



GREAT EXPECTATIONS

central illinois hosta society
www.cihshostaclub.org

august 2009
volume 15, issue 6

president's letter

Thank you to Carol Koch for opening her garden to us for our July meeting. A true backyard paradise! We have beautiful gardens in Central Illinois! We are preparing to honor Walt Helmick next month at Luthy Botanical Gardens. The club purchased a bench and stone marker in memory of Walt and it is located in the hosta glade at Luthy Botanical Garden. If you are new to the club, Walt was a great man who loved all aspects of hosta gardening. He and his wife, Nancy, owned a nursery in north Peoria that specialized in hosta. He was ALWAYS very generous, liked to joke around and was a faithful CIHS member. I really miss visiting with him at the meetings.

A few things to remember: Don't forget to bring a tiny, huge, ugly, blue or yellow with a yellow edge hosta leaf to the August meeting. Kathy Allen has lined up The Good, The Bad and the Ugly leaf contest. See the following article for more information.

Sign up for the annual banquet in September – Mark Zilis is our speaker. Shirley Metz has a wonderful buffet planned!

See you in August,
Golda Ewalt, CIHS President

august meeting

Tuesday, August 18, 6:30 pm

Luthy Botanical Garden

2218 N. Prospect, Peoria; corner of Gift & Prospect, at the north end of Glen Oak Park

Centered on a traditional tropical conservatory, the Botanical Garden encompasses five acres of beautiful landscaped displays to please every eye and give you ideas for your own gardening endeavors. Garden areas include the Hosta Glade (of course), the Fall & Spring Borders, the Wildlife Garden, the Woodland Garden, a Dwarf Conifer Garden, the Rose Garden, the Herb Garden, and the Children's Garden. Of special interest this year, the exuberant planters near the front entrance. Patterned after Christopher Lloyd and his garden, Great

Dixter, they are planted for the senses using bold textures, colors and fragrances.

Don't forget to take a few moments to check out the Hosta Glade and the new bench, placed in memory of Walter Helmick. The Hosta Glade was made possible through the kind donations of the CIHS and its very generous membership. It is a garden complete with companion shrubs and 120 hosta cultivars. To provide increased seasonal interest, this spring the hosta were underplanted with woodland ephemerals like mayapple, spring beauty, jack-in-the-pulpit and bloodroot. As a public garden, the hosta display is focused on reliable hosta that the home gardener will find to be most successful, especially those noted for slug resistance and sun tolerance. Please come and join us!

Notice: To provide adequate time for viewing Host Gardens, each Garden will be open to visitors ½ hour early at 6:00, while the meeting starts at 6:30.

The good, the bad and the ugly...



It's time now to have fun with our hosta.

At our **August Meeting** at Luthy Botanical Gardens, we are going to have our own "leaf show". Not the formal kind but the fun kind!

We are looking for the biggest leaf, the smallest leaf, the ugliest leaf (no nematodes, slug damage, or disease – just an ugly growing leaf), the bluest leaf, the most yellow one, and finally, one with a yellow leaf edge and a yellow center (ask Ella, she says there are only 9 registered hosta of this kind). Prizes will be awarded and the judges will be our education committee. If there is a tie between leaves, the judges will grade the leaves on their condition. Just wrap your leaf in a paper towel and we will label them with the owner's name. Any questions contact Kathy Allen 645-7908

CIHS Banquet

The 2009 annual banquet will be held Tuesday September 15th at the Kickapoo Creek Winery (6605 N. Smith Road) in Edwards, Illinois.

This year's keynote speaker is Mark Zilis. Mark is owner and founder of Q&Z Nursery in Rochelle, Illinois. He is most noted for his tissue culture work with hosta and introducing over 200 new hosta; some of which are: 'Frosted Mouse Ears', 'Holy Mouse Ears', 'Pineapple Upside-down Cake', 'Victory', 'Sweet Home Chicago' and 'Summer Breeze'. He is a recipient of the American Hosta Society's Alex J. Summers Distinguished Merit Award,



In addition, Mark is a noted author. His work includes *The Hosta Handbook* and his latest, *The Hostapedia*. He will have copies of his new book available for sale. This is a huge book, a hosta encyclopedia, which is the most definitive work on hosta, in print and a must for every collector and gardener. It's on everyone's wish list.

