:

Your destination is 395 West Algonquin Road in Des Plaines. Friendship Park Conservatory is located on the south side of Algonquin Road (Route 62), one-half mile east of the intersection with Elmhurst Road (Route 83).

Traveling westbound on the Northwest Tollway (I-90), exit at Elmhurst Road and go north 0.7 miles to Algonquin Road (Route 62), turn right, and proceed 0.5 miles to Friendship Park.

Traveling eastbound on the Northwest Tollway (I-90), exit at Arlington Heights Road and go north 0.4 miles to Algonquin Road (Route 62), turn right, and proceed 3 miles to Friendship Park. From Route 53, exit at Algonquin Road (Route 62) and proceed east 5.5 miles to Friendship Park.

Introducing the 2019 NIHS Sponsor Plants

By Mike Kraus

As Lou Horton has always said, “the Sponsor Plant Program is designed for the benefit of our members”. This year we have selected some high quality cultivars from two vendors, Bob Solberg and Jeff Miller. You will receive field grown divisions that are ready to be placed in your garden after the threat of frost. This year’s offerings are four beautiful cultivars that everyone should have in their collection. **Pickup plants at the Spring Symposium Sunday May 19.** See previous article.

H. ‘Orange Star’ (\$11) It is a sport of H. ‘June Fever’, this cultivar likes the sun! Grow in morning sun for thick-leaf centers of orange in Spring and fade to a cream by August. Grow it in shade for yellow leaves with a green margin throughout the season. This Jan van den Top cultivar is medium sized at 12” tall x 20” wide.

H. ‘Sugar Plum’ (\$12) Sugar Plum is a Bob Solberg cultivar. Bob writes that.. “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... It has purple scapes as well and blooms in late August and September. It is a prolific seed producer. (20” tall x 28” wide)

H. ‘Munchkin Fire’ (\$12) This is a Randy Goodwin plant introduced by Walters Gardens. It is a vigorous yellow miniature that is the perfect size for troughs and fairy gardens. It has short narrow leaves that hold their bright yellow color all season. Munchkin Fire measures at 4” tall x 9” wide with an upright habit.

H. ‘Gabriel’s Wing’ PPAF (\$22) This Don Rawson introduction will withstand full sun. This may be the most colorful sport of H. ‘Empress Wu’ to date. The yellow margins are vibrant and hold that color, setting off the green centers well. The entire clump may remind you of the classic hosta ‘Sage’. This very large sport measures in at 28” tall x 59” wide.

Members only are eligible to order plants and there is a limit of **one plant per person** for each of the four varieties. All orders will be filled on a first come, first serve basis. Any surplus plants may be offered at the Spring Symposium.

See the Sponsor Plant **ORDER FORM on the next page.**

H. ‘Orange Star’



H. ‘Sugar Plum’



H. ‘Munchkin Fire’



H. ‘Gabriel’s Wing’



Sponsor Plant Order Form

Maximum order of 1 of each variety.

Name _____

Email address: _____

Phone number _____

Orange Star (\$11) _____ Sugar Plum (\$12) _____ Munchkin Fire (\$12) _____

Gabriel's Wing (\$22) _____ One of each plant (\$57) _____

All orders must be accompanied by a check for the full amount made out to NIHS. If you wish confirmation that your order was received, either include your email address or a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Orders should be sent to Mike Kraus 6311 Carrie Ct., Crystal Lake, IL 60014. **The order deadline is Friday May 10th.**



Rockford & Dubuque Bus Tour Garden Highlights July 20

We will devote a full day to touring gardens from Rockford, Illinois to Dubuque, Iowa on Saturday, July 20. We will visit four private gardens. In addition, a hosta shopping opportunity will be available at The Hosta Leaf at Colesburg, Iowa.

We will depart at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 20 from Parking Lot L at Southwest end of Woodfield Mall in Schaumburg, near the water tower. This is the same departure point as last year. All registrants for the tour will be provided driving directions with their confirmations. We will travel by motor coach. No lunch stop is planned so bring your own lunch (no alcohol please). NIHS will provide limited on board refreshments as well. We will go regardless of the weather so bring rain gear if the weather looks unfavorable.

We are limited to 52 participants so please sign up early to ensure a place on the bus.

Please arrive at the parking lot by 6:45 a.m. as the bus will leave promptly at 7:00.

COST: \$40 for NIHS members and members' spouses. \$50 for guests (includes a one-year NIHS membership). The cost will increase to \$50 for late entries received after April 30. See Order Form on next page.

Garden Descriptions

Mike Carr has been a hosta lover for more than 25 years, and has cultivated a few gardens in his time - see pic below. He and his wife Pam have a current collection of approximately 400 varieties and a total of about 1,500 plants in their four year old garden that is always expanding. When



they moved to this residence, they brought between 300 and 400 plants with them. They took their blank slate of a



yard, a 3/4 acre court residence, and turned it into a Hosta Haven. Mike's obsession with large varieties is evident, and Pam just tries to keep up with the maintenance and addition of color, her favorites being oriental lilies, peonies and irises. This garden has many other features including Japanese maples, flowering crabs, tricolor and variegated beech, as well as many flowering shrubs and perennials. Mike and Pam enjoy hosting tours and garden walks, and await the opportunity to share with you their love of gardening!

