

# Hosta Happenings

The Newsletter of the Northern Illinois Hosta Society

ISSUE 86

JULY 2014

## 2014 CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

- **July 13, 2-5 pm, Hosta Garden Walk** 2-fer at **Marcia Jendreas & Colleen Gaudins', Prospect Heights**
- **July 27, 2-5 pm, Hosta Garden Walk** at **Tanner Musso's, Hinsdale**
- **August 10, 1-5 pm, Plant Auction** , **Hinsdale Community House, public invited**
- **Sept 7 , 1-4 pm, Hosta Potluck, Annual Mtg, & Plant Swap, @ Judi & Ron Asselborn's, Campton Hills**
- **December 7, Holiday Party, Faith & Andy Campbell's, Elgin**
- **January 2014, Winter Scientific Meeting, location to be determined**



*Hosta plantainifolia Venus* has sweetly scented, "twice-double" flowers.

## President's Letter

Summer is only a few days old, but for NIHS it's already a busy time, and June is especially so.

The annual NIHS Leaf Display and Sale at Chicago Botanic Garden on May 31 – June 1 attracted several hundred people, as it usually does, and they seemed to like what they saw. As an example, I approached a man who was looking longingly at the leaves on display and asked if he had any questions. He answered, "Yeah—how do I fit them all in my garden?" A very big thank you to the members who contributed leaves and helped with set-up and takedown. Special thanks to Lou Horton and Tom Micheletti for leading seminars on Saturday and Sunday respectively, to Tom and Jim Morrow for vending, and to Nancy Bodinet for another great job as Show Chair.

You might be interested to know that about 150 people voted for their favorite hosta in the display. See the poll winners on page 9.

Many thanks to Teddy and Howard Goldman of Northbrook for opening their gorgeous garden to us for the first Hosta Walk of the year on June 8. Clearly they had worked hard to perfect their garden's presentation. The afternoon was perfect, too--pleasantly warm, sunny and breezy. Hosta walks like this are usually our most popular activity, but sadly many NIHS members missed this beauty. There will be two more Hosta Walks this summer, on July 13 and 27; details are inside



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## President's Letter *continued*

this newsletter. I hope everyone will make a special effort to visit them. The owners go to a lot of trouble to make their gardens look their best, and we should show our appreciation with our presence.

Our annual bus trip, to southwestern Michigan, was June 21. It began at 7:00 am at Orland Square Mall under murky skies, and ended there 12 hours later just as a violent storm with drenching rains came to an end. In between, the weather gods smiled on us as we visited three fantastic gardens and shopped at a nursery with over 500 varieties of the most mature hostas I've ever seen for sale in pots. Naturally many of us bought more than we had intended and completely filled the storage bay of the bus for the trip home. Kudos to Mark Rekoske for his meticulous work in planning this event and shepherding us through the day. Everything went like clockwork, and participants seemed to have a great time. Thanks also to Nancy Bodinet, who kept snacks and beverages coming throughout the day.

As you know, the NIHS Board of Directors has endorsed the creation of an AHS National Display Garden at Cantigny Park in Wheaton. Here is some background and a status report: In 2011 Lou Horton initiated a member-built hosta garden at Cantigny, with the approval of the NIHS board and Cantigny staff. Many of us have contributed plants to it since then—about 50 in all, with the largest number donated by Tom Micheletti—that have formed the basis of that collection and will become the nucleus of the proposed AHS display garden. The \$1,000 purchase of mature hostas authorized by our board is on hold as we work with Cantigny officials to optimize the location of the AHS garden within the park, move existing plants, and determine how best to integrate existing Cantigny hosta collections and ours. At press time, we are still working on the details. When these matters are resolved, hopefully soon, we will start planting. Stay tuned!

One of the most important events of our year is coming up on August 10: THE NIHS AUCTION! Details are elsewhere in this newsletter, but I want to emphasize that THIS IS OUR ONLY ANNUAL FUNDRAISER. We rely on income from this event, which provides (we hope!) more than half our total for the year. It's also lots of fun. So I



*Kay Maitner's multi-level garden on the June 21 Bus Trip.*

*Jim King photo*

ask you to please to help us out by providing hostas and/or companion plants to be auctioned. Dig between now and a month from now. Put your plants in pots so they will recover to look their best and bring the best price on August 10. Donate as many as you wish, but please note: Bigger clumps of desirable plants bring the best prices. If you need help digging, let me know and I'll find someone to help. You can also help us by coming to the auction and bidding on specimens to augment your own collection. BRING YOUR FRIENDS, TOO! The auction is open to the public, and we will be advertising it in media throughout the suburbs.

I look forward to seeing you at the next two garden walks and at the auction. In the meantime, please let me know if you have any comments or suggestions about what NIHS does and/or what you think it should do. The board always appreciates member input.

Barbara



## July 13 Prospect Heights Hosta Garden Walks Preview

Our second Hosta Garden Walk of the season is a **twofer** at Prospect Heights. Friends, neighbors and NIHS members describe Marcia Jendreas and Colleen Gaudins who will open their gardens on Sunday, July 13. Both gardeners include hostas as one expanding element in their lovely gardens.

Marcia started her garden 34 years ago surrounded by honeysuckle bushes and four Peony plants. Her goal was to get rid of the honeysuckles since she didn't like a lot of flowering plants. She sought a lot of texture and



Marcia Jendreas' texture gardens above and left.



different shades of greens and yellows. She finds gardening is a lot of fun, a stress reliever, and a way of life. The garden now has eight different garden "rooms" which include shade, sun, native plants, and ponds. Giant hostas are among Marcia's favorites and she grows over 30 varieties of hostas. Empress Wu is just starting to come into its own.

Something is always blooming in Marcia's gardens from spring to fall. The waterfall in the pond creates a relaxing atmosphere on the patio. The koi and goldfish are entertaining, especially during spawning season. Marci-

a's grandchildren have a great time following all the paths that lead to bridges, dry rock beds, and ponds.

Our next garden is Colleen Gaudins' labor of love. As a Master Gardener who volunteers at the Chicago Botanic Garden's plant propagation unit, Colleen cannot resist the many new and different plants she encounters each season. What was once a *continued on page 4*

Colleen Gaudins' sunny bed.