The Banquet cost is \$35 for CIHS members and \$40 for non-members. The cost includes a dinner buffet, the program and a very special gift hosta from Mark's breeding program. Dinner will be served at 6:30, with a cash bar available at 5:45. After a brief meeting, the program will begin at 7:30. Sign up started at the June meeting. Please make checks payable to CIHS. Contact Shirley Metz for more information at 309.263.7103 or jametz@comcast.net

Note: University of Illinois Extension Master Gardeners will receive continuing education credit for attending the Zilis program.

hosta of the month

Hosta 'Rough Waters' is a medium-large hosta with rich blue-green foliage. It is semi-upright, crinkled blue-gray leaves give the appearance of its namesake. It is a handsome cupped and heavily-textured selection of *H. tokudama*.

Hosta 'Abiqua Drinking Gourd' A medium-large clump with nearly round, blue-green, glaucous leaves that are cupped, with a heavy substance. The clump grows somewhat upright so that you can see the white backs on some of the deepest cupped leaves of any hosta plant. Near white flowers will bloom just above the leaves in early August. This hybrid of *H. tokudama* x *H. sieboldiana* can make an impressive specimen but takes some time to reach maturity.

Hosta 'Elvis Lives' The popularity of this 1990 cross of *H. 'Peter Pan'* x *H. 'Green Fountain'* has skyrocketed. With unique, wavy, tapered leaves of blue suede, the clump spreads to 60" and is topped with nice, medium-lavender flowers in early summer.

Hosta 'Choo Choo Train' A large hosta from a North Carolina gardener with a 2-mile railroad track in his landscape comes this fabulous large hosta. 'Choo Choo Train' features thick gold leaves that are wonderfully ruffled and in time will form a majestic clump 6 feet wide by 2-feet tall. Near white flowers are produced in summer, it is an awesome specimen plant

Hosta 'Blue Hawaii' A vigorous-growing hosta, this stunning upright specimen forms a 30" tall x 42" wide architectural clump of corrugated, flat, blue leaves. The clump is topped with a 44" tall flower scape bearing white, lightly fragrant flowers.

Douglas Drenckpohl

officers

President
Golda Ewalt
309.360.3719
goldaandbob@hotmail.com

Vice President
Kathy Allen
309-263-8637
jkallen9@comcast.net

Second Vice President
Shirley Metz
309.263.7103
jametz@comcast.net

Third Vice President
Sue Eckhoff
309-925-5267
gardener22@verizon.net

Recording Secretary
Carol Morrissey
309.263.0845
camorris99@hotmail.com

Corresponding Secretary
Donna Cothrell
309.694.7648
dkcothrell@hotmail.com

Treasurer
Dan McConnell
309.243.5925
drdtm@comcast.net

to join:

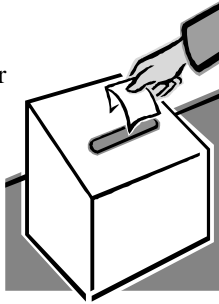
Central Illinois Hosta Society
\$10/year, form on back cover

Midwest Reg. Hosta Society
\$20/2 years
Send dues to:
Pete Postelwaite, Treasurer
21172 Andover Road
Kildeer, IL 60047

American Hosta Society
\$30 individual, \$57/2 years
\$34 family, \$62/2 years
Send dues to:
Sandie Markland
AHS Membership Secretary
Post Office Box 7539
Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

slate of nominations

We will be voting at a future meeting for the slate of nominations; however, nominations will be taken from the floor.



- President: **Sue Eckhoff**
- Vice President: sets up meetings events and potluck, **Charlotte Woodhouse**.
- Second Vice President: works with V. P. to set up meetings and events; sets up auction and banquet, **Shirley Metz**
- Third Vice President: sets up spring symposium, Solberg hosta order & bus trip, **Golda Ewalt**
- Recording Secretary: records and presents meeting minutes, **Chuck Crider**
- Corresponding Secretary: mails thank you notes, cards and other correspondence, **Donna Cothrell**
- Treasurer: maintains accounts, pays bills, writes checks, **Dan McConnell**
- Publicity Chairmen: notifies media of meetings and events, works with Publication Chair, **TBA**
- Education Chairmen: promotes education at meetings, **Bob Streitmatter, Ella Maxwell**
- Ways and Means Chairmen: hosta of the month and fund raising, **Douglas Drenckpohl**
- Historian: keeps scrapbook and history of club, **Micheline Koch**
- Parliamentarian: advises board on parliamentary procedure: **Al Kuhlmann**
- Publication Chairmen: writes and assembles newsletter, **Bob Streitmatter**
- Librarian: maintains library, **Ella Maxwell**
- Membership Chairmen: maintains members list and accepts membership dues, **Kathy Allen**
- Hospitality: sets up refreshments and beverages, **Connie Zircher, Bob Monier**

