

Hosta Happenings

The Newsletter of the Northern Illinois Hosta Society

ISSUE 120

NOVEMBER 2021

2021 / 2022 CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

- **December Holiday Party - cancelled**
- **Feb 5, 2022 MRHS Winter Symposium, Brookfield, WI**
- **Mar 6, NIHS Winter Symposium, Cantigny Park, Wheaton**
- **May 15, NIHS Spring Symposium, Friendship Park Conservatory, Des Plaines**
- **June 4-5, Leaf Display & Plant Sale, Chicago Botanic Garden**
- **June 8 - 11, 2022 AHS National Convention, Minneapolis, MN**
- **July 14-16, 2022 MRHS Convention, Hostas Chicago Style, hosted by NIHS, Lisle - Save the Date!**



President's Letter

Here we are in the second week of November and the temperatures are in the 50's. Although not totally unusual to see a 50-degree-day, it has been warmer for an extended period this year. At least the weather is a little nicer to be out cutting off the hosta leaves if you are a Fall cutter as opposed to doing it in the Spring. The tree leaves seem to want to "hang around" a little longer this year so we can enjoy the Fall Colors a little longer than usual.

This has been a tough year in the "hosta world". We have lost three very important people this year, NIHS members Jack Barta (Jack's Hostas) and Jeff Miller (Land of the Giants) plus grower Gary Lindheimer (Naylor Creek).

Many of you have met and spoken with Jack Barta. Jack opened his garden to NIHS in 2016 for our annual bus tour and again this June for our Car Caravan to Cedarburg, WI. Jack was also one of our vendors at the NIHS Leaf Display & Plant Sale held at the Chicago Botanic Garden. Jack was a friend and will be missed.

I found out that we had lost another Giant in the Hosta Industry after I finished this Letter. Jeff Miller, owner of Land of the



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President's Letter *continued*

Giants Hosta Farm, has passed away. Jeff has been a longtime friend of NIHS. Our hearts and prayers go out to Jeff's wife and children. Please keep them in your prayers. Please read the In Memoriam articles following.

Gary Lindheimer also passed this year. Gary and his partner Jack Hirsch, who preceded Gary in passing, owned Naylor Creek Nursery in Washington. I know a few of you purchased hostas from Naylor Creek through the Facebook Hosta Buyers Guide. When Gary would post his hostas for sale he usually had an entertaining story to go along with his post. Naylor Creek, Gary and Jack, were giants in selling hostas throughout the country. Gary will also surely be missed by many!

This year we have been able to get back a few of our events like the Spring and Fall Symposiums, a Car Caravan to Cedarburg, WI (in place of our annual bus tour) and our Hosta Garden Walks were outstanding this year. We also held our in-person Annual Meeting that was hosted by Judi and Ron Asselborn. I want to thank our NIHS Board for keeping us on track with as many events as possible during the pandemic. Unfortunately, we have had to cancel our potluck dinners. As you will note in the Calendar at a Glance the 2021 Holiday Party has also been canceled.

Re: Board positions for the upcoming 2 years. Janet Simpson has decided to retire from her Director-at-Large position. I want to thank Janet for all that she has done for the Board over her 4-year tenure. Janet has been a tremendous asset in handling our Symposiums, finding speakers and arranging for our venues. Replacing Janet will be Mark Meginness. Mark and I have already spoken and he has some great ideas moving forward. NIHS will be expanding the number of educational seminars/symposiums that we have been holding in the past. Mark has already hit the ground running and getting us positioned for our 2022 activities. Linda Lood, Secretary and Gary Blausler, Treasurer, were re-elected and will continue

in their positions for another two years. Thank you to both Linda and Gary. Also, the Nominating Committee for 2022 will consist of June Vander-vest, Chair Person, and Kathy Fox. June has also decided to fill the vacant Publicity Director's position. We welcome June back onto the NIHS Board. Anyone interested in possibly serving on the NIHS Board in the future should contact June or Kathy.

We recently held our annual Fall Symposium at Cantigny Park. The presentation by Tammy Borden was on Growing Hostas in Containers. Tammy is currently the Executive Vice President of the American Hosta Society. The presentation was outstanding and well received by all who attended. Please see Ron Asselborn's article detailing this event. The presentation was recorded and will be made available on our NIHS website on our "Member's Only" page. You will be notified by email when it is available.

Upcoming 2022 events: Please check out the Calendar at a Glance on page 1.

The MRHS Winter Symposium will be held February 5th in Brookfield, WI. Go to <http://www.midwesthostasociety.org/index.shtml> for details and a registration form. NIHS has added a Winter Symposium on March 6th at Cantigny Park. Mark Meginness is working out the details for our Spring Symposium on May 15 in Des Plaines. Our Leaf Display and Plant Sale returns in 2022 on June 4th & 5th at the Chicago Botanic Garden. NIHS will also be looking to find speakers and make them available to speak at local garden clubs in our area.

I want to thank you all for being members of Northern Illinois Hosta Society ("NIHS"). Your participation in the NIHS is appreciated and essential to the success of what we do.