## July 13 Hosta Garden Walks

### Preview *continued*

garden composed of ditch daylilies and a few variegated hostas has become Colleen's eclectic mix of plants reflecting her interest in the unusual. The half-acre site includes both sun and shade planting beds. Many native plants are included. Touches of whimsy are found throughout the garden including a collection of rabbit figurines. Colleen is a lover of bunnies, despite the damage they may cause. What was once an unused in-ground pool has been converted into a large planter that serves as the central showpiece for the patio.



Visit Colleen Graudins' distinctive garden on July 13. *Driving Directions: The gardens are located west of Highway 83 and north of Palatine Rd. in Prospect Heights. From Highway 83 turn west onto Stonegate Dr., about 0.25 mi north of Palatine Rd. The first intersection is Wildwood Dr. Turn left one block to Marcia's garden at 31 S. Wildwood on the left. Or, turn right and proceed less than one block on Wildwood Dr. to Colleen's garden at 904 E. Wildwood on the left. The gardens are less than two blocks apart. If you travel on the Edens Expressway, I-294, or Highway 53, exit at Palatine Rd to travel to the interchange with Highway 83.*

## New Member Welcome!

**Carol & Alan Champ, Lake Forest**  
**Ted & Myra Lawrence, Oak Brook**

**Sandra Sanda, Elgin**

**JoDee Walsh, Chicago**

**Sue Welker, Naperville**



Join the NIHS by contacting Mike Kraus, Membership Chairman, 6311 Carrie Ct, Crystal Lake, IL 60014 with your check for \$20. Please include your name (s), address, phone #, and current email address.

Family membership dues are \$20 for 2 years includes email versions of 4 newsletters per year.

Email us at [NI.hosta@gmail.com](mailto:NI.hosta@gmail.com)

Call Mike @ 815-356-8569. Visit our website @ [www.NorthernIllinoisHostaSociety.org](http://www.NorthernIllinoisHostaSociety.org).

Please send membership renewals to Mike at the above address. For mailed copies check the date above your mailing address for your expiration date.

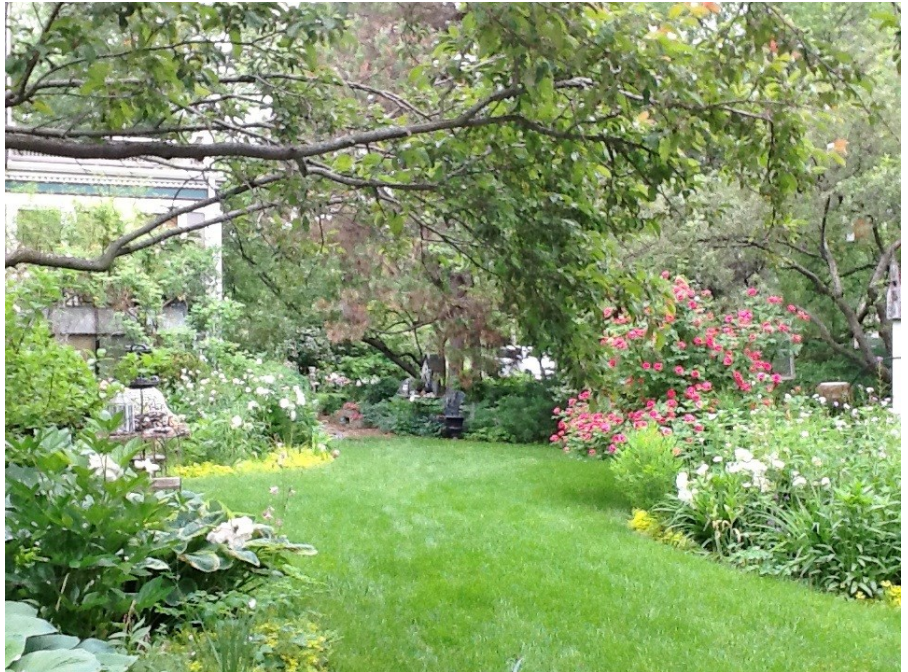


## July 27 Hosta Garden Walk Preview in Hinsdale

Our final Hosta Garden Walk of the season will be at the Hinsdale home of Tanner Musso on July 27 from 2 to 5 pm. The house is from the 1880s and the garden has evolved through the years.

The garden reflects the eclectic interests of its owner. There are many features including a pond, fountains, antique planters, benches, ornamental stone from old buildings, etc. Of course there are many hosta. There are walkways, boxwood squares and walls.

*A touch of Tanner Musso's artistry.*



*One of Tanner Musso's garden vistas.*



Tanner spends winters searching for and making interesting garden accessories. She finds gardening is a never ending process; she frequently adds or edits features.

The Musso garden has been featured in many garden walks and has been the site of numerous charitable events over the years. Later this year Tanner will host the Nature Artists Guild for a day of painting and creating in her inspiring garden. Mark your calendar to visit on July 27.

*Driving Directions: From I-294 take Ogden Ave West for 0.8 miles (If using LaGrange Road, IL Hwy 83 or I-355 exit Ogden Ave to York Road). Turn South on York Road.*

*Follow York 0.5 miles (York ends at The Lane. Turn right on The Lane and then immediately turn left onto Garfield Ave Follow Garfield Ave 0.8 miles south to Third Street. Turn right onto E Third St and go west two blocks to 242 E Third Street.*





Hosta Victory, 2015 AHGA Hosta of the Year



Botanical Gardens—Arboretum  
Garden Center



Princeton, IL

[www.hornbakergardens.com](http://www.hornbakergardens.com)



This year's only sale day is Saturday,  
June 7th. Visit other times by  
appointment. Call me at 630 293 7735.

My address is: 1N735 Ingalton Ave.,  
West Chicago, IL 60185

Lou Horton



Rich's Foxwillow  
Pines Nursery, Inc.

Hosta Sale and Bolivian Arts & Crafts Fundraiser  
June 7, 2014 August 23, 2014  
9am—4pm

All proceeds from hosta sales benefit Heifer International  
and Bolivian arts & craft sales benefit  
Mano a Mano International Partners.