Mark Zilis to speak at Landscape & Garden Day Prequel

The theme of the 29th annual ICC Landscape and Garden day is “Made in Japan.” As a prelude to the Saturday festivities, Mark Zilis, noted author and hosta grower, will speak about his trips to Japan to obtain hostas and to see them growing in their natural habitat, on Thursday evening, September 10 at 6:30 pm. The seminar will be held at the Illinois Central College horticulture lab. Admission is free. Prior to Mark’s talk, at 5:30, Glenn Herold, horticulture professor at ICC, will give a tour of the horticulture arboretum,

American Hosta Society national display garden, and CIHS Classic Hostas collection.

Saturday seminars include “Ikebana, the Art of Japanese Flower Arranging,” by Helen Bordeaux, “Cooking the Japanese Way,” by Chefs Joy Ashwood and Charles Robertson, “Small Maples of Japanese Origin,” by Sandra Mason, University of IL Extension, and “The Art and Science of Bonsai,” by Steve Tordoff. **For more information, contact Glenn Herold at 694-8446 or 359-2383.**

Hosta Price Lists Likes, Dislikes & Other Observations

When I look at hosta price lists, whether hard-copy or via the Internet, I am most appreciative of the lists that provide a great deal of detail. The more detail one has, the more apt they are to make a purchase decision that will bring joy to them and to those visiting their gardens. The more that is known about hostas and those that introduce them, the more useful the detail becomes.

Most sellers (vendors) specializing only in hostas would consider it price prohibitive to including as much detail as I would like on their hard-copy price list. Fortunately, a number of vendors produce paper and electronic price lists. Website lists typically provide more detail and pictures.

Some hard-copy lists are enhanced by a few pictures, but on electronic lists, pictures are a must for me. Keep in mind that vendors typically use the most flattering picture they have access to. Also be aware that it is very difficult to depict colors exactly, especially shades of blue. For additional photos, I highly recommend checking out the Hosta Library, <http://www.hostalibrary.org>.

There are a few larger-scale growers, offering a wide variety of plant material, that do promote their offering in high quality catalogs. Two of the ones most familiar to me are Klehm’s Song Sparrow Farm & Nursery and Plant Delights Nursery.

In my opinion, lists that only include the following are providing the bare minimum and should be avoided, unless the potential buyer is familiar with the vendor and with the plants of interest.

Hosta Name
Size (Mini, S, M, L, Giant)
Description
Price

Continued on page 4

Additional details often included in price lists include:

Registered By
Year Registered
Parentage
Plant Dimensions
Leaf Dimensions
Flower Color
Scape Color
Introduced by if not Registered (NR)
Ploidy if other than Diploid

I know of one list that even provides the number of vein pairs in typical cultivars' leaves.

It is very important to most buyers to know whether single or multi-eyed divisions will be provided. On occasion, when double-eyed divisions are promised, one may be the recipient of two single division plants. This happens more commonly with newer introductions.

When offering a hosta with splashed variegation, description should include whether the plant sets viable seed. Splashed is the correct term according to the American Hosta Society (AHS), yet most people still refer to this form of variegation as streaked. Such plants are often referred to as breeder plants. With just a few exceptions, splashed hostas are unstable, meaning given enough time without division, they will stabilize into an edge- or centered-variegated or solid-colored plant. It is not unusual for splashed hostas to display all forms in a single clump.

Most vendors do a pretty good job of documenting which plants are viridescent, albescent, or lutescent, although they seldom use these words, see below:

- Viridescent - possessing leaves which begin the season lighter colored and become more green as the season advances
- Albescent - possessing leaves which begin yellow or more pigmented and become whiter as the season progresses; i.e. *H. 'Gold Standard'*
- Lutescent - possessing leaves which begin the season darker and become lighter or more yellow as the season progresses; not the same as bleaching due to poor nutrition or too much sun

Hostas for which Plant Patents have been granted, or Plant Patents have been applied for (PPAF) are also typically documented.