Wally and EJ Rebman The note following came from EJ who maintains an informal garden amongst trees with a large variety of plants and a large pond. "We built our pond in 1994 when I got the harebrained idea of a water feature. Our son's friend designed a pond, and when the 36 tons of stone were delivered, we had a "What were we thinking?" moment and then "dug" in. That was a GREAT decision as we have enjoyed every second of what the pond experiences have brought to our lives, transforming our paradigm of gardening. In early spring, the gardens are filled with ephemerals, followed by phase two when the hosta, epimedium, ferns, and other shade-loving plants open. Our front yard has seen massive changes with the loss of large trees, so it is now the pollinator garden with lots of sun. We have grown organically and our property has been pesticide and herbicide-free for 25 years."

Janice Duncan's garden is located next door to Wally and EJ's. Both gardens have been included on Rockford garden tours and were recommended by Lori Walsh whose garden we visited last year. Jan maintains an extensive collection of hostas in a

Continued on next page

**Rockford & Dubuque Bus Tour
 Garden Highlights continued**

beautifully designed garden.

Jim Husemann has gardened for many years on a one-acre property in Asbury, outside of Dubuque. He grows about 700 named varieties and has a couple hundred seedlings under evaluation. Jim reports that he dabbles in hybridizing and has registered about 20 cultivars. Perhaps his best known hosta is *H. 'Taurus'* which is available from a number of hosta vendors. Jim has registered a series of hostas named for astrological signs. Jim has been very active in the Dubuque Regional Hosta Society for years. On the day



Taurus

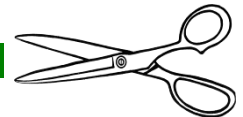
of our visit he will have several members of the Dubuque Regional Hosta Society on hand to help show us around his garden. Jim may also have some potted

Jim Huseman's H. 'Taurus' below and the Hosta Leaf pond right.



hostas for sale.

The Hosta Leaf marks their 20th year of operation with owners Bob and Julie Hackbarth. Their family farm is outside Dubuque and they have opened their display garden and sales area to MRHS conventions and a previous NIHS bus tour. The Hackbarths have a beautiful display garden with a pond and hundreds of mature hostas. They grow many of the Rosedale series of hostas originated by Jerry Hadrava that are often not seen elsewhere. Hostas at The Hosta Leaf are grown mainly in the field, but they will dig on request when we visit. The Hosta Leaf does not do mail order. They sell only onsite by appointment or on designated weekend sale dates.



Rockford & Dubuque Bus Tour July 20 Order Form

Pease print this page and mail it with your check. Due date is 04/30/19

QUESTIONS: Email marekoske@gmail.com or call 224-622-1171

Make checks payable to: Northern Illinois Hosta Society

Send to: Mark Rekoske, 10902 Hickory Nut Way, Richmond, IL 60071

Name _____
 Guest Name _____
 Telephone _____
 Email _____

Members \$40 X _____ = \$ _____
 Guests \$50 X _____ = \$ _____
 Late Entries \$50 X _____ = \$ _____
 Total \$ _____

Please provide your email address above. Confirmation of your reservation, directions to the parking lot and the tour schedule will be sent to you via email.

Note: Registration fees are non-refundable. However, I will create a waiting list to facilitate private transfers if you later find you are unable to attend. No guarantees, but sometimes replacements can be arranged.

Introducing Our Newest Board Member - Judi Asselborn

Hi, I'm Judi Asselborn the new Hospitality Chair. My husband Ron and I have three married daughters and six grandchildren. I worked at the St. Charles Library for 20 years before my retirement.

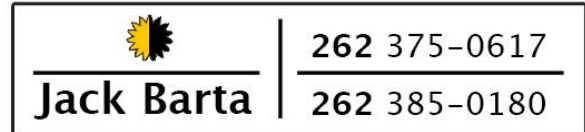
Gardening is one of my favorite hobbies. I enjoy the peacefulness that comes from working in the yard. Ron and I joined NIHS because of our love of flowers & plants, especially hostas.

Our gardens reflect that love with the many different varieties of hostas and companion plants that call them home.

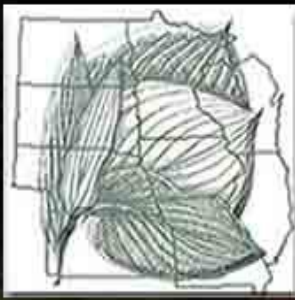
I'm pleased to be the new Hospitality Chair and look forward to meeting you at our various events.