**Check or Cash only.**

*Hundreds of Hosta varieties always available!  
Lovely shade-tolerant conifers and Japanese maples  
make great companion plants for hostas! Tour the nursery and  
see unusual conifers, ginkgos, Japanese maples,  
European beeches and more!*

March 1 - November 30: 8:00 - 4:30 Monday - Saturday  
December 1 - February 28: 8:00 - 4:30 Monday - Friday

11618 McConnell Rd. Woodstock IL 60098  
phone: 815-338-7442 fax: 815-338-7446  
email: [coniflora@richsfoxwillowpines.com](mailto:coniflora@richsfoxwillowpines.com)  
[www.richsfoxwillowpines.com](http://www.richsfoxwillowpines.com)



Hosta  
Curly  
Fries,  
AHGS  
Hosta  
of the  
Year  
2016





## Your Growing Concerns Perennial Nursery

We carry over 160 hostas, all from Q & Z Nursery, 55 new hostas this year and 14 new introductions including 'Aladdin's Lamp', 'Epiphany', 'Hypnosis', & 'Tootie May'. We are a full service nursery providing a wide selection of trees, shrubs, shade & sun perennials including 24 Proven Winners hydrangeas. Perennial plant prices start @ \$3.25.

Visit us @ [yourgrowingconcerns.net](http://yourgrowingconcerns.net) or on Facebook. 8N996 Dittman Rd, Campton Hills, IL 847-826-4769

How does your garden grow?

## Contrary Mary's Plants & Designs

We specialize in the unusual!

More than 500 hosta varieties

Dozens of peony varieties

Most available to order online!

Visitors welcome! We're located

35 miles southwest of Chicago.

[www.contrarymarysplants.com](http://www.contrarymarysplants.com)

(815) 521-9535



## Join the Excitement for our Annual Plant Auction

Aug 10, 1 till 5 pm, Hinsdale Community House

Mark your calendar to join in the fun of taking home plants that may be difficult to find in the trade or just some great bargains! The bidding will be lively and exciting! Again this year will be a sale of some special plants at fixed prices for the bargain hunters plus a fun hosta raffle of some lovely mature specimens.

We need your help with the auction to keep the NIHS going for another twenty years at our only fundraiser. Last year we made \$2,279 net profit. Our goal is \$2,800 for this year's auction. The auction is being held at **The Community House, 415 W. Eighth St in Hinsdale, 1:00 PM to 4:00 .**

To donate just bring your potted plants (hostas and companion plants) between 12:30pm & 1:00pm to the Community House. Also, other ways to make the auction a success:

- bring a non-member friend to the auction
- copy this page and share with your gardener friends and plant club members
- donate quality newer variety plants you would be happy to own

Directions: From Ogden Ave/IL 34 in Hinsdale turn South on York Road which turns into Garfield Ave and continue to Eighth St. Turn Right to the Community House.



Happy winning bidders at the August 2013 Auction.



## Hosta Leaf Display at Chicago Botanic Gardens June 1



Visitors examining hosta leaves on display.



Tom Micheletti presenting a workshop Sunday afternoon.

Vendor Tom Micheletti of The Hosta Patch sets up his space.



Winners of popularity poll, left to right: #1 Hollywood Lights; #2 Victory; #3 Wheee!

*Many thanks to Jim King for photos and commentary.*



Some of the hostas leaves on display.

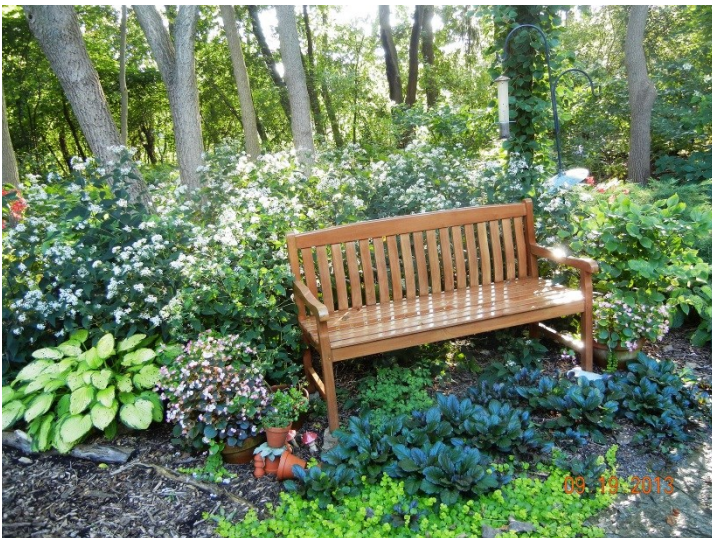
Acknowledgements: Many thanks to Lou Horton & Tom Micheletti for their seminars, Tom Micheletti & Jim Morrow for vending hostas, & to Nancy Bodinet for coordinating and arranging the volunteers. Other volunteers known to the Editor included Mary Ann Brucher, Faith & Andy Campbell, Billie Childress, Barbara King, Nellie Lulla, Ellen & John van Ostrand, Mark Rekoske, Rosemary Sieverin, Janet Simpson, & Olga Swehla. Join the fun and meet new friends by volunteering for an upcoming event. My apologies if I have not properly recognized your contributions. Editor



## Sept 7 Potluck, Annual Meeting & Plant Swap

Mark your calendar for the last outside social event of the season on Sunday September 7. Fall is a lovely time to enjoy our gardens and to visit with new & old friends. Dig your plants now to swap at the festivities. Learn what's happening and planned for next year 's NIHS activities at a brief business meeting. Enjoy great food prepared by local chefs (you!)

The gathering will be from 1 till 4 pm at Judi & Ron Asselborn's in Campton Hills (just west of St Charles).



Asselborn garden Sept 2013.

## Volunteer Opportunities!

**ASSISTANT WEBSITE MANAGERS** needed to help the NIHS Webmaster with updating the site and adding new information as needed. It's important to have more than one person available who has some website experience and can handle this important responsibility. Contact Mike Kraus at [NI.hosta@gmail.com](mailto:NI.hosta@gmail.com).

**AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHERS** wanted to take photos at NIHS events. Any type of digital camera will work for our needs. We wish to document and publish these photos in the Hosta Happenings newsletter and on the website. We have one volunteer and need another person to cover several events.

Contact Ron Asselborn at: [rasselborn@fvi.net](mailto:rasselborn@fvi.net) or 630-587-1341.