For some people, knowing whether the plant being offered is Originator's Stock (OS) or propagated from Tissue Culture (TC) is of importance. Typically, vendors feel they can price OS plants at a premium. It is often difficult to get some of the more unusual plants to come true to form via TC. In such cases, it is advantageous for vendors to document this fact to help justify the asking price.

There are a variety of other terms occasionally used in lists. If unfamiliar with any, definitions may be found in the Dictionary of Hosta Terms, available on the AHS website, <http://www.americanhostasociety.org/HostaDictionary.html>, or other publications found therein.

I would guess that many people would be interested in lists that include AHS awards won by particular plants or leaves of particular plants. Especially for those newer to hostas, the latest AHS Popularity Poll results should be of interest, as well as the American Hosta Growers Association's (AHGA) "Hosta of the Year" designations, see http://www.hostagrowers.org/ahga_hosta.html.

Most price lists include a guarantee that the plants provided are true to name and will be properly labeled upon receipt. Encouraged by the AHGA, an increasing number of member retailers are also guaranteeing their plants to be pest and disease free. To me, such guarantees should be sought out and should provide an added level of confidence, especially when considering ordering from a nursery one is less familiar with.

Many price lists include a variety of comments like "a great specimen", "a real showstopper", "sure to be a classic", etc. Made in good faith, comments like these may grab readers' attention and help sell plants, but what is more important to me is what I consider value-added comments, like the following examples:

- Plants offered are 2nd year tissue culture. (plant specific)
- *H. 'Blue Flame'* may be the same as 'Secret Love' (sports of 'Fragrant Blue').
- *H. 'Dream Queen'* is similar to 'Dream Weaver' and 'Thunderbolt.'
- *H. 'First Love'* will be an early riser and can use protection from spring frosts.
- *H. 'Guacamole'* does best if planted in a sunnier location.
- *H. 'Summer Music'* is a slow grower and needs bright morning sun to grow well.
- *H. 'Tokudama Aureonebulosa'* and 'High Society' are slow growing but worth the wait.
- *H. 'Tortifrons'* dark green leaves have a corkscrew effect, twisting as the thin blades reach upward. Must be grown in lots of sun to accomplish this effect.
- *H. 'Yellow Polka Dot Bikini'* is quite distinctive early on but as it changes, it begins to look very similar to 'Hanky Panky'.
- Grow *H. 'Cherish'* in an open area with moist soil, where it will not dry out or be eaten by large, more aggressive plants.

Of the price lists I have viewed, Naylor Creek Nursery provides the most value-added information, see <http://www.naylorcreek.com>. **Continued on page 5**

Some vendors continue to offer plants that have a well documented history of having rather serious cosmetic flaws (spring desiccation burn, melting out, etc.), and/or plants that are considered by many as difficult to grow. I'm sure vendors have their reasons for offering such plants, but what really irks me is when only the positives are promoted, and no reference is made about potential negatives. When such sales are gained from less knowledgeable buyers, the potential for repeat business may unknowingly be lost. In my opinion, providing only good to great garden plants should build the vendors reputation and likely result in increased sales.

Although vendors don't typically state the flaws of the plants they are offering, other vendors occasionally point out flaws of particular plants if they are offering a plant they consider better. Example: *H.* 'Olive Bailey Langdon' resembles 'Frances Williams' without all of the unsightly blemishes on the golden part of the foliage.

Another negative I occasionally see, which I believe is merely the result of not updating descriptions, is the reference to "new" used in the descriptions of hostas that have been in the trade for a number of years. Albeit unintentional, this could be misleading. The use I am referring to is not the same as when vendors denote plants that are being offered by them for the first time or offered again after an absence of one or more years.

Be cautious when you see statements like "improved version of...." in the description of newer hostas. If a sport has a wider edge than the parent, brighter coloration, or if the original plant is a diploid and the sport is a tetraploid, I think most hosta enthusiasts would consider these as improved versions, but not all sports are improvements over the parent.

There are thousands of hosta varieties available in the trade today and more entering each year. Based on parentage and coloration, well-informed hosta vendors will have a pretty good idea if newer varieties should or will likely not develop into quality garden worthy plants. Hopefully such vendors will add only the best of the new introductions to their offering. Just as I would expect all vendors to continually add new varieties to their product offering, I believe they should also be responsible enough to drop-off underperformers.