Enjoy the upcoming Holidays. Most importantly BE WELL and STAY SAFE.

Hosta-la-Vista, **Mike Kraus**

Annual Meeting and Election of Officers September 12 in Campton Hills



NIHS members gathered on a gorgeous Sunday to elect a slate of officers and to approve the budget for the coming fiscal year. June Vandervest was elected as our Publicity Director & Mark Meginness was elected as a new Director-at Large. Mark will be organizing the upcoming educational symposiums.



Hosts Judi & Ron Asselborn, pic bottom left
Pics by Ron Asselborn





Wyatt and
Hosta
'Grand
Prize' —
Then
&
Now
By Sue Topp



Wyatt, our Cavachon, was newly arrived as a puppy in late October 2020, left photo. The hosta 'Grand Prize' isn't nearly as attractive as he is at that time of year. The right photo shows what he and "Grand Prize" look like now.

2021 Special Events

Open House & Hosta Walk on June 11-12-13

Hosta Expert Bob Solberg on Sunday, July 18 (*reservations required*)



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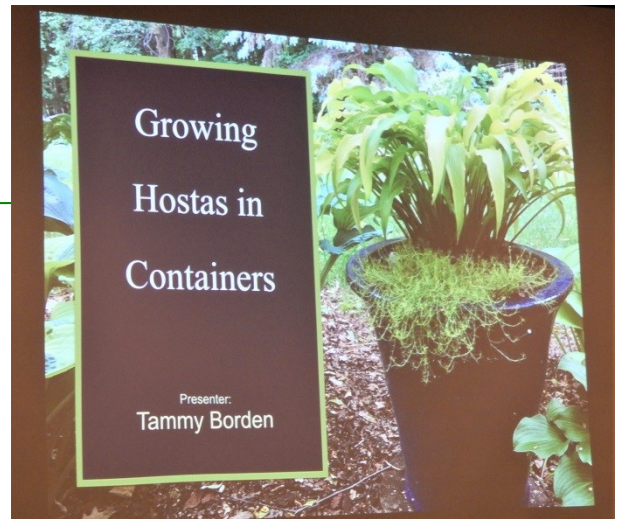
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'Growing Hostas in Containers' Our Fabulous Fall Symposium



Our fabulous Fall Symposium organized by Janet Simpson, bottom left, delivered baskets full of practical info and tips on successfully growing hostas in containers. Hosta expert Tammy Borden led the group thru gorgeous pictures and provided inspiration and encouragement to the members that they really can grow hostas in containers.

Tammy demonstrated her hosta successes using pictures from her own and other gardens in the Green Bay area. Her friendly and encouraging delivery inspired many participants to resolve to pot their hostas and reduce the annuals in their own gardens. Note: Autumn is always a lovely and highly decorated time at Cantigny Park!



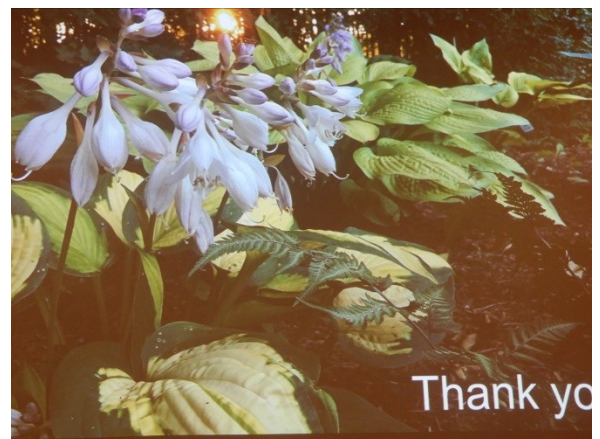
Fabulous Fall Symposium
continued



Pumpkin cake & cider—Yum!



*Pics by Ron
Asselborn*



HOSTA HAPPENINGS



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Jack the Carecrow Debuts at Cantigny Park