## CHICAGOLAND DAYLILY SOCIETY

### *Plant Sale*

Saturday, August 9, 2014

10:00 am - 2:30 pm

**The Annual Daylily Plant Sale** is to be held at the Community House in Hinsdale. Many colors and flower types of both older and new cultivars will be available at reasonable prices.

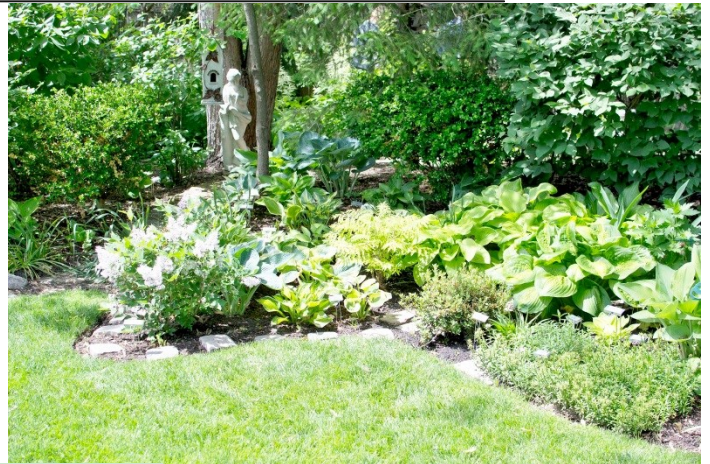
There will be one table devoted to newer cultivars on the market.

The Community House,  
415 West 8th Street, Hinsdale, IL. (630) 323-7500

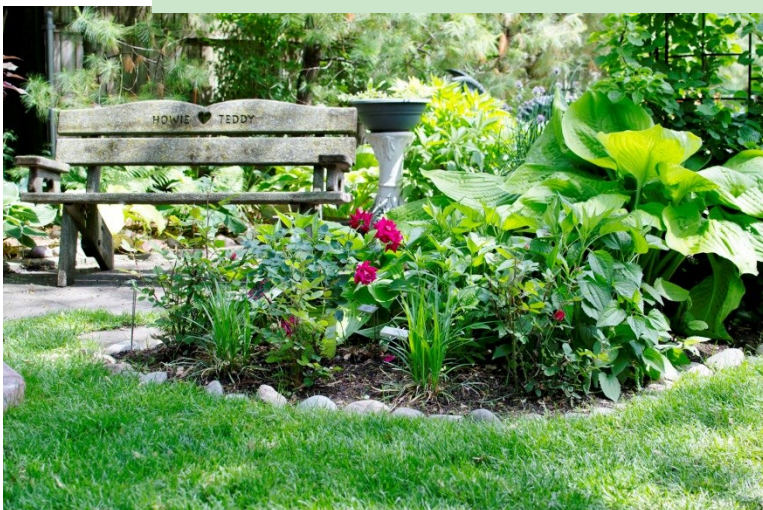




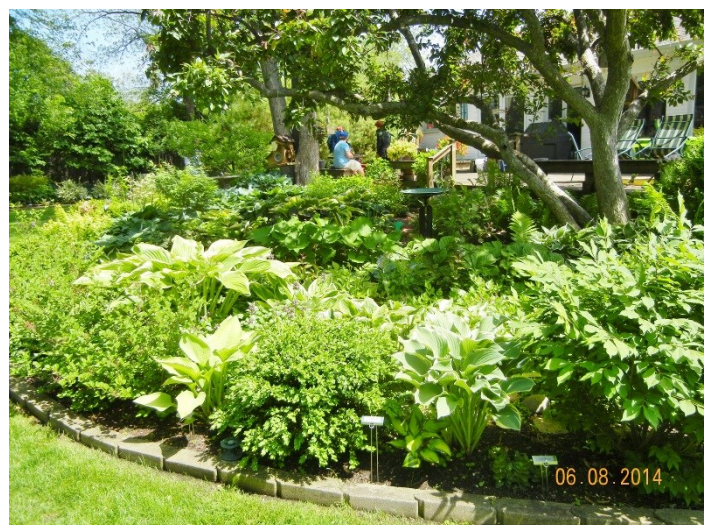
NORTHERN ILLINOIS HOSTA SOCIETY  
HOSTA HAPPENINGS



Sunday June 8 was a glorious Spring day with many NIHS visitors to Teddy & Howard Goldman's lovely garden.  
Photos above right and directly below courtesy of Jim Solotke.



Teddy & Howard Goldman, hosts for the June 8 Hosta Garden Walk.





## Hostas that Tolerate Dry Shade



*Hosta Sweet Home Chicago*

Dry shade can be the result of several different situations. The first scenarios that came to my mind were areas that couldn't be reached by a water hose, gardens that rely on the limited availability of well water, and the areas directly under wide roof overhangs. I was reminded that hosta gardeners regularly experience dry shade conditions due to plantings under trees, most notably shallow rooted trees like maples.

Without amending the soil prior to planting and receiving average amounts of moisture, there may not be any hosta that will grow well year after year in dry shade. This article focuses on hostas that when grown in well prepared amended soil will tolerate dry locations, but not actually prefer this condition. A top dressing of organic mulch (garden compost, mushroom compost or well-rotted wood chips to name a few) will keep the soil cooler, retain moisture longer and reduce evaporation.

When hostas are grown under trees, possibly the most important factor is the type of tree itself. Oak and hickory trees (deep roots) are reasonable to grow hostas under, silver maples are not (shallow roots), at least not without daily care as Lou Holverson does in her wonderful garden. Kay Dye believes that the most difficult area to grow hostas in is anywhere in the vicinity of the outer edge of a tree's drip line, no matter what type of tree, as their roots are most competitive in this area.

As far as hosta that will tolerate dry shade, Kay developed a list of good performers in her gardens using the following criteria:

§ They were growing in an area that either, is not watered or experiences periods of hotter sun conditions, causing the soil to dry out, even if they do get occasional water.

§ They maintain or increase in size from one year to the next.

§ They are not typically susceptible to crown rot.

§ They look good from August until first frost.

Below is her list, in no particular order. The majority of the follow-

ing are large hostas. Possibly their tolerance to dry shade is due to a larger root system being more capable of extracting moisture from the soil. An interesting side note, Kay has not noticed any of these hostas form the fairy ring (center clump dieback).