By Ray Rodgers, CIHS

notes from a lecture on growing mini hosta

At the 2008 American Hosta Society National Convention in St. Louis, Missouri, Warren Pollock presented a lecture titled "Mini Hostas 101". Here are some of the recommendations Warren made for good mini hosta growth.

- Minis need sharp, rapid drainage. This can be accomplished by adding up 50% chicken grit to the growing medium. Chicken grit, a crushed granite stone, is inexpensive and can be purchased at the county coop or feed store.
- Minis need moisture. Although this sounds like a contradiction to sharp, rapid drainage, it actually refers to watering often. They do not like to dry out and will not recover well from a drought. A light mulch is advised. Keep the leave dry and do not let them touch damp soil.
- Minis need good air circulation. This is easier to do when the minis are in pots or troughs and can be elevated. If planting in the ground, don't try to tuck it down under a larger hosta or grouped too tightly.
- Minis only need about 3" of soil when planted in containers. Many of them have very short root systems to go with their small stature.
- Minis do not like to have their root disturbed. This is why they do well in pots and the pots can be moved instead of disturbing the hosta.
- Minis like a light application of nitrogen in the spring.
- Minis like to be mulched over the winter. It keep the soil temperature even and helps prevent heaving of the entire plant out of the ground.
- Minis may be put into the soil, a large pot or large trough by burying the entire small planting pot in which it came. To give the mini good drainage, place a few inches of pea gravel under the mini's pot and fill the soil in around it to the top of the pot. If you lift the pot out of the soil and the roots are trying to emerge from the bottom of the pot, you may repot it in a slightly larger pot and return its slight larger space.

By Mary Bardens and reprinted from the newsletter of the Northwest Indiana Hosta Society, August 2008 issue

mini gardens

An oddity just a few years ago, miniature hostas are now seen everywhere. They are cute, take up less space, grow well in troughs and can be addictive for hostaholics. But as with any hosta garden, diversity in plant material will contribute to the health of the plants. It also showcases your minis by giving your eye another place to look instead of at a sea of tiny hostas. So, what is also little, cute and fun to collect to add to your mini hosta garden?

There are many smaller versions of plants that we already know which will grow under the same conditions as hostas. The first that comes to mind blooms for about two weeks in mid spring. 6" in flower, dwarf crested iris, *Iris cristata*, has a soft purple flower with a spot of yellow. The spiked leaves remain a medium green and create a nice contrast in shape when the flowering time is done. Another cute spring bloomer is Dwarf Solomon's Seal, *Polygonatum humile*. It will only reach about 8" in height and produces tiny white oblong flowers that hang down just like its larger version. The leaves are a shiny, dark green and ovoid in shape. Both of these will slowly colonize an area and are easy to divide for transplanting. Korean Violet, *Viola koreana*, 2" in height, remains attractive from spring until fall with a silver pattern on medium to dark green leaves that have a dark maroon underside. The pink to purple flowers are petite too. It tends to reseed a bit, but not aggressively.

Goat's Beard's smaller counterpart is *Aruncus aethusifolius*. It only gets 12" tall with deeply cut glossy foliage in a mound shape. It will bloom in the early summer with several little spikes of white astilbe-like flowers. Miniature Meadow Rue, *Thalictrum kiusianum*, has foliage that reminds one of maidenhair fern with an airy appearance and tiny light purple flowers in early summer. It will only grow to 6" high and can take a bit more moisture. *Heuchera* 'Petite Fairy' Coral Bells makes a demure mound 10" tall by 8" wide with pink bell shaped flower spikes and also blooms in early summer. Three small astilbe bloom in summer, July-August.

Astilbe x chinensis 'Crispa Perkeo' has crinkled, finely divided leaves that emerge bronze and turn deep green with a dark pink flower spike. *A. crispa* 'Lilliput', also with crinkled leaves, has a salmon pink plume. *A. chinensis* 'Pumila' has a dense plume of mauve flowers with typical astilbe foliage. They will grow to about 6" high and 12" wide.