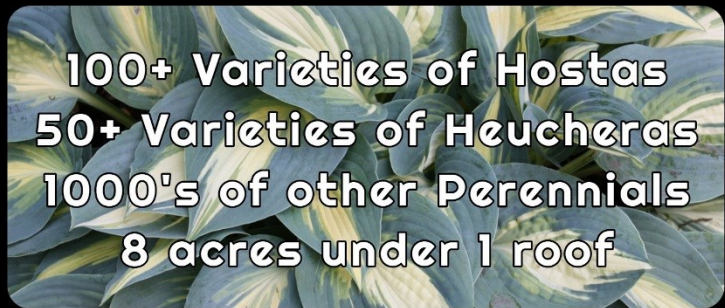
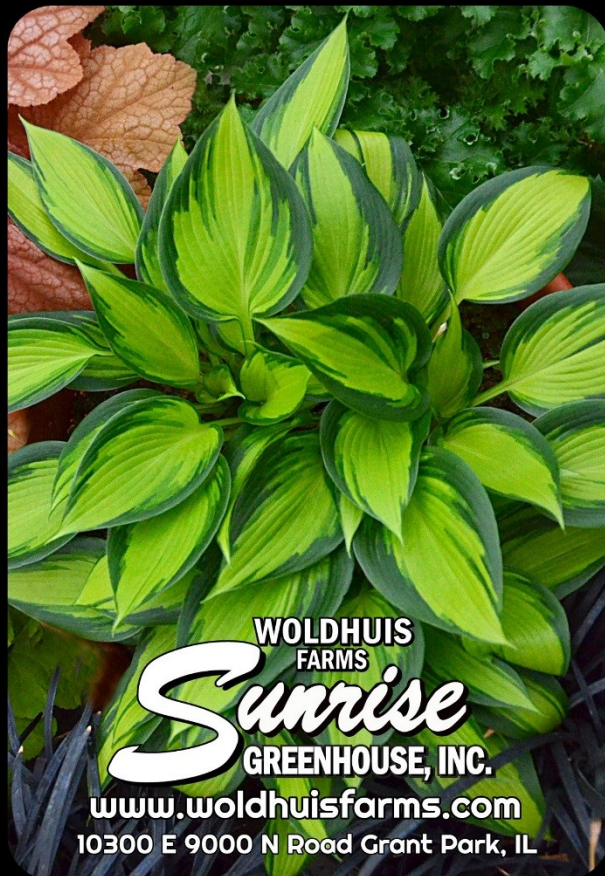


Pics by Judi Asselborn & Barbara King

“Jack the Carecrow” was created for Cantigny Park’s Carecrow Festival. Our entry in the Hosta Garden was one of many Carecrows throughout the park this fall. Jack was named in memory of Jack Barta.

The Carecrow creative crew were June Vandervest, Judi Asselborn & Linda Lood (top right pic) & Barbara King, adjusting Jack’s apron, in blue shirt left pic.





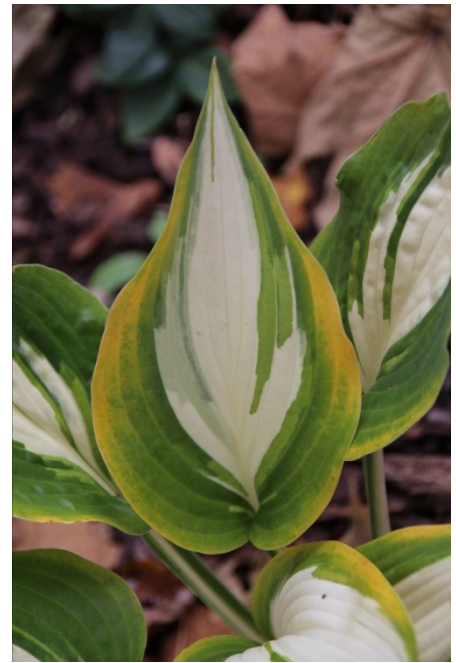
DAVE'S VIEW

By Dave Trollope



Enjoy these pictures of Hosta's in their fall glory. All taken on Halloween from our garden at home.

Hosta Savannah Supreme is one of my favs! (bottom right) Funny thing - I thought it would be interesting when I took it, and when I looked at it on the computer, it was better than I expected!



Clockwise from top right: H. 'Extasy', 'Savannah Supreme', 'Hanky Panky', 'Queen of the Seas', 'Aladdin's Lamp', & 'Sherborne Swallow'.



**MRHS CONVENTION RESCHEDULED FOR
JULY 14 – 16, 2022**

THE COVID-CURSED CONVENTION first planned and postponed for 2020, then 2021, is now officially back on the MRHS schedule for **July 14 – 16, 2022, in Lisle, IL**. The virus appears to be in retreat, more people receive vaccinations each week, and signs point to a more benign environment next year, when Covid should not be the dominating factor in our lives.

Hostas Chicago Style will be hosted by the Northern Illinois Hosta Society (NIHS), and we will make this convention unique: Speakers you haven't heard before to educate and excite you. Fabulous gardens where other distinctive plants and unique designs share top billing with hostas. Two new cultivars from Bob Solberg as choices for a gift hosta. An evening garden visit. A Chicago-style pizza party.

Of course, the features you've always expected at hosta conventions remain part of this one. Reunions with hosta friends. Vendors with the newest hosta cultivars, companion plants and other items for your garden. Hosta leaf show. Seedling display. Good old-fashioned midwestern hospitality.

Make plans now to be part of it, and join fellow hosta lovers in Chicago's western suburb of Lisle for **Hostas Chicago Style, July 14 - 16, 2022**. **Mark your calendars now, and keep an eye out for new developments on the MRHS website, <http://www.midwesthostasociety.org>.**



MIDWEST REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY

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

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

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

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

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SOCIETY**

www.americanhostasociety.org

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

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

In Memoriam— Jack Barta

“Jack was passionate about all thing’s hosta. It was his life. His whole yard was planted in hostas and he was a popular vendor at conventions.

Jack was at times outspoken and a bit rough around the edges for some, but he had a big compassionate heart.”

