

GREAT EXPECTATIONS

central illinois hosta society
www.cihshostaclub.org

march 2010
volume 16, issue 1

Sue's News

As I look out upon another snowy winter day, I can't help but dream of the warmer weather soon to come. I look out at my garden, sleeping peacefully under this snow, and picture the lush green growth that will replace this bleak winter landscape. What gets me through this time of year is looking forward to the warmer weather and the activities planned for our club this year.

I really enjoy seeing new gardens; talking to fellow gardeners, getting ideas and advice, discussing "good" and "bad" plants, and just being in a peaceful place. We have some great gardens to visit this year, and I always enjoy visiting with fellow club members while we enjoy the "greenery." I am confident that Golda is planning a wonderful bus trip for us this year, so be sure to bring your camera and checkbook! We also have the Hosta Auction meeting this year, which is always fun and exciting. Add in the potluck and banquet, and we will have many great opportunities for fun and fellowship in the upcoming year. I hope to see you all as we begin another year of garden adventures, enjoying friendships and "the friendship plant."

Sue Eckhoff, CIHS President

"One of the most delightful things about a garden is the anticipation it provides" W.E. Johns

The Next Meeting

Tuesday, March 16, 6:30 pm

Trough Gardening 101

Freedom Hall

349 W. Birchwood Street, Morton, IL

Our first monthly meeting for 2010! What better way is there to kick off spring but with a trough gardening presentation...Trough Gardening 101!

We will cover the basics of trough gardening including trough construction and an explanation of that weird term "**hypertufa,**" **the miracle elixir of masonry.** Discussion will encompass soil mixes, the perfect plants for trough gardening, theme garden troughs and even over-wintering your trough gardens.

Directions: From interstate 155 take the Birchwood Exit, east, into Morton. The Birchwood Exit is the first exit south of the I-74 and I-155 junction. Morton Park will be off to your left and the building is at 349 W. Birchwood Street.





Hosta of the Month

Due to the complexity and uncertainties of forcing hosta this early, we will have some very cool garden prizes

Dues Reminder!!!!

If your address label says 2009, this will be your last newsletter. It is time to pay dues for 2010. If it says 2010, 2011, etc., you are paid up through that year. You can pay dues at the March meeting or fill out the membership form (see back) and mail it. Remember!!!! Dues are \$10, for both single and family memberships.

2010 Hosta of the Year...H. 'First Frost'

H. 'First Frost' is a sport *H. 'Halcyon'* and the reverse of *H. 'June.'* It has blue leaves, edged with a creamy yellow margin that brightens to creamy white by midsummer. A mature clump measures 2.5-3' across and in late summer it displays lavender flowers atop 2' scapes. The American Hosta Growers Association began choosing a Hosta of the Year in 1996, in an effort to assist growers, nurseries and gardeners in selecting the best hosta. The criteria for award winners are that they are solid performers for all regions of the country, they are readily available and usually retail for about \$15.



2010 Hosta Happenings

Tuesday, March 16, 6:30 pm
Trough Gardening 101
Freedom Hall
349 W. Birchwood Street, Morton, IL

Tuesday, April 20, 6:30 pm
Potluck & T.B.A. speaker
Freedom Hall
349 W. Birchwood Street, Morton, IL

Tuesday, May 18, 6:30 pm
Gloria Hicks' Garden
1608 Robin Court, Morton, IL

June 23-26, 2010 (New date!)
AHS National Convention
"Stars of the North"
Sheraton Hotel, Bloomington, MN

July 8-10
Midwest Regional Convention
Des Moines, IA

2010 Bus Trip
T.B.A.

Tuesday, June 15, 6:30 pm
Bill and Toni Cottrell's Garden
201 Daniel Pkwy, Washington, IL

Tuesday, July 20, 6:30 pm
Connie Zuercher's Garden
1448 W. Birchwood, Morton, IL

Tuesday, August 17, 6:30 pm
Hosta Auction
Illinois Central College, Land Lab
East Peoria, IL

Tuesday, Sept. 21, 6:00 pm (earlier time)
Annual Banquet
Speaker: T.B.A.

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To join:

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

Midwest Reg. Hosta Society
\$20/2 years

Send dues to:
Barb Schroeder, Treasurer
1819 Coventry Drive
Champaign, IL 61822-5239

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

Garden Q & A

How can you determine where the various colored hostas should be planted? Analyze the amount of sun a site gets. Blue hostas need the most shade since strong sun will melt the waxy coating on the leaves. Gold hostas do better with morning sun to bring out the coloring. Variegated hostas range from needing morning sun to full shade. Research the special needs of these plants. Green hostas can take morning sun. Hostas with strong leaf substance are more tolerant of sun and species can take more sun than hybrids. In general, hostas do not do well under dogwoods and maples (with the exception of Japanese Maples).

By Ann Bentsen from the Georgia Hosta Society Newsletter

Anticipation and Preparation for a New Spring Season

As long as the eyes can see and the mind can imagine, avid gardeners will start preparing for the next growing season months before the time Mother Nature allows deep penetration of the soil.