Please call for your appointment



W59 N910 Sheboygan Rd. Cedarburg, WI 53012



The Midwest Regional Hosta Society

<http://www.midwesthostasociety.org/>

Hosta Garden Walk Preview

Sunday June 9 in Gurnee

Joe & Monica Jansen's Garden Open 2 to 5 pm

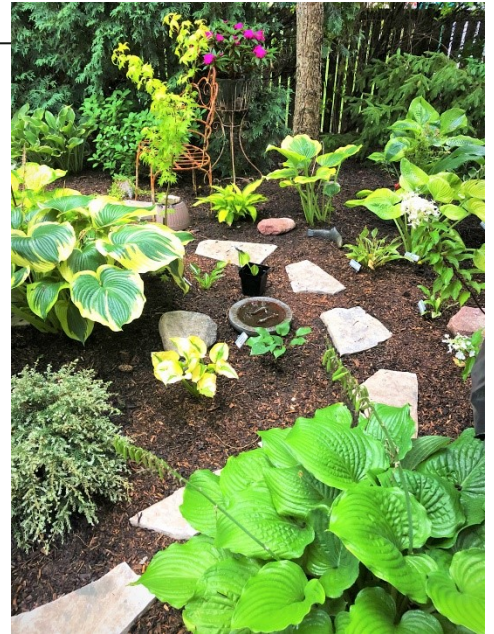
I've always enjoyed gardening (an awesome stress reliever) and even started my own landscaping business during college. Monica and I were very happy when we were able to create our own garden here. When we first moved in



18 years ago we had only one tree that I was able to touch the top of. Now, we enjoy the shade provided by many mature trees which allows for the protection of my hostas. One of the best parts of our hosta collecting journey has been meeting other hostaphiles, learning from them and getting to actually see and sometimes purchase hostas you've only heard about. Lastly, I always enjoy having other garden enthusiasts visit our garden and talk shop.

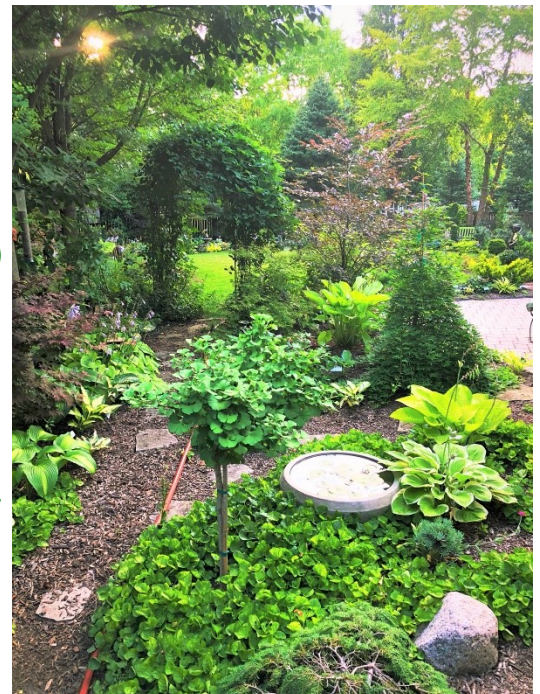
My garden in general:

The three main staples of my garden are 500+ varieties of hostas, 45 cultivars of Japanese maples and many unusual conifers. I enjoy using these plants & trees to paint my garden with color. My style is definitely a controlled wild look. My goal is to always make something look like it's been there for many years. I'm always moving things around, putting in more paths, adding more seating areas, deciding what my next yard project will be and definitely removing grass in order to add more hostas and trees. I already know what my spring project is going to be...you'll have to come and see.



Directions to 640 Yorktown Lane, Gurnee:

The two main roads that we are near are Route 120 (Belvidere Rd.) & Interstate 94. If you are on Interstate 94, take the Route 120 East ramp. Take 120 East to O'Plaine Road (Left/North). Take O'Plaine Road to Country Trails Road (Right). Take Country Trails Road (it's a curvy road) all the way to Yorktown Lane (Right). The house will be the second to last house on the right side (640 Yorktown Lane).



Lifetime NIHS Members

We Recognize Your 25 Years of Service



Rich Hornbaker is the owner of Hornbaker Gardens, a magical & marvelous garden center/botanic gardens & arboretum located in Princeton, Illinois, which he runs with his daughter Molly and his son, David. Hornbaker Gardens has long been a source of hostas for gardeners in the Midwest since its inception in 1987. Rich has also been a supporter of Hosta Societies throughout the Midwest.



Olga Swehla joined NIHS in 1993 shortly after it was formed. She has been an active participant in many of our Society-sponsored activities including donating hostas, hosta leaves and volunteering at conventions. Olga is also a long-time Member and former officer of the Downers Grove Garden Club. She loves to share her knowledge and plants.



Mark Zilis is a world-renowned hosta expert. He has traveled the world exploring hostas and has published three hosta books considered 'bibles' of the industry. Mark has owned & operated several hosta nurseries and currently operates A to Z Perennials in Rochelle with his son, Andy. Mark is our NIHS auctioneer at our annual Hosta & Plant Auction in August.

We also recognize **Jeff & Bernie Postlewaite** who are Lifetime Members. Unfortunately no picture was available.



In 2017 members voted to recognize members who achieve 25 years of service. Lifetime members will no longer pay dues.

GARDENING with Hostas

By Diana Stoll



Planting for Pollinators

Bees, butterflies and other pollinators have called my landscape home since I created the first sunny border thirty years ago. I didn't choose plants to attract them. Instead, I chose perennials to which I was attracted. But with all the news of their declining numbers and loss of habitat, I have begun intentionally adding plants that provide food for them whenever the garden puts out a vacant sign.