Tom Micheletti

“No one in the hosta world had a bigger heart and more giving soul. We would walk around his garden, and he would exclaim, “Oh, you’ve got to have that!” and he would dig up a clump for me. Almost half of the hostas in my current garden came from Jack.

Three years ago, he received the MRHS DeEtta Montgomery Award for his lifetime service to the Midwest Region. We are fortunate that we were able to do this. Thank you, Jack, for being my friend, for sharing your knowledge of hostas (and your plants), and for all you have done. We will miss you.”

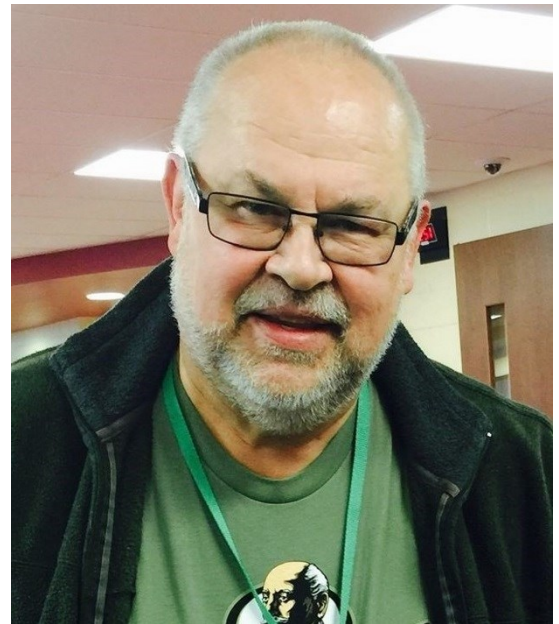
Glenn Herold

"Jack Barta has been interested in plants since he was a boy. While pursuing careers of professional photography and obtaining a degree in teaching music, Jack has always kept his interest in plants. He wants to help you with his passion, and making your landscape the envy of your neighborhood with the use of America's favorite perennial, the Hosta.

Jack has some 2,000 plus varieties of hosta which are on display in his yard. While he sells the plants, he also takes pride in the display of his front yard.

“When you get started gardening by taking care of a hosta plant, whether it’s one or many, you get to see how good it feels and how rewarding it is to keep something healthy and alive.”

From Jack Barta’s website



New Member Welcome!!

Welcome to our newest hostaphiles!

- ◇ Justin & Andrea Geskes, Uniquely Hostas/Geske's Gardens, Milton, Wisconsin



Northern Illinois Hosta Society

HOME ABOUT US CALENDAR MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTERS & FLVRS RESOURCES CONTACT US MEMBER'S ONLY
CART (0)



Some of our Programs, Events & Activities



Annual Membership Meeting-
September 12, 2021

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



Sponsor Plant Pick-Ups-May 2021

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

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

Join the Northern Illinois Hosta Society

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

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

Email us at NI.hosta@gmail.com. Call Stevie at 331-235-4114 . Visit our website @ www.NorthernIllinoisHostaSociety.org and visit us on Facebook.



In Memoriam— Jeff Miller

Jeff was a long-time NIHS member and a regular contributor to our NIHS auction fund raisers. Jeff was a generous hosta genius. His passion was developing spectacular large hostas in which he excelled.

From Land of the Giants website:

Land of the Giants Hosta Farm is owned and operated by Jeff and Penny Miller and located in Milton, Wisconsin. What started out as only 25 different hosta varieties has over the years turned into over 2700 different varieties. With over 340,000 planted in our gardens. Most of which are rare and unique hostas, not found at local nurseries but are eagerly sought after by devoted collectors and shade lovers nationwide.

Jeff also loves studying the plants and hybridizes every year to create new and garden worthy plants, including many [Giantland hostas](#) that will be coming to market very soon. In addition to grow seeds in the winter months, Jeff does talks across the country about hostas and hybridizing...

We have 2 children Ashley and Andrew, they both are not too far away and we sure enjoy seeing them when they come and visit.

Penny has a terrible degenerative hereditary disease that caused her to stop working several years ago. It is called Huntington's Disease. It is a cross of Parkinson's Disease, Alzheimer's Disease and Muscular Dystrophy. She cannot do much in the gardens anymore but loves meeting people...

The factory that I worked for shut down and I had enough seniority that I could take a reduced retirement. We both enjoyed gardening and started this business. The business continues every year to get bigger and bigger with more gardens and more hostas. The income from the business helps greatly with Penny's medical expenses and to help maintain the gardens. What Penny and I enjoy more than anything is meeting all the great people that have come here or bought hostas from us online. We are blessed to have so many great hosta enthusiasts and gardeners in our lives.

Last year we proudly donated over \$34,000 worth of plants and gardening equipment to many different gardening ventures all across this great nation. All we ask is for them to play it forward, do something nice for someone else.



A central graphic with a sunburst background and the text "Spring into Summer". Surrounding it are five notices:

- Garden Center Open**
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Sat. 9-4
Sun 12-4
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Here Is Mark Meginness! New NIHS Director-at-Large

A true Baby Boomer, I remember helping my “green thumbed” Mom in our family’s backyard which, in the 1950s, still had remnants of a WWII Victory Garden. Fast forward to the 1990s when my fiancé drove me to a golf course club house in Aurora to show me what hostas looked like.