Kay believes these hostas (listed below) actually prefer well drained to dry conditions:

- ◆ Abba Dabba Do
- ◆ Abiqua Drinking Gourd
- ◆ Bright Lights
- ◆ Choko Nishiki / On Stage
- ◆ Christmas Tree
- ◆ City Lights
- ◆ fortunei Albomarginata
- ◆ fortunei Aureomarginata
- ◆ Gold Edger\*
- ◆ Gold Regal
- ◆ Gold Standard
- ◆ Golden Waffles
- ◆ Halcyon
- ◆ High Noon

*(Continued on page 13)*



## Hostas that Tolerate Dry Shade

*Continued from previous page*

- ◆ Invincible
- ◆ June
- ◆ Leola Fraim
- ◆ Most of the Tiara Group
- ◆ Mountain Snow
- ◆ Nigrescens
- ◆ Olive Bailey Langdon
- ◆ Permanent Wave
- ◆ Prairie Glow
- ◆ Sagae
- ◆ Shogun
- ◆ Sparkling Burgundy
- ◆ Summer Serenade
- ◆ Sun Power
- ◆ Sweet Home Chicago
- ◆ Tenryu
- ◆ ventricosa
- ◆ ventricosa Aureomarginata
- ◆ Zounds

\*In Kay's garden, this hosta has been susceptible to crown rot, but it made the list because it has proven to be "such a trooper in hot dry conditions".

Keep in mind that the above is Kay's thoughts based upon plants grown in her gardens. I am sure if you asked other gardeners, there would be some duplication of names, plus some additional names. Ray Wie-

gand (Ohio) states Sweet Susan, Undulata and Fortunei Albopicta survive in a real dry northern exposure under a roof eave. Additionally, I did find two references stating Jason and Katie will tolerate dry conditions.

Of course, there are no guarantees all of the above will tolerate the variable dry shade conditions in every garden. Recapping, I think it is safe to say there are hostas that will tolerate dry shade, but to improve the likelihood of success, keep the following tips in mind:

§ Improving the composition of the soil, adding significant amounts of moisture retentive well-rotted composts is critical.

§ Use an organic mulch (not fresh) to retain moisture. It is important to pull the compost a few inches away from the base of each hosta to lessen the possibility of crown and/or petiole rot.

§ A consistent season long watering program will also improve your chances for success.

There are a couple pluses to gardening in dry shade. Slugs do not live in dry locations and the likelihood of crown rot and/or petiole rot is significantly less. Of course, most people would agree there are more severe negatives than positives. These include:

Hostas without sufficient amounts of water throughout the growing season are more likely to develop dry rot of the crown over the winter, resulting in much smaller hostas the following season and possibly the complete loss of others.

Competition for moisture and nutrients from shallow rooted trees is a constant challenge. Hostas grown under shallow rooted trees typically require more watering for optimum size increase. Keep in mind that tree canopies often prevents light rains from reaching the ground. In years of average or more amounts of rainfall, mature clumps of hostas can survive with no supplemental watering. Remember the advice of Bob Solberg; if you are not going to water - DON'T START, if you are going to water - DON'T STOP!

By Ray Rodgers, reprinted from CIHS June 2014 newsletter



*Hosta June*

## Hosta Garden Calendar

### Summer (Period of bloom and seed set) June-July-Aug

The time of bloom in hosta species and their cultivars varies from late May or June to September. A particular hosta will normally bloom once for about 3 weeks during the summer, producing a flower scape from the growing bud that just finished producing the flushes of leaves. The scape has a number of lily-like flowers that are open for one day only and are bee pollinated. (H. Plantaginea opens in the evening and may be moth pollinated.)

Seed pods are formed from fertilized ovaries at the base of the pistil and swell in size. Black, single-winged seeds are usually ripe in 6-8 weeks.

Labeling: Replace the labels that the squirrels have pulled up.

Light: This is the brightest and more importantly, hottest light of the year. The sun is at its maximum height in the sky and often beds that were bathed in shade in early May are now in full sun. Hostas can tolerate direct light but they hate heat! If leaf margins begin to brown, it may be time to move that hosta to a cooler spot in the garden. On the other hand, year by year shade gardens become shadier. Consider removing a branch here or there during the summer to create spotlights of bright light in the garden. Maybe even consider removing an entire tree, but that should probably wait until winter.

Nutrients: Blooming hostas still need nutrients to maintain their foliage and produce seeds but not a high nitrogen diet. If you are liquid feeding weekly, continue if there is ample rain. In times of drought reduce feeding to every other week. Discontinue any supplemental foliar feeding; hosta leaves have expanded to their maximum by now. Remember if it doesn't rain, then your slow release fertilizer is not being released. Irrigation may be a good idea.

Pests: If it turns dry, the deer will show up looking for some lush hosta foliage full of water. Spray deer repellent every 3 weeks or more often and rotate your favorite brands. Leave the electric fence on at all times. Be on the look out for the symptoms of foliar nematodes, those nasty brown streaks. If you have a major problem, remove the most highly infected hostas and water less and feed less. Starve the hostas and stress the worms.

Quarantine your garden. If you have a minor issue, remove infected hostas and all the ones touching them. A few years of this may eliminate the problem almost completely.

Protection: Watch for petiole rot. This fungus attacks the base of hosta petioles, secreting a substance that eats through the plant tissue causing the leaves to fall on the ground. This usually occurs in the first hot dry weather of the summer. Pull back mulch. Treat with 10% bleach solution immediately and retreat if necessary. There are also fungicides (e.g. Terrachlor) that can be applied. Oth-



Hosta Fried Bananas in bloom

er fungi may attack the hosta leaves, especially in hot, humid climates in wet summers. Apply fungicides (e.g. Daconil) as a preventative in late June every 2 weeks as necessary. Rotate fungicides.

Propagation: Divide hostas as the heat of summer pass-

*(Continued on page 15)*



## Hosta Garden Calendar

*Continued from previous page*

es. August is the best time to drastically divide and plant or pot hostas. Try to give your hostas 6 weeks before the first frost to establish new roots in their new home.