So far, most of the new additions have been in sunny areas – anise hyssop, blazing star and butterfly weed, to name a few. This year, my efforts are turning to the shady areas in my landscape, and there are many pollinator-friendly plants that will become bedfellows with my hostas. Spring bulbs provide nectar in early spring for early-rising pollinators but, just like Lay's potato chips, there is always room for more. From the first-to-bloom snow crocuses to the large-flowering Dutch crocus, they awaken the landscape in just above every color of the rainbow. Early- and mid-season



Heuchera 'Paris' is just one perennial Diana plans to plant for pollinators.

daffodils follow in succession, keeping the nectar fountain flowing. I have all spring and summer to decide which varieties to plant this fall. Columbines welcome bees to the shade in spring when there aren't as many nectar-rich sources as in summer. An invitation has been sent to *Aquilegia chrysantha* to come and join my pollinator party. It shows off large, long-spurred, sunny yellow flowers on 30-inch stems over attractive bluish-green foliage. Imagine these cuties self-sowing and weaving their way amongst the hostas.

I am not sure why Jacob's ladder has not already found itself in my landscape, but *Polemonium reptans* 'Stairway to Heaven' is on my shopping list. It grows in a low mound of creamy yellow-margined green leaves brushed with pink in spring and early summer. Lavender-blue, bell-shaped flowers line sturdy stems up to 18-inches tall in April and May.

Crocuses are an important nectar source for early-rising pollinators.

My gardens are already full of coral bells but most were chosen for their colorful foliage to show off beautifully next to hosta leaves. This year, *Heuchera* 'Paris' will bond with its kin. It is a blooming machine that boasts 14-inch tall columns of rose-pink flowers. The white-washed foliage reflects any sunlight that may find its way through branches to brighten the shade garden.

I have always admired *Tradescantia* 'Sweet Kate', commonly called spiderwort, on garden center benches, but this year it will become a resident in my landscape. Its golden, strap-like leaves contrast beautifully with the bold texture of hostas foliage and the color of its own periwinkle blue flowers.

And I am not forgetting my beloved hostas. Their blooms are a favorite of pollinators. Instead of cutting off the ones I find unappealing, this year I will leave them for my pollinator friends.



GETTING READY FOR 2019 IN THE AHS GARDEN AT CANTIGNY

If you would like to volunteer, now is the time!

By Barbara King

The calendar is turning to March, so we begin to think (hope!) we may soon see some signs of life in our gardens, including our AHS National Display Garden at Cantigny Park. That means we will soon need volunteers to help spruce it up and care for it for the growing season.

Since starting to create the garden in 2014, we have had a wonderful group of dedicated NIHS volunteers. More are always needed, and we are ready to welcome any NIHS members who would like to join us for the first time. Working with NIHS colleagues is an enjoyable experience that will give you a real sense of accomplishment as you watch the garden grow and mature.

There are two categories of volunteers at Cantigny: Standard and special events. The difference is in the training that's required and in the "perks." Work assignments in the garden are the same for both.

Cantigny requires two types of training at the park for all its standard volunteers:

- ◆ Safety procedures in the garden and the greenhouse. It takes about an hour, plus 10 - 15 minutes to fill out some forms, and must be repeated each year. Several sessions are offered every spring on various days and at various times so that everyone can choose what best fits her/his schedule.

- * Child safety training must be taken every two years, with each session lasting about 1 -1/2 hours. Again, many sessions are offered.

The benefits for standard volunteers include free admission and parking whenever the park is open, not just on an NIHS volunteer workday. They will also receive a 10% discount on purchases at the gift shop in the Visitors Center. A standard volunteer who works 50 hours per year (which NIHS volunteers customarily do not) is invited to Cantigny's Volunteer Appreciation Dinner held in December, and all standard volunteers receive a large poinsettia in early December regardless of the number of hours worked.

Special events volunteers do not have any required training. They will be asked to fill out minimal paperwork at the beginning of the season. Their benefit is free admission to the park, including free parking, on the days they volunteer only.



IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER AT CANTIGNY THIS YEAR, OR HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT WHAT'S INVOLVED, PLEASE CONTACT BARBARA KING AT bhk430@att.net or 630-879-2263 (home) or 630-643-2263 (cell) AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE 2019 TRAINING SESSIONS FOR STANDARD VOLUNTEERS ARE ABOUT TO BEGIN, AND SHE WILL MAKE SURE YOU GET INTO THE ONE YOU WANT.

Cantigny volunteers in 2018 enjoying a bit of camaraderie. Pics by Ron Asselborn



Hostaffinity

noun | host·af·fin·i·ty | host-ə-'fi-nə-tē |

Welcome!

A feeling of kinship among people who share a love of hosta.

Attendees of the AHS national convention certainly have an affinity toward hosta, but they also have an affinity toward other hosta lovers! Maybe that's why it's called the "friendship plant" — it brings people together.

Join hundreds of other hosta enthusiasts from around the country and the world for the 51st annual convention held in Green Bay, Wisconsin June 12–15, 2019, hosted by the Green & Gold Hosta Society.

We welcome you to beautiful and picturesque Northeast Wisconsin where you'll tour iconic gardens, hear world-renowned speakers, shop a variety of vendors, participate in friendly competitions and a live auction, eat great food and, most importantly, enjoy the company of fellow gardeners and friends, both new and old.