Besides grabbing my favorite hori-hori knife and heading out into our backyard I also enjoy travel. Wherever my wife and I go we always try to include a visit to a local garden. Some have been spectacular like Versailles, Chateau de Villandry, Peterhof Palace, Tivoli, Butchart, Longwood, Calloway, Missouri Botanical, and the Keukenhof in spring.

But we also enjoy the more intimate gardens such as Mission San Juan Capistrano, The Indianapolis Museum of Art (where they have a piano in the garden for anyone to play!) and, of course, Cantigny.

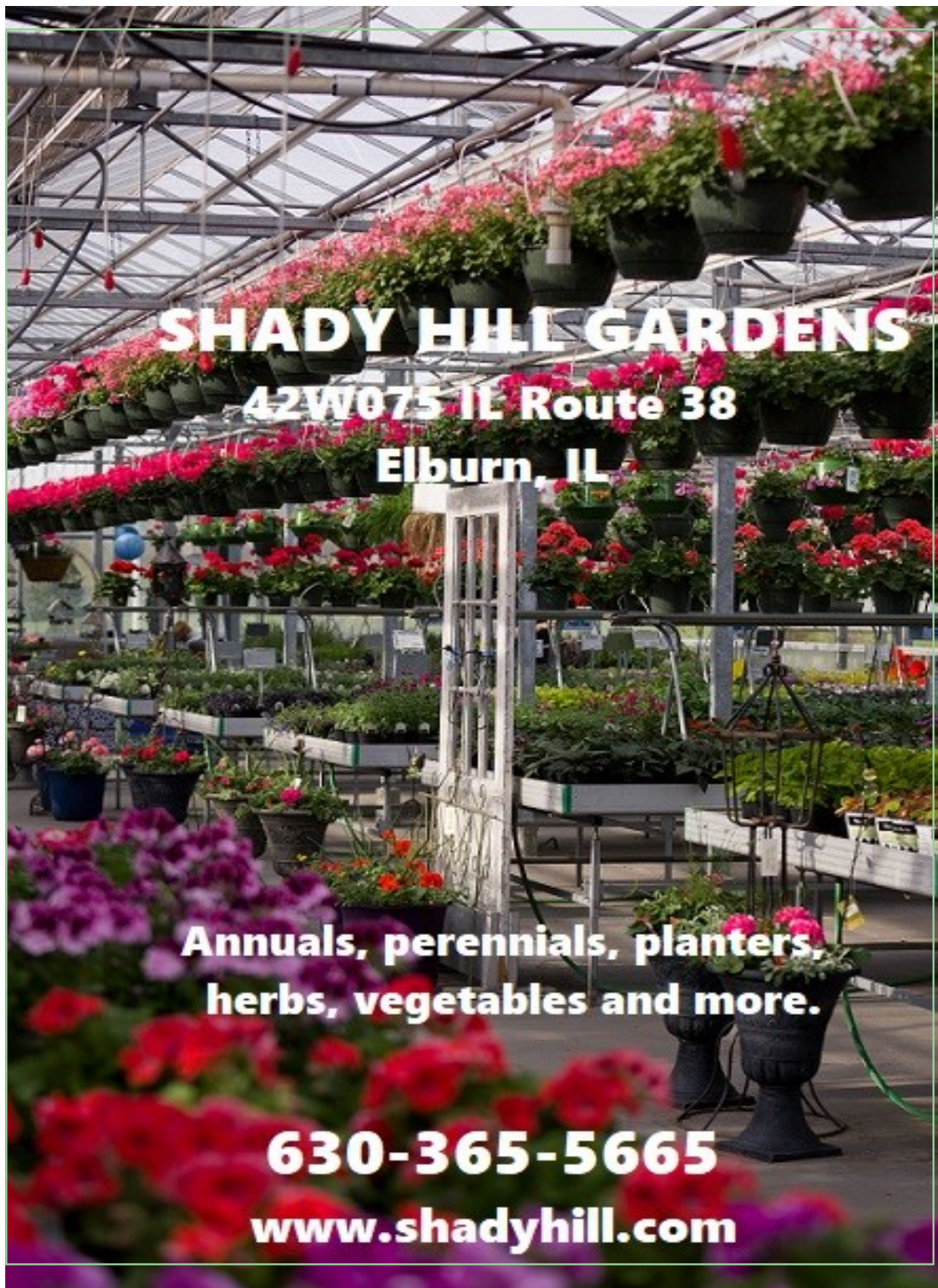


Mark resting on an interesting tree during one of his many travels. Mark & the tree were in a small WWI memorial garden in a Sydney neighborhood.

I enjoy the camaraderie of gardeners. As a Director At Large I hope to provide some interesting topics and speakers for our organization.



Hosta 'Island Breeze' - emerging in the spring, right and later in the summer, left. H. 'Island Breeze' is the 2022 American Hosta Growers Association Hosta of the Year.