**Water:** Like nutrients, a hosta's demands for water are reduced after their leaves are mature. Increased temperatures however, increase the transpiration rate, the rate at which the water is pulled out of the hosta leaves, requiring more water to replace it. Transpiration affects trees to an even greater degree as they pump water up and out of the garden soil. In hot weather sometimes keeping your hostas full of water all day long is a constant battle. Continue the fight. Dry soil may cause your hostas to go heat dormant or worse, dry rot at the bottom of the crown. In heavily shaded gardens, irrigation during the day can cool those hot leaves.



Hosta 'Plantaginea'

Fun! Cut some scapes after a couple of flowers have opened and bring them inside to enjoy for two or more weeks. Cut and remove the other scapes when 75% of the flowers have opened, unless you wish to save the seeds. Take in a hosta convention; regional events are inexpensive and allow plenty of time to socialize. Visit other local gardens and get some new ideas. Remember to bring a hosta along as a gift. Begin to plant new acquisitions.

from "The Green Hill Gossip" by Bob Solberg

## How To Grow Hostas In Containers

By: Sandra O'Hare

Hostas make a lovely shade garden plant but there is no reason that these hardy and versatile foliage plants need to remain tucked away in your shade garden. Hostas will also thrive in containers and look wonderful accenting a shady patio or porch. Also, if you have serious trouble with slugs in your garden, container gardening with your hostas may be the answer.

### How to Plant Hosta Plants in Containers

To plant your hostas in containers:

Fill the base of the pot you've chosen with rocks for drainage. One or two inches will do.

Fill the pot with your choice of soil mix. Don't fill it completely just yet, though.

Place a handful of slow release fertilizer in the container.

Add a little bit of soil to the fertilizer, mix it up well and then put the hosta on top of that.

Remove the hosta from its growing pot and fork over the rootball to help free the roots. This will help the plant establish quickly in the new container, but will not damage the roots.

Center the hosta in the pot and then fill the container with more soil.

Make sure you water the plant carefully.

Finally, cover the surface of the container with a thick layer of small pebbles. This stops any slugs and will help keep the roots of your hosta cool. It's also going to prevent the soil from drying quickly.

Remember that hostas in containers need water regularly. Make sure you water them below the leaf canopy and around the crowns. Excessive wetting can mark the

*(Continued on page 16)*

## Letter to the Editor

Q What is a Sport versus a Hybrid?

A. A sport is a mutation produced vegetatively by a single plant that is different from the parent plant (no seeds involved). In hostas, this usually is a leaf color or pattern variation, although flower, scape, and even root differences on a new division would also be considered sports. Basically, your plain old green plant suddenly grows a leaf or sends out a new division with, for example, a white edge. Or your nice variegated plant suddenly produces an eye with solid green leaves.

A hybrid is a new variety produced, most often by seed, either from 2 different parent plants, or by self pollinating one plant that is itself a hybrid. Species plants breed true, but almost all of the hostas currently available commercially are hybrids, that is, the result of an earlier crossing of 2 different varieties. Therefore, when you cross 2 hybrids, you can get a wide range of different plants, none of which will be genetically identical to either parent plant.

*Contributed by dhaven on the Hosta Forum*

## How To Grow Hostas In Containers

*Continued from previous page*

leaves. At the same time, make sure that the container you plant your hostas in has good drainage. This is important to keep root rot from setting in.

You can tuck in a few other shade loving flowers and plants as well. Hostas make a wonderful backdrop to help make the colors of the flowers pop. Even on their own, hostas can help add a tropical feel to a shady but soilless area in your garden.

*From Gardening Know How: <http://www.gardeningknowhow.com>*

## Slug Solutions

Here are some slug solutions from Laura Klein:

1. Slugs avoid crawling over anything dry, dusty or scratchy, such as lime, diatomaceous earth, cinders, coarse sawdust, gravel or sand. These make great barriers to keep out slugs.
2. Epson Salts sprinkled on the soil will help deter slugs and also help prevent Magnesium deficiency in your plants.
3. Vinegar, a good ingredient for slug sprays and removing slug slime.
4. Spread salt around your plants. Salt dries them out so they won't go near it.
5. Collect human, dog, or cat hair and put around your plants, not only will the slugs not go on it, but it will also keep a lot of the little critters away.
6. When you find a slime trail, destroy the track so other slugs do not follow. They will follow each other's trail. There are certain plants that slugs hate like the strong smell of mint, chives, garlic, geraniums, foxgloves and fennel. Plant them around the edge of your garden.
7. Put stone paths along your flower beds.
8. Put Copper or foil barriers around plants that the slugs are eating. When the slugs cross them they are given a small shock. This also works for snails.
9. If you find slugs in your potted plants, put petroleum jelly around the base and tops of your plant containers and watch them slip and slide.
10. Fill a shallow bowl with beer and wait overnight. The slugs love it. Dispose of the slugged brew on your compost.
11. Another slug formula: 1 part ammonia to 3 parts of water. One squirt on the slugs is all you need.
12. After eating your 1/2 grapefruit for breakfast, put it into your garden to make slug trap. Turn upside down after putting a small hole or two on the side for slugs to enter. They adore grapefruit and the slugs will gather there to eat the grapefruit and leave your plants alone.



## HOSTA HAPPENINGS

**Why and Where I Grow Hostas****(or A Stroll Down Memory Lane)**

I became interested in hostas when we moved to southern Maryland 30 years ago. There, I had a small collection, but I did not start seriously collecting them until we moved back to Tennessee and I joined the Hosta Society. Unlike many of my fellow hosta lovers, I do not have a lot of shady areas. Although we live on eight acres, most of it is open fields. This property has a lovely roll to it. Fortunately, there is one-half acre that is mostly flat which is where we built our home in 2000. We have owned this property since 1977 and we let our neighbor keep his small herd of cattle on it from the mid-1980's until 1999. After we moved into our home, I discovered a narrow strip of land through the trees where those cows had walked for 10 years. They had worn a path through the shaded areas that ran from the front of the property toward the back. To the right side of this path is a three-foot-wide strip of land that gently slopes away from the path. It then drops off into a five-foot deep gully. One day I was walking along this path and realized that it would be the perfect spot for me to put in my shade gardens.