Even when it is too frigid and blustery to venture outside, gardeners can visualize new or revamped gardens as they peer through cold window glass, while in an entranced state of mind.

January often ushers in the stuffing of plant catalogs into mail boxes. Additional food for thought arrives with the updating of favorite websites. Following these feeding sessions, plant material orders are often placed with selected nurseries for spring deliveries.

Sometime in February, I envision Bob Streitmatter, Central Illinois Hosta Society Newsletter Editor, being in the initial stages of preparing educational topics, collecting articles written by others, and assembling our March 2010 newsletter, which will welcome in a new season and announce the detail of



our first meeting of the year. Even though the inside March and April meetings have historically not been as well attended as the in-the-garden meetings, they remain excellent opportunities to talk to a number of people who share the same interest in gardening.

By the time early April arrives, bright sunny days combined with rising temperatures seem to sound an alert for all cooped up gardeners to head out to local nurseries and garden centers in the hope of finding signs of spring. On such days, nurseries are methodically gearing up for the upcoming season but have little outside plant material available to sell. Even so, leaving with a new gardening tool, spring lawn fertilizer, an indoor plant, or whatever else happens to capture one's fancy, makes for an enjoyable day and further stimulates the desire for the upcoming planting season to arrive.

New Years Resolutions are akin to To-Do Lists. They both start out with the best of intentions, yet somehow never seem to get accomplished quite like planned. Even so, the "off-season" is a great time to document a game plan for the upcoming gardening season. It is important to remember that any problems experienced last year will likely reoccur unless corrective actions are taken.

Weather permitting, gardeners can get an early start and release some of their pent-up energy by performing a number of tasks, including but certainly not limited to the following:

- Have various forms of coverings (frost cloth, plant containers, etc.) at the ready to protect emerging hostas from freezing temperatures
- Clearing gardens of debris, if not done in the fall
- Applying fresh mulch (helps to stabilize soil temperatures and protect against late freezes)
- Physically define new garden spaces
- Truing up and/or expanding edges of existing gardens
- Eliminating grass from around trees, bushes, etc. to protect against mower damage
- Eliminate weeds in gardens before they become a bigger problem
- Turn compost pile

Although we all enjoy the handful of unseasonably warm days often experienced in spring, gardening veterans are well aware that too many such days encourage our plants to prematurely break ground. When the mercury dips back down below freezing, we are then faced with the dilemma of whether to cover or let nature take its course. **continued on page 4**

In the Peoria area, the **average** date of the last spring occurrence of 32°F is April 21, yet history has taught us we could experience freezing temperatures up to mid-May, so listen to the forecasts! Generally speaking, hostas can withstand short periods of temperatures down to 28°F. Leafed out hostas are more susceptible to freezing temperatures than the earlier stage of tightly furled foliage.

Hopefully by mid-May, any lingering threats of a late spring freeze will be history, and we will be well on our way of implementing those plans that started months ago in the dead of winter.

By Ray Rodgers, CIHS

Time to Prune

Now is the time of year to prune trees and shrubs that don't bloom until after June. This should be done while deciduous trees and shrubs are still dormant and before buds swell. It is also the time to remove all dead, diseased or broken branches and assess overall shape so that corrective pruning can be done. Removal of spindly growth may be done to encourage vigor in the remaining branches. Look for branches that rub against each other which can cause bark damage resulting in an infection site, and remove one of the branches. Now is also the time to remove that branch that knocks you off the riding mower, is a threat to pedestrians or just blocks your view. Water spouts (the branches that grow straight up off of limbs that are often found on crab apples) and suckers (the thin branches that grown up from the base of trees, also often found with crab apples) should be pruned away now and as needed during the season as these branches are of no value to the tree. The one tree you don't want to prune at this time is the maple. You must wait until the maple sap thickens or the tree will bleed and the cut will not heal properly.

Rejuvenation pruning is a technique used on an old shrub that has outgrown its space or lost its shape. This is a drastic method of cutting back the shrub to within 6" to 12" of ground level. Have a little faith;



this should encourage abundant growth by mid summer. When the new growth is between 6" and 12" long, cut back just the tips to encourage lateral branching resulting in a more compact shrub. Some shrubs that respond well to rejuvenation include 'Anthony Waterer' spirea, honeysuckle, beautybush, Indian currant, snowberry, and privet.

An alternative method for renewing a shrub is done over a 3 year period. The first year select one third of the oldest branches and cut back to ground level. The second year cut back to ground level one half of the remaining old stems and head back long shoots from the previous pruning. The third year, remove the rest of the old branches and head back new long shoots. Some shrubs best pruned by this method include lilacs, red twig and yellow twig dogwood, arrowwood viburnum, forsythia, kerria, deutzia, mockorange, azaleas and weigela. Prune these back right after they flower.

When pruning for shape, look for a bud on the branch pointing in the direction that you want the branch to grow. Cut at an angle close to but not through the bud. If you are removing an entire branch, cut close to the limb or trunk, but not into the branch collar which is a slightly thickened ring where the branch emerges from the limb/trunk. The younger the tree or shrub is when you start shape pruning, the better overall results you will have.