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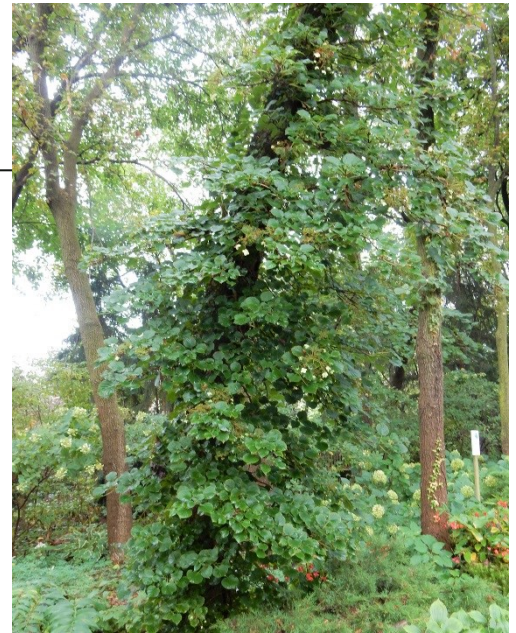
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Partners in Shade...Hydrangea

By Bob Streitmatter



Climbing Hydrangea, *Hydrangea anomala* subsp.

Petiolearis (photo upper right) Partial Shade to Full Shade

A beautiful woody vine, with large lacy, cream flowers in early summer and glossy dark green foliage. Winter interest is provided with both dried flower clusters and handsome brown exfoliating bark. It thrives in rich well-drained soil and climbs wood or masonry surfaces with root-like tendrils. Slow growing at first, it can take 3-5 years before making noticeable progress. However, it is worth the wait, few vines can equal its beauty, rambling over an arbor or covering a brick wall.

Smooth Hydrangea, *Hydrangea arborescens*

Height 3-5'/Spread 3-6', Partial Shade to Full Shade

Characterized, by large foliage and a spreading growth habit, it is an understory dweller, native to the woodland from Illinois to Pennsylvania and south to Georgia. I had always read that it was native to Illinois but was always skeptical until I observed it growing at Starved Rock State Park. I remember teaching Golda how to identify it by the flower heads on a very cold winter hike in the park. The species carries small creamy fertile flowers insignificant in comparison to those of the cultivars.

'**Annabelle**' (below right) has large snowball-like flower clusters, up to 1' across in summer. Probably the cultivar most frequently found in the trade, discovered growing in Anna, Illinois and introduced by J. C. McDaniel. I have found it very useful in shaded borders as a shrub companion for hosta, fern or coral bells. Its colonizing abilities make it useful as an understory meandering through a woodland garden or as a large drift enclosing a shaded patio. It rarely dies to the ground;

but I often cut it back in very early spring, because I think the shorter

stems make it less floppy under the weight of the enormous flowers.

'**Grandiflora**' or **hills-of-snow hydrangea** has large white flower clusters in summer. The flower clusters, 6-8" across, are smaller and more open than H. 'Annabelle' because they contain smaller, less showy fertile flowers. Because of the smaller flower clusters, its habit is neater and less floppy.

'**White Dome**' or '**Dardom**' Finally, a new hydrangea that I think can replace the old favorite, Annabelle Hydrangea. It carries a dome-shaped, lacy, white bloom, creating a truly Victorian effect from mid to late summer. The pure white blooms lighten up a garden and contrast wonderfully the large deep green foliage. The flowers will dry up and persist well into late fall, providing sorely needed interest. The plant is quite sturdy and it holds its blooms up in a neat fashion, while other selections, like H. 'Annabelle', tend to collapse after heavy rains. I have found the lacy openness of the flowers eliminates the

water buildup that often causes an ungraceful nosedive. It is very useful in shaded borders as a



Partners in Shade...Hydrangea continued

shrub companion for hosta, fern or coral bells. Its colonizing abilities make it useful as an understory component meandering through a woodland garden or as a large drift enclosing a shaded patio.

'Grandiflora' or Pee Gee hydrangea (upper right) bears white flower clusters in mid-summer that fade to pink and persist into winter. Its overall habit is upright and almost weeping to give it a vase shape. The weight of the flower heads seems to promote this weeping character. Quite often one finds them clipped up as a tree in front of old Victorian homes. Dried flower heads have a pinkish cast and are ideal for arrangements. Height 10-20'/Spread 10-20'

'Pink Diamond' has very large conical flower clusters with pink buds opening to white flowers. The flower clusters provide even greater interest by eventually maturing to deep pink in late summer and early fall. It is smaller in stature with a 6-8' height and spread.

'Tardiva' (bottom right) flowers in late summer with open white flower clusters, blushed with pink in early fall. Compared with pee gee hydrangea, it is more compact and dense in habit with a 6-8' height and spread. Quite often one finds them clipped up as a tree in front of old Victorian homes. Dried flower heads have a pinkish cast and are ideal for arrangements. Height 10-20'/Spread 10-20'

'Pink Diamond' has very large conical flower clusters with pink buds opening to white flowers. The flower clusters provide even greater interest by eventually maturing to deep pink in late summer and early fall. It is smaller in stature with a 6-8' height and spread.