And so, the “Cow Path Gardens” were born. We made a low fence using dead fallen trees to keep the soil from eroding. It was also to keep me from going too close to the edge. Before I



had a lot of plants, the edge was not easily seen in the winter. Since I tend to be distracted when I am outside, I needed something to keep me from wandering too close to the edge. This arrangement has evolved into a very inexpensive fence that fits in with the rustic nature of this garden. The area on the left side of this pathway has some large trees and a lovely slope away from the path. This area was expanded to a garden that is now six feet wide and runs the entire length of the cow path. In the beds on both sides of the path, I have planted among the pots of hostas hydrangeas, beauty berry, buckeyes and other native plants such as ferns, hellebores, wood poppies, columbine and ginger. I also have placed pots of dwarf Japanese maples in these beds. During the summer, to give the gardens some added color and interest, I like to grow colorful tropicals like elephant ears, coleus and impatiens in pots.

*(Continued on page 18)*



## Why and Where I Grow Hostas

*Continued from previous page*

In Maryland, I would buy hostas from two members of my garden club at our annual plant sale. (We were always our own best customers.) These ladies taught me that voles think of hostas roots as a real tasty treat. They showed me the secret of sinking the black nursery pots into the ground and mulching the garden to hide the pots. Although those shade beds in Maryland were bordering a wooded area with a stream, it worked well there. I have tried that same trick here and it worked for a while. Then began the battle with tree roots. My shade is really a dry shade, but since I grow many plants that require a good bit of water, the tree roots have become a serious problem. So I decided about eight years ago, growing them above the ground in pots was the best way for them to thrive. I have all different sizes of pots that I put on old weather-resistant tiles or upside-down plastic saucers to keep the tree roots and voles out. So far, so good.

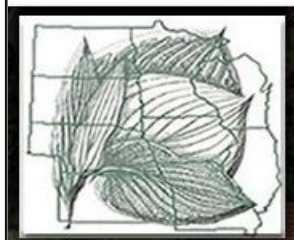
The great thing about hostas is that they are such attractive plants from April until October. I like all the different colors, sizes and shapes of hostas. I really like the lighter green hostas because they show up so well from a distance. They light up the shade beds and vary in sizes, shapes and forms. I like to put them in small groups along the path so they can act like beacons in the garden, lighting the way down the path.

Another benefit of growing hostas in pots, is that they can be moved around as needed. Four years ago, I lost two mature sassafras trees, but most of my hostas have been able to survive. Since some hostas can take more sun than others, I was able to shift around different pots of hostas and it now appears that everyone is happy in their current location. I have since planted four Japanese maples and a vitex that in time will replace these lost trees. They are growing fairly quickly and hopefully in the next three or four years will replace a lot of the shade that was lost.

Now I am doing battle with a small herd of deer that visit the gardens in the winter. They walk through the gardens and prune all the new growth tips off my hydrangeas. I do not often get to enjoy their blooms. They also do a little bit of taste testing of the growth tips of some of my Japanese maple collection. Luckily for me, they do not seem very interested in the gardens during the summer months. But just in case, I spray the hostas periodically with deer deterrents once they start to leaf out.

I once heard it said that gardeners are optimists because we always plan for the future. No matter what nature or the critters throw at us, we continue to persevere and sometimes we actually win! May you continue to garden and win as well. by Rosa Woodydy,

*from the Mid-South Hosta Society Hosta Hotline, April 2014*



**Midwest Region Hosta Society**

Visit: [www.midwesthostasociety.org/](http://www.midwesthostasociety.org/)



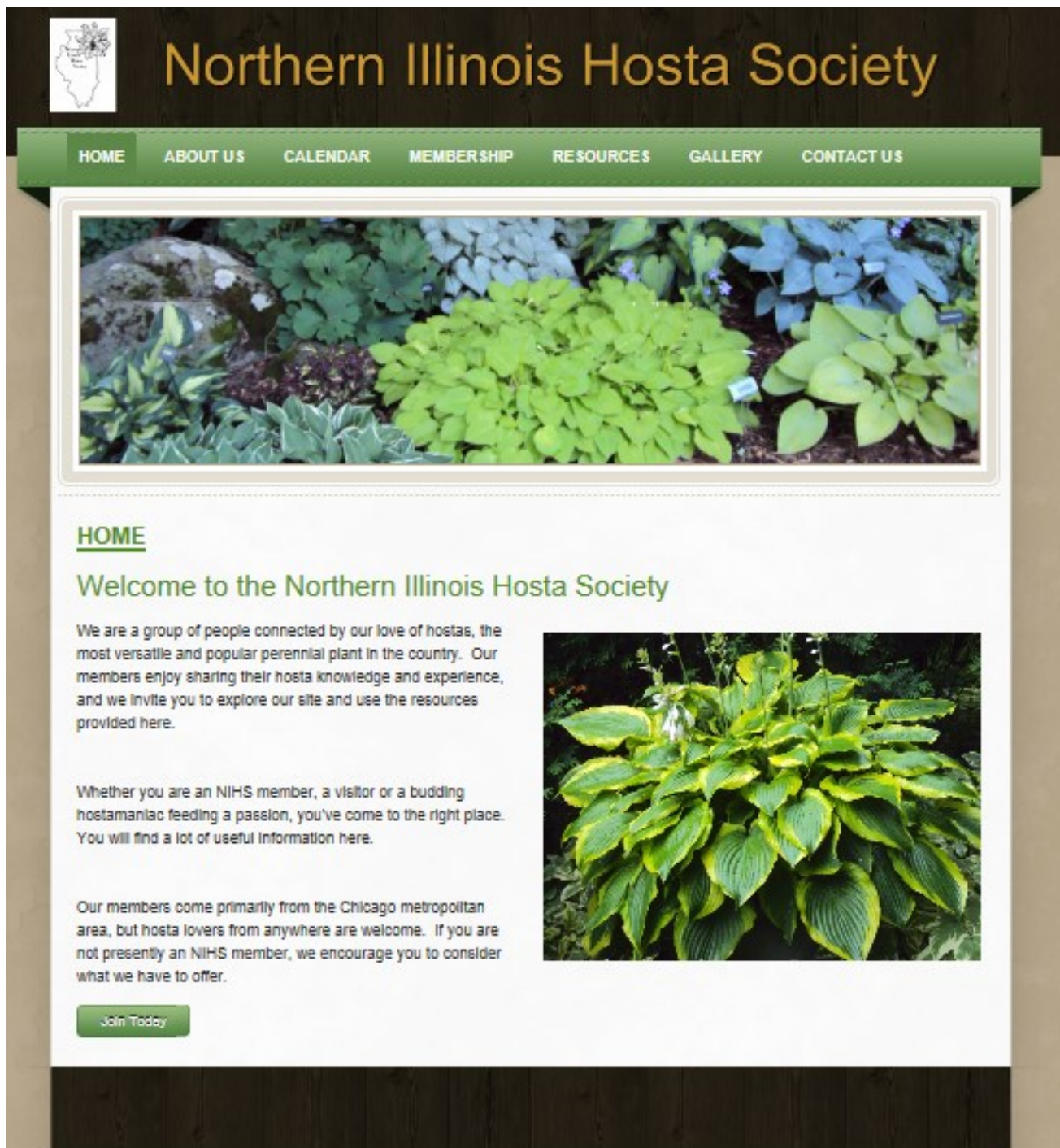
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[www.americanhostasociety.org](http://www.americanhostasociety.org)