Join us in Green Bay June 12 - 15! www.ahs2019event.org

Observations on MRHS 2019 Winter Hosta Symposium

By Mike Kraus

To take our minds off the weather, at least briefly, the Midwest Regional Hosta Society brought back what used to be called the Winter Scientific Meeting which is now renamed the Winter Hosta Symposium. This was a one-day event on Saturday February 2nd at the Sheraton Milwaukee-Brookfield. The Symposium was hosted/co-chaired by Jack Barta and Glenn Herold. It was a nice winter day at a well-organized event that featured six speakers and I believe a little over 100 attendees.

I found this year's presentations by Bob Solberg and Don Rawson particularly informative. Bob spoke of Hostas in Containers. He explained why you would or would not pot your hostas in a container, the types of containers available and more importantly to me the type of potting mix to use and over wintering.

Don Rawson spoke about the impact of trees in a hosta garden. He explained how tree roots compete with hostas for water and nutrients. Trees will always win that battle. He also identified that in Mark Zilis' book "Field Guide to Hostas" there is an Appendix (page 373) that identifies the compatibility of various trees, shrubs and vines with hostas. Who knew, I never got past the hosta pictures! Seriously, Mark's book is a great resource. Don also demonstrated a couple of ways to protect your hosta roots from tree roots.



Bob Solberg describing his approach to growing hostas in containers. pic by Jack Barta

The six speakers were:

- Bob Solberg- Growing Hostas Successfully in Containers
- Don Rawson- You can have a Tree-mendous Garden
- Don Dean- Where did That Trait Come From?
- Mark Zilis- Searching for Hostas in the Wild of Japan
- Jeff Moore- Thoughts on Hosta Hybridizing
- George Papadelis- New Annuals and Perennials for 2019

Don Dean, past president of AHS, gave a presentation on the general traits of various hosta species plants and how those traits relate to today's hosta cultivars. Mark Zilis' slide presentation highlighted his trip to Japan last summer looking for the hosta species plant sieboldiana. Accompanying Mark on his trip were his son Andy and Bob Solberg.

Jeff Moore is a hosta hybridizer from Janesville, WI. He is a forward looking hybridizer looking at the future of hostas. For example he is working on producing a hosta with a red flower. Jeff's slide show presented the various hosta plants he is using in his hybridizing program and showing some of the results he is achieving. The final presenter of the day was George Papadelis of Telly's Greenhouse in Michigan. George gave an energetic presentation of what annuals and perennials will be available on the market in 2019.

Again, this program was well organized and it was very informative. It was also great to see that NIHS was well represented at the Symposium with about 12 members. You should consider attending the MRHS Winter Hosta Symposium next year. It is scheduled for **February 1, 2020** with hostatality the night before for those staying at the hotel.

What kind of fertilizer do you use?

by Bob Solberg

Whenever I give a talk to a hosta group, the question always comes up, "What kind of fertilizer do you use." I'm never quite sure if they believe that growers like me have some kind of magic plant food that we use to grow our hostas bigger and better or that if they really want to know what, when and how to fertilize their hostas.

In the garden hostas need light, water, and nutrients for healthy growth. Any fertilization program must take all these as well as soil type in to account and balance the needs of the hosta. If you water a lot you will need to fertilize more often during the season as watering leaches nitrogen away from the plant (and/or garden). If your garden is very shady over fertilization will not necessarily produce bigger hostas because of the lack of light. Sandy soils will leach nutrients faster than clay soils. Get to know your garden.

There are organic and inorganic fertilizers. Both contain the same nutrients (chemicals) but they come from different sources. At the cellular level hostas "see" these nutrients identically. Organic fertilizers tend to have lower analysis numbers than inorganic ones and thus tend to burn less but you will need to apply them in larger amounts to apply the same amount of nutrients, making them often more expensive in time and money. They may also attract rodents (code word, voles) since several of the materials used as sources of nitrogen in organic fertilizers like cottonseed meal and alfalfa meal are used as animal feeds. Manure is a good cheap organic fertilizer that should not burn if properly composted.



Both types of fertilizers come as a liquid feed, a granular and a slow release. Liquid fertilizer, Peter's 20-20-20, Miracle-Gro, Fish Emulsion, etc., can be used as a drench into the soil or sprayed on the



leaves only as a foliar spray. (If this is the only type of fertilizer you use then a drench is more effective.) Liquid fertilizer needs to be applied to hostas at least once every two weeks during the growing season if not weekly since it remains in the root zone for only a short period of time.

Standard inorganic granular fertilizers like 10-10-10 are quite inexpensive and remain in the garden 4-6 weeks depending on the amount of rainfall. Thus two to three applications are necessary, beginning as the hostas emerge and ending when their growth slows in the heat of summer. Beware! Formulations with a high percentage of urea will release their nitrogen in a short period of time in periods of high rainfall and at best be washed from the garden or at worst burn your plants.