Oakleaf Hydrangea, *Hydrangea quercifolia*

Height 4-7'/Spread 5-8', Partial Shade to Full Shade



This Hydrangea derives its name from its large, deeply lobed foliage that is reminiscent of an oak leaf. Its foliage turns red, orange and purple in the fall. White flowers appear in summer and develop a pinkish-brown to russet cast with age. It flowers best in partial shade or morning sun and prefers moist well-drained soils. A stunning upright to spreading specimen for a shade garden, it is especially attractive in winter with dark cinnamon exfoliating bark and dried flower clusters.

'Pee Wee' is a compact form of oakleaf, 3-6' in height and 3-6' in width, bearing smaller 4-5" flower clusters

'Snowflake' has white flowers that appear to be double with layered bracts. This cultivar has the potential to be slightly taller by 1-2'.

'Snow Queen' is a superior cultivar with larger white flowers and dark, red-bronze fall color. It has a sturdy, compact habit with dense flower clusters, held more upright and turning pink with age. *Reprinted from Central Illinois Hosta Society Newsletter, October 2021.*

Photos by Ron Asselborn



Hosta Seed Starting 101

By Kathie Sisson

Winter time for hosta fanatics can be a tough time of year. The gardens are dormant, the days are shorter, and the air is often so frigid that we find ourselves indoors more than out. One great way to beat the 'winter doldrums' is to find alternative hosta activities, like perusing plant catalogs and dreaming of future garden designs or projects.

A favorite winter hosta activity for me is growing hosta babies from seed. This is much easier than some may think and does not require any high tech equipment. There is also no 'right' way or 'wrong' way, only 'your' way. Let's begin the journey...

Basic items you will need include seed, a good soil-less mix, pots or containers, water and light. I like to use seed from an interesting source, like a known cross between two hostas with pleasing characteristics, as this will lead to more interesting seedlings. Many seedlings will be plain and green, but the chance of getting something fun and unique increases when you begin with seed from an exciting gene pool.

Start by 'sterilizing' your mix by moistening with water and 'cooking' in a microwave or by pouring boiling water over the mix, covering to seal in the steam, and letting it steep until cool. This will cut down on potential insect problems. Next, fill your containers without packing the mix and sow the seed on top. Lightly cover with a small amount of mix, mist to dampen, and put in a tray. Don't forget to label!

Cover containers with a humidity dome. Hosta seeds do not need light to germinate, but I do put my trays under fluorescent lights for the warmth. You don't need fancy, expensive "grow lights." For years I used plain old shop light fixtures with one cool spectrum bulb and one warm spectrum bulb, hoping to offer the seedlings a fuller

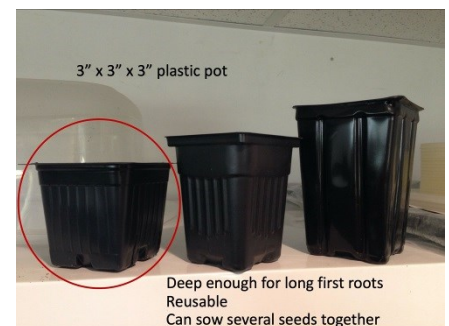
Note: Follow photo sequence top to bottom & left to right.



Soil-less mix begins with store bought seed starter, add perlite and vermiculite



Important step: Kill off insect eggs



Deep enough for long first roots
Reusable
Can sow several seeds together



Scatter seeds evenly

Hosta Seed Starting 101

continued

spectrum of light. Ideal temperature for germination is between 65-80 degrees Fahrenheit.

Seeds will begin to sprout in a couple of weeks. Rate of germination will vary quite a bit, so be patient. Once the young seedlings start to grow bigger and get crowded, it is recommended to up-pot those that catch your eye to grow on. To promote bigger roots you can use deeper cups and add shredded pine bark to the potting mix. Bottom watering is also highly recommended using a diluted fertilizer; something like Miracle Gro Tomato Food will work well.

Don't be afraid to "cull" or discard any seedlings that don't appeal to you. As the rest of your seedlings grow it is very easy to run out of room. Being selective can help focus your energy and effort on seedlings that you will be happy with in your garden. When you see roots starting to come out of the bottom of your container it is a good time to up-pot again as the seedlings seem to like the fresh new pot and soil.

Growing hosta seedlings can be a great way to chase away the winter doldrums and can lead to an enjoyable winter activity that is very rewarding. Don't be afraid to give it a try!

Reprinted from MICHIGAN HOSTA HAPPENINGS Newsletter, Jan 2021



Lightly cover seeds with mix



Don't forget to LABEL!



Seeds do not need light to germinate
Lights do provide warmth

Humidity Dome will keep
conditions warm and moist



Sprouts begin to
appear in a couple
weeks



Rate of germination and growth will vary

Hosta Seed Starting 101 continued



To prevent 'leggy' seedling, place seedlings as close to light source as possible (without touching)



~ 6-8 weeks

Note: Follow photo sequence top to bottom & left to right.