## New Website

Below is the initial view visitors will see when they visit our new and improved NIHS website at <http://nihosta.weebly.com/>. Just Google "Northern Illinois Hosta" and you will go right to our site. Mike Kraus and his development team are looking for feedback regarding your use of the site Contact Mike at [NI.hosta@gmail.com](mailto:NI.hosta@gmail.com)



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Northern Illinois Hosta Society website. The header features a logo of a hosta plant on the left and the title "Northern Illinois Hosta Society" in a large, orange font. Below the title is a green navigation bar with white text links: HOME, ABOUT US, CALENDAR, MEMBERSHIP, RESOURCES, GALLERY, and CONTACT US. The main content area has a white background and is framed by a dark border. It begins with a large photograph of various hosta plants in a garden. Below the photo is the heading "HOME" in green, followed by the main heading "Welcome to the Northern Illinois Hosta Society" in green. The text below reads: "We are a group of people connected by our love of hostas, the most versatile and popular perennial plant in the country. Our members enjoy sharing their hosta knowledge and experience, and we invite you to explore our site and use the resources provided here." This is followed by another paragraph: "Whether you are an NIHS member, a visitor or a budding hostamaniac feeding a passion, you've come to the right place. You will find a lot of useful information here." A third paragraph states: "Our members come primarily from the Chicago metropolitan area, but hosta lovers from anywhere are welcome. If you are not presently an NIHS member, we encourage you to consider what we have to offer." At the bottom left of the main content area is a green button with the text "Join Today". To the right of the text is a photograph of a large, healthy hosta plant with variegated green and yellow leaves and a single white flower.



**UPDATE:** March 26, 2014

**GREAT NEWS and ANNOUNCEMENTS!**

The dream became a reality in mid-January after the \$150,000 needed to order the new home for the Spece family was met in December.

I had the privilege of seeing the Spece family's new home being placed on the foundation on that sunny, bitterly cold day. The first of four modules was hoisted into position by a crane and a surprisingly small crew for such a huge undertaking. Guide ropes and a few experienced men on the ground made short work of the first three sections to the amazement of everyone who had gathered to watch this life-changing event.

The final section didn't arrive on site until work was well underway. Prep for its installation took longer than the others. It was a thrilling sight as it was lifted over the top of the other sections and nestled into place on the east side of the home.

Marlys' dream of a new, handicap accessible home for her friends, the Spece family, began several years earlier when she was asked to write a letter nominating the Spece family to Extreme Makeover: Home Edition. Although another Iowa family was selected for that home, Building A Dream In The Country was launched by a group of friends and supporters of the family in the Independence area. Marlys quickly became one of the main champions of BADITC, and, as a result, the funds raised by the 2012 ROHS Auction (over \$3000) went toward the building fund.

Marlys also encouraged hosta clubs across the U.S. to do what ROHS had done and over \$3000 was raised from those efforts, as well.

In May 2013, I hosted an online fundraising auction for BADITC. With generous donations before and after the auction, \$16,000 was raised. Last December, I hosted another online auction benefitting BADITC on behalf of the Hosta Seed Growers group and over \$4700 was raised from hosta seeds, a few select hosta plants, and many generous additional donations.

As Eve wrote in her message, "Marvelous Marlys" was the spark that the hosta world needed to come together to help make Building A Dream In The Country become a reality.

Work continues on the home and many generous in-kind donations have been received from businesses in Northeast Iowa. Work has been slowed at times since the home was placed due to the extremely cold and snowy winter and now muddy conditions around the home.

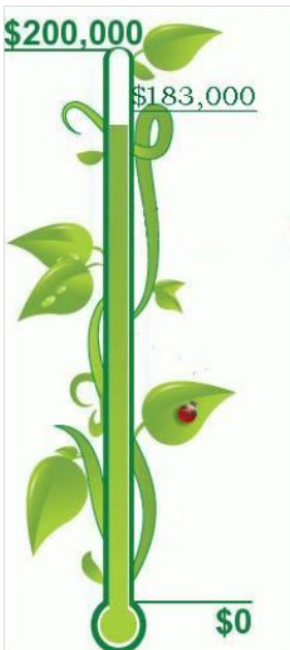
Fundraising continues. The BADITC fundraising thermometer was updated to \$183,000 on February 28th.

Go to: <http://www.buildingadreaminthecountry.com/>

By Reldon Ramsey , Ross O'Hara Hosta Society, April 2014



*For over 30 years, Sue Spece has been the primary caregiver for her three children, all of whom have a form of muscular dystrophy that keeps them in motorized wheelchairs. Josh is a hosta expert, Jacob works with dairy cattle and Jackie runs a dance studio.*

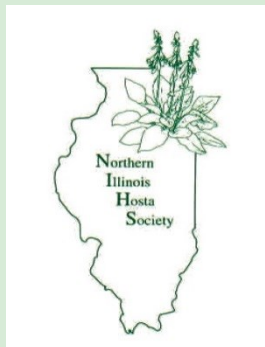




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The Northern Illinois Hosta Society is dedicated to educating the public and promoting the use of hosta in the landscape. NIHS serves the people of Northern Illinois and surrounding areas.

*Tanner Musso's garden is a 'must see' on the July 27 Hosta Garden Walk.*



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*Be sure to visit Marcia Jendreas' & Colleen Graudins' gardens on the July 13 Hosta Garden Walk*