Slow release fertilizers like Osmocote and Nutricote release nutrients over time dependent on temperature and rainfall and have the advantage of only needing to be applied once a year. They come in a variety of formulations with hostas preferring a nitrogen number of 18-21. Choose a time of release, 3 months to 9 months that matches the active growing season for your hostas. Many bagged organic fertilizers release their nitrogen slowly also and can be treated as slow release fertilizers and applied just once a year.

Which fertilizer you choose probably has more to do with you than your hostas. What kind of gardener you are and how often you want to feed your hostas? If you enjoy preparing snacks for your hostas and want to shower them with tender

Continued to next page

What kind of fertilizer do you use?

by Bob Solberg *continued*

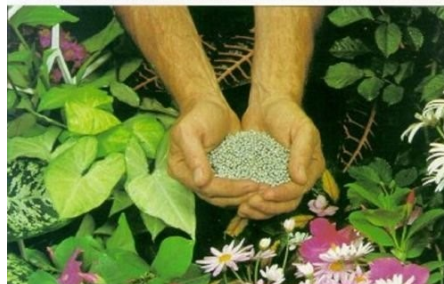
loving care, then liquid fertilizers once a week during the growing season is the way for you to go. If you are a lazy gardener like me or one just pressed for time, then you should choose a 9 month slow release formula and fertilize once a year when your hostas first start emerging from their winter's nap. The important thing is to have nutrients available when your hostas are actively growing, from emergence to fall.

Probably the best way to fertilize is a combination of the two. Apply a organic or inorganic slow release fertilizer in early spring. Then supplement this with foliar applications of a high nitrogen liquid fertilizer with Epsom Salts (18-24 nitrogen) maybe twice, a couple of weeks apart while the hostas are growing at their most rapid rate. For us that is around the first and fiftieth of May. An application or two of 10-10-10 liquid fertilizer can also be applied in August when the hostas make their "little flush" of new foliage, especially if all the slow release nitrogen has been released by high summer temperatures and rainfall. This diet is sure to fatten up your hostas.

What fertilizer do we use in here in the nursery? We grow all our hostas in containers, so we can control as much as possible the environment in which we grow our hostas. Currently, we are using a slow release "Nutricote" product sold by Florikan that has been blended with some soluble urea and magnesium. It is actually three fertilizers in one. Since we want nitrogen available from day one for our newly planted liners, there is some soluble nitrogen for the first week or two. Then some 10-10-10 like fertilizer with magnesium for the second and third weeks and then in the third week the Nutricote kicks in. The Nutricote works great in regions of the country that have hot summers, releasing its nutrients evenly into the fall. Our formulation is 14-5-10 and because we would like the nitrogen number to be up near 20 we apply the fertilizer at the "high" recommended

rate rather than the normal rate.

We like this fertilizer so much that we now sell 20 pound buckets of it here at the nursery under our own private label. It is called "Green Hill Hosta Fertilizer" and we are now licensed as a fertilizer manufacturer in North Carolina. Sorry the law does not allow us to ship our fertilizer to other states but you can legally come to the nursery, pick it up, (with a few new hostas to boot), and take it back home. Our local customers keep coming back for more!



5 LBS Hobby Pack

Tips to remember:

1. Use a foliage feed as a supplemental feed especially for magnesium (Epsom salts 50ppm) and trace elements when your hostas are actively making new leaves.
2. Hosta roots do not grow during the winter. They stop growing when the plant goes dormant and begin only after the soil has warmed in the spring. New roots are not made until after the first flush of foliage has unfurled. Winter fertilization for added root growth is unnecessary.
3. You can test your soil throughout the season to measure the available nutrients in the soil. It may be more fun to test your hosta leaves for their nutrient content. Hosta leaves can be tested by most State Labs to determine the amount of nutrients that actually are available in the plant not just in the soil.

Notes from Bob Solberg 8/22/18 – "We have now changed fertilizers again. We use a formulation from Harrell's, a slow release 17-6-12. The reasons for the change have to do with the fertilizer but mostly how it can be purchased, I do not need a broker to get it sent to me, I can deal directly with Harrell's. It also seems to work as well or better than the Nutricote. *Editor's Note: Harrell's sells online in 50 lb. bags.*

Holiday Party at the Kraus Haus!



A festive and fun atmosphere permeated Lenny & Mike Kraus' home in December. (their pic top left) The weather cooperated with a sunny afternoon and a landscape that sparkled with a recent snow cover. May thanks to the great cooks who brought their best.