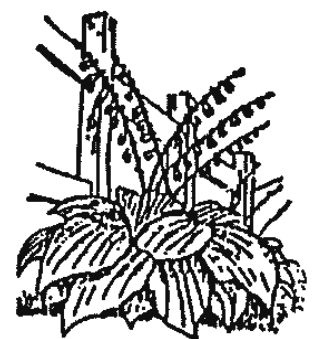
Some dwarf ferns could also be added. Dwarf Lady Fern, *Athyrium filixfemina* 'Minutissimum' with delicate light green fronds will be 8" to 10" in height and up to 10" in width; or *Athyrium filix-femina* 'Entourage,' which has crested and tassled fronds. To add a grass-like texture to the garden, *Acorus gramineus* 'Minimus Aureus' is a sweet flag. Greenish yellow in part shade and blooming May to June, it gets 4" to 6" high and 6" to 9" wide.

There are even mini water lilies for your mini pond. 'Helvola' has a long booming period with a yellow flower about the size of a half dollar. 'Joanne Pring' is a pink one and 'Tetragona' blooms white. They require only 6" to 18" of water covering their crowns. Dwarf Papyrus *Cyperus isocladus* grows 12" to 18" tall. Mini cattails, *Typha minima*, will get 8" to 12" tall. Contain these to a pot or they will take over their space. Goldfish, which you could imagine as mini koi, would be in scale here.

If you are trying to create a downsized version of a regular garden, adding art to your mini garden will complete the scene. But you are on your own here with individual taste. A bench, an arbor, a birdbath or pebble path could add interest. Just keep it in scale with the plants. Most of importantly, have fun with it. It's your garden. Rest assured that the mini garden police will not show up at your door

By Mary Bardens

LEE GARDENS



Hostas | Daylilies
Wildflowers | Perennials
25986 Sauder Road
Tremont, IL 61568
(309) 925-5262



**Hostas, Irises, Daylilies, Perennials,
Annuals, Trees & Shrubs, Grasses,
Pond Installations, Pottery, and Granite**

Online ordering also available!



**Monday-Saturday
8 am - 5 pm**

**Princeton, Illinois
(815) 659-3282**

www.hornbakergardens.com

THE WORLD IS OUR GARDEN®

sensational
summer



Green View Design Group

National Award-Winning Landscape Architecture,
Design-Build & Landscape Maintenance Services

Green View Garden Center

Trees, Shrubs, Perennials & Annuals,
Casual Furniture, Fountains, Gifts for Gardeners,
Statuary, Pottery, Home & Garden Accessories

Visit our web site for a schedule of upcoming events & seminars

www.greenview.com • 309.243.7761 • Rt. 40, N. past Lake of the
Woods, turn W. onto Cedar Hills Drive, Dunlap



*"Family owned and operated - serving the Peoria
area for over 80 years"*



Quite Simply. Amazing.

**Hoerr Nursery awarded one of the
Top 100 Revolutionary Garden Centers
in the country for the fourth
consecutive year.**

- Garden Center • Nursery
- Landscape Design & Install
- Lawn Care & Maintenance
- Irrigation

Pictured: Our new 10,000 sq ft greenhouse, the Garden House



M-T-W 8-6 Th & F 8-7 Sat. 8-5 309.691.4561
8020 N. Shade Tree Dr. Peoria, IL 61615 www.HoerrNursery.com



If you're serious about gardening, you must make a trip to Sunnyfield - and plan on staying awhile. Stroll through our greenhouses and gardens. You'll find more than 2000 varieties of common and uncommon annuals, perennials, and herbs, each properly labeled and displayed. It's like walking through your favorite garden catalog.

We're located in rural Kewanee, 4 miles south of Good's Furniture Skywalk.

We're open Mon-Sat 9-8, Sun 10-6, April thru October.

Take I-74 west from Peoria to Rt 78. Then 78 North to Rt 91.
Turn **LEFT (west)** at Jct. of Rt. 78 and Rt. 91 onto 200N.
Follow the signs.

www.sunnyfield.com Phone 309-852-4172

central illinois hosta society
P.O. Box 3098
Peoria, IL 61612-3098

first class postage

www.cihshostaclub.org

september newsletter
deadline:
august 20th, 2009

submit items for publication
to: Bob Streitmatter
309.264.4813
goldaandbob@hotmail.com

cihs membership form (please print)

name(s) _____

address _____

city _____ state _____ zip _____

phone _____ e-mail _____

Dues are \$10/year: new renewal amount enclosed _____

Make check to CIHS; mail check and form to: CIHS, P.O. Box 3098, Peoria, IL
61612-3098