~10-14 weeks



Nice vigor
 Strong root system
 Pleasing form or characteristics



So many seedlings... Many are culls, some need several years to grow, watch and 'evaluate'



Styrofoam cups
 8 oz.
 12 oz.
 16 oz.



Keep soil-less mix LOOSE
 Water



Gently tease apart the roots



16 weeks and beyond
 Keep your goals in mind
 Flower scapes
 Multiple divisions

Rare Finds!

Clinton and Anastasia Cleaver share a photo of their garden in Rydal, PA. The picture includes: (clockwise from upper right) H. 'Neptune', H. 'White Feather', Brunnera 'King's Ransom', H. 'Kifukurin Ko Mame', H. 'Shiny Penny', Taraxacum officinale, H. 'Blue Mouse Ears', H. 'Green Eyes', another H. 'White Feather', and H. 'Fire Island'.

The stunning H. 'White Feather' is a sport of H. 'Undulata'. It was introduced and registered in 2005 by Gerard Heemskerck. After emerging pure white, it slowly becomes, mottled green with green veins as the season progresses. H. 'Zebra Stripes' and H. 'White Wall Tires' are similar but not quite as striking initially.



Hosta Flowers:

Arrangement and photo by Barbara Nace



Article & photos courtesy of Delaware Hosta society Newsletter, Fall 2021



Perched in a honeysuckle shrub in the Cartwright garden, a juvenile Cooper's Hawk surveys his surroundings. (Hawk identified by Richard VanAken.) Photo: Marie Cartwright. Ed. note: organic vole control!

Part IV: The Bigger, The Better — Growing Humongous Hostas

by Don Rawson

In his final instalment about growing Humongous Hostas, Don Rawson wraps up his series of tips with Tip #10.

There's just nothing quite like wandering through a shady landscape that is flourishing with lush and colorful foliage plants... and especially gardens with enormous hostas everywhere you look! In the final part of this series, we are covering the final tip, #10, on how to provide the perfect environment for growing giants in your own hosta glade. You, too, can raise these monsters in your own hosta haven simply by following the tips we cover in this series.

Here are some final recommendations to consider. Tip #10: Safeguard against pests and diseases, and protect against late spring freeze. Be on the lookout for any pests and diseases which may disfigure and weaken your great looking plants...the ones you've worked so hard to create and enjoy. Common pests and diseases include: • Deer and rabbits • Voles • Slugs, Crown Rot (Southern Blight), Virus HVX. Go to the Hosta Library at www.hostalibrary.org and click on "Pest and Disease" for more information. In addition, a hard frost or freeze in late spring can cause irreparable damage to the crown, resulting in stunting and fairy ring. This can set a large hosta back several years and some



Hosta 'Empress Wu' above.

Below—Hosta 'Key West' with Olga Petryszyn.

may never recover. You cannot afford to let your prized specimens to be affected, so protect the hosta crowns with blankets, tarps, buckets, and pots whenever frost is in the forecast.

Final Suggestion - Be patient! If you've ever encountered a really enormous hosta before, it's most likely over 4 years old...perhaps even 6 to 8 years old or more! With each year, the root system has a chance to really grab and work its way into the soil and that foundation creates the huge leaves that very large hostas are known for. Slow growing and giant varieties take 5 - 7 years or longer to reach maturity. That means that this is an investment with a long-term payoff. So, keep your giant hostas healthy and growing well, and as the years go on, you will be rewarded with the biggest and best hostas on the block! Following these tips

Continued next page

Part IV: The Bigger, The Better — Growing Humongous Hostas continued

will send you well on your way to growing some absolutely enormous and HUMONGOUS HOSTAS. Happy gardening!

Summary:

- ◆ Tip #1: Select the Best Location
- ◆ Tip #2: Prepare the Planting Site Well
- ◆ Tip #3: Plant on a Raised Mound
- ◆ Tip #4: Select a Cultivar that gets BIG
- ◆ Tip #5: Allow Enough Space
- ◆ Tip #6: Provide Adequate Light
- ◆ Tip #7: Prevent Root Competition
- ◆ Tip #8: Mulch and Fertilize
- ◆ Tip #9: Water, Water, Water
- ◆ Tip #10: Safeguard against pests and disease, and protect against late spring freeze.

Reprinted from the Michigan Hosta Happenings Newsletter, September 2021.

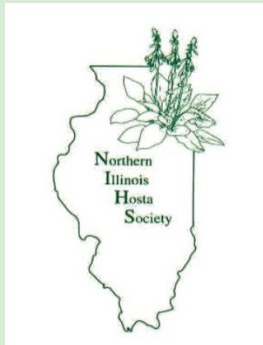


Pics from top - Hosta 'Minke', Hosta 'Abba Dabba Do & Hosta 'Spartacus'

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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.



Our Annual Meeting on September 12 was an outdoor affair with gorgeous weather. We approved our 2022 Budget and elected 5 officers/ directors to 2-year terms.



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Hosta 'First Frost' in the Cantigny Park garden looks good — after several frosts in November.

Pic by June Vandervest