Pics by Ron Asselborn



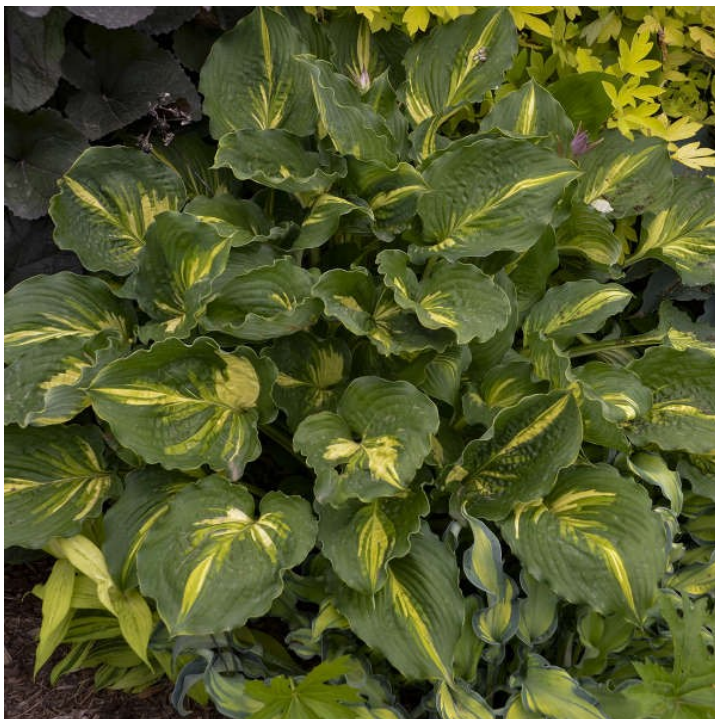
**Holiday Party at the Kraus Haus!
continued**



Hosta 'Lakeside Paisley Print' is named the AHGA Hosta of the Year for 2019

One of the very best hostas to come from Mary Chastain! This stunning hosta produces heart-shaped leaves with very wide, wavy, green margins. The narrow, creamy white markings in the center of the leaves shoot out from the cream colored petioles in a feathery pattern.

Its thick-substanced leaves make the perfect background for the cream scapes that carry the light lavender flowers in midsummer.



Stachys 'Hummelo' is 2019 Perennial Plant of the Year

The Perennial Plant Association (PPA) has designated Stachys 'Hummelo' as its 2019 Perennial Plant of the Year.

Hardy in USDA Zones 4 to 8, this dependable betony cultivar forms basal rosettes of ovate, glossy, bright green leaves that work well as a groundcover. Upright spikes of purple flowers appear in late June and July, reaching up to two feet tall above the foliage. These blooms attract pollinators and make good cut-flowers.

'Hummelo' was introduced in the late 1990s, and subsequently gained popularity when renowned designer and plantsman Piet Oudolf included it in some of his signature works. The PPA recommends pairing it with ornamental grasses, purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*), and butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*).

It will do best in full sun to part shade. Visit www.perennialplant.org for more information about 'Hummelo' and the PPA's Perennial Plant of the Year program.



Save & Establish a New Sport

By Van R. Wade

Introduction I have developed a very simple method to preserve, help save, or to establish a new hosta sport; a method to help you save that sport you may have just discovered. I have been using this method since 1986 and find that it works very well. I have been able to rediscover and duplicate known hostas and have developed dozens of new varieties.

Materials and Methods To discover a potentially new sport, watch all your hostas very carefully. Any single leaf different from the parent may be the start of a totally new plant. The leaf may be all green on a gold plant, or all gold on a green or blue plant. It may have only a yellow, gold, or white streak in a leaf. It may be a leaf with half green or blue and the other half white, gold, or streaked. It may have a center different than the edge. The new leaf can be of almost any different pattern of color, shape, or form, but different from the mother plant or parent. Watch and study the new leaf, group of leaves, or small new plant! You will notice that it is attached to the mother plant and is a part of it.

Determine the value of the mother plant. Is it the only one you have? Could you get another if you should lose it? Find out, or try to determine, what your possible new plant might be. Maybe you are just duplicating what someone else has, or the new plant that is different from the mother might possibly be another known plant, rather than an absolutely new one. Consult an expert or the reference materials on hostas before proceeding to "save" what you think is a sport.

What I like to do is trim back part or all the mother plant. Keep all her roots intact. Trim part or all the leaves back to just above the ground, leaving a few nearest to your sport's leaves a little longer (or full size) at first. The purpose here is to give more strength to the new sport. Be sure that the plant doesn't receive too much sun now. Then you wait... Often in a few weeks, the leaf gets bigger, changes occur, and it slowly gets another leaf or two. Other buds may form, but usually they don't sprout the first year. The first year,

H. 'Francee'
sport
amongst
"Francee"
leaves



under normal conditions, you may have to trim back the mother plant several times, often two or three times, because she will sprout up. But, you see, you are forcing more of the mother's strength into your new little sport. Protect it over the winter, the same as you normally might a new plant.

Fertilize it in the early spring

As the plant develops, you will notice that the bud that had been forced to develop more fully at the base of the leaf will be more fully developed or is a more stable plant. Again, repeatedly trim back mother, as she is strong, and this makes more strength available for your little sport, now stronger and better able to survive. It is possible that after a year or so, you can start to remove a part of the mother by cutting her away piece by piece. I usually wait another year, depending on the size, location, and value of the mother.

I do not want to cut away the new plant, dig it up and replant it yet. Most people do this in the first or second year. I wait. Remember, if you cut the end off a new root, it does not get longer or branch. A new root must form from the root rhizome for it to benefit the new plant. Just keep your new baby where it is and let all the new roots and buds form as they will, without transplanting it. After two or three years of cutting and trimming your mother plant and doing all you can to help your new baby sport develop, you will come to realize what it is, and exactly how it differs from your mother plant. Eventually, in two to four years, you should carefully

Continued next page

Save & Establish a New Sport

continued

cut a crown or eye away with all of its roots intact, leaving the base plant there. I usually like to do this in April or early September. Replant the new 1-2 eye crown plant in a specially prepared site with just the right amount of sunshine. I will often add peat moss, ProMix, sand and/or aged horse manure in a partially raised plant bed. I do use Osmocote for expensive new plants. For older, established plants, I sometimes use 19-19-19 or a similar general garden fertilizer because of the cost. But for the newest, expensive plant, I spare no expense in the preparation of a good planting pocket.

With this method, I have developed dozens of new sports. It is always exciting to dream about your new little sport as to just what it will become. Then when it does develop, you can see just what you've helped Mother Nature do... only quicker!

This method probably isn't new or unconventional, but it works. I've tried to just cut off the new plant, eye, crown, or leaf, but it doesn't always work. You end up losing your sport, or you weaken it so much that it doesn't come up the next year.

The next time you see a new and unusual leaf or more on one of your hostas, remember this method to preserve it. Try it or adapt your own method, using some or all of the technique described here. You'll have fun trying! Not all are success stories, but you will surely not miss very many times with this method.

Reprinted courtesy of the August 2018 newsletter of the Central Illinois Hosta Society. This article originally appeared in Hosta Science, Vol 1, No 1, 2002. Mr. Wade is renown for his career as a plantsman; he died in 2017.

Join the NIHS by contacting Stevie Meginness, Membership Secretary, 84 Dunham Place, St. Charles, IL 60174 with your check for \$20. Please include your name(s), address, phone #, and current email address.

Family membership dues of \$20 for 2 years include email versions of 5 newsletters.

Email us at NI.hosta@gmail.com. Call Stevie at 630-377-9306. Visit our website @ www.NorthernIllinoisHostaSociety.org and visit us on Facebook.

New Member Welcome!!

A special welcome to our newest hostaphiles!

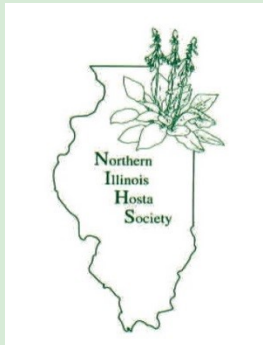
- ◆ Tom Carlson, Roseville, MN
- ◆ Howard & Holly Clark, Geneva
- ◆ Dale Craig, Arlington Heights
- ◆ Lori Mikeska, McHenry
- ◆ Barbara Richardson, Elgin
- ◆ Ken & Kathy Smizinski, Palatine



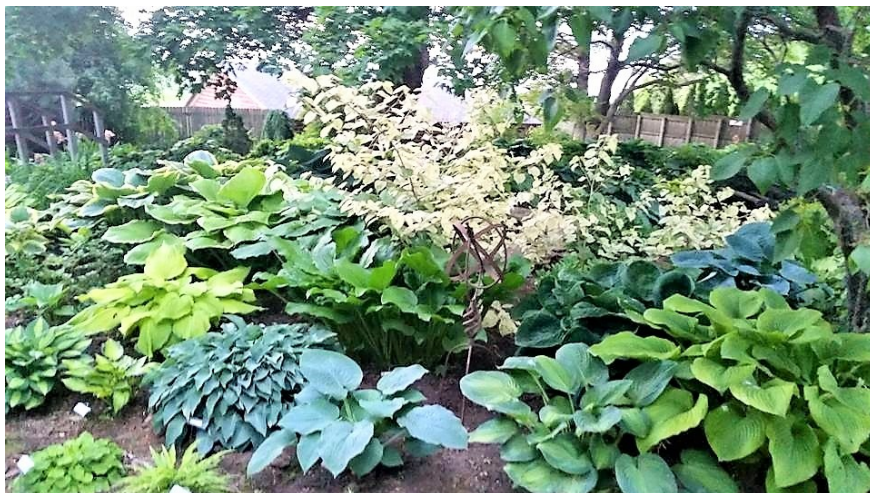
NIHS Membership Secretary

84 Dunham Place

St. Charles, IL 60174



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



Many fun NIHS activities are planned for 2019. Above, a scene from Bob and Julie Hackbarth's The Hosta Leaf gardens outside Dubuque on the Annual Bus Trip on July 20. Below, a scene from Joe & Monica Jansen's Garden, our first Hosta Garden Walk on Sunday June 9 in Gurnee.



Officers & Directors

President

Michael Kraus
815-356-8569
kraus6311@comcast.net

Vice President for Program

Mark Rekoske
224-622-1171
marekoske@gmail.com

Membership Secretary

Stevie Meginness
630-363-7266
NI.hosta@gmail.com

Recording Secretary

June Vandervest
630-852-2940
junevandervest@comcast.net

Treasurer

Linda Lood
847-426-9021
llood@sbcglobal.net

Hospitality Chair

Judi Asselborn
630-460-0209
jasselborn5@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor

Ron Asselborn
630-587-1341
rasselborn5@gmail.com

Publicity Director

Lynn Walsh
630-323-7200
lynn@walshcommunications.com

Directors –At–Large

Nancy Huck
630-595-4874
nancyh43356@att.net

Janet Simpson
630-881-9012
janetsimpson@comcast.net