Most pruning tasks can be accomplished with hand pruners, lopping shears, pole pruners and pruning saws. Bypass pruners are curved, having a blade cutting against a blade. This is best for live wood. Anvil pruners have a straight blade cutting against a broad, flattened, grooved blade. This is better for dead wood. Hand pruners should be used for branches less than 1/2" in size. Lopping shears are used for branches 1/2" to 1 1/2" in size. Larger than 1 1/2" and a pruning saw should be used. Pole pruners may be anvil or bypass pruners and are on a long extension pole. Sharp pruners will give you the best results and periodic professional sharpening should be done.

Take your time, step back after a few cuts to see how it looks and don't be afraid to prune. The first cut is the hardest.

By Mary Bardens, Northwest Indiana Hosta Society, March 2008 issue

Forcing Flowering Branches

If you would like bring some spring color into your home, here are some suggestions for branches to cut and preservative solutions to use from the Purdue University Cooperative Extension Service and the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service.

Cherry: Takes three weeks to force, produces white or pink flowers in clusters

Honeysuckle: Takes two weeks to force, produces fragrant, pink or white flowers

Vernal witch hazel: Takes two weeks to force, produces four yellow, strap-shaped petals

Pussy willow: Takes two weeks to force, produces fuzzy, white buds

Forsythia: Takes two weeks to force, produces many yellow flowers

Flowering quince: Takes four weeks to force, produces long lasting red or orange flowers

Red maple: Takes two weeks to force, produces small, orange-red, unusual-looking flowers

Magnolia: Takes five weeks to force, produces large, creamy-white to deep red flowers

Bridal wealth Spirea: Takes two weeks to force, produces small, white flowers in sprays

Alder: Takes one week to force, produces flowers in long, drooping, reddish-brown spikes

Peach: Takes four weeks to force, produces pink flowers

Forcing Tips

- Choose healthy, young branches with numerous flower buds.
- Cut branches about 1/4 inch above a side bud or branch to avoid leaving a stub.
- Cut branches about 6 to 18 inches long.
- Once inside, make a second cut on a slant just above the previous cut to allow branches to absorb water.
- Place branches in an upright container; add warm water no higher than 3 inches on the stems. If frozen, submerge the branches in slightly warm water for a few hours. Then mix in a floral preservative to prolong the life of the stem.
- Place the container in a cool, partially shaded location, keeping the water level at its original height.
- Occasionally mist the branches to keep the leaves from drying out.

- When the buds begin to emerge, move the branches to a lighted room, but still avoid direct sunlight. They also will be ready to place in an arrangement.
- Be sure the arrangement has ample water at all times. To prolong its good appearance, consider moving the arrangement to a cool location in the evenings.
- Expect to enjoy the arrangement for a couple of weeks.

Preservative Solutions

- **Recipe 1**
2 cups lemon-lime carbonated beverage (not sugar free)
1/2 teaspoon household chlorine bleach
2 cups water (1 pint)
- **Recipe 2**
2 tablespoons white vinegar
2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon household chlorine bleach
Mix with 4 cups water (1 quart)

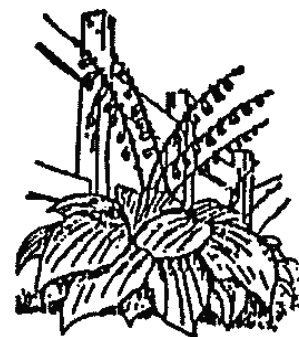
Rooting

Rooting may occur on the branches of some species during the forcing period. If the rooted branch is desired for a new plant, remove the branch from the water when the roots are 1/4 to 3/8 inches long. All branches should be trimmed to a length of approximately 6-8 inches. Then pot individually, and keep moist until permanent roots are formed. When warm weather arrives, the new plant can be planted outdoors. However, protection may be needed for 1-2 years

The Hosta Library

If you would like to check out a magazine or book from the Hosta Library, see Ella Maxwell at a meeting or call her at 309.444.3758.

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AHS 2010 Convention Registration Form
June 23 – 26, Sheraton Bloomington Hotel
Hosted by the Minnesota Hosta Society



Register online and pay by credit card at: www.starsofthenorth.net
 or send in **one form per person** with payment. Please print.

Name (as you would like it on your name badge) _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip/Postal Code _____ Country _____

Email ** _____ Phone (day/evening/cell) _____

**** Registration confirmations will be sent via email only.**

Please select: (Any refunds subject to \$100 administration fee)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$199 Early Full Registration (postmarked by May 16) includes all activities and garden tours Wednesday evening through Saturday, Welcome Dinner Thursday evening; lunch Friday and Saturday; and banquet Saturday evening. | <input type="checkbox"/> \$249 Full Registration (postmarked after May 17) |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> \$140 Meals Only (postmarked by June 1) includes name badge, Welcome Dinner Thursday evening; lunch Friday and Saturday; and banquet Saturday evening. |

Vegetarian Meals

- \$35 Optional Tour** Wednesday, June 23; coach tour to Rochester, Minnesota, including 5 private gardens, 1 public garden (Mayowood), lunch, and 1 nursery with buying opportunity.
- \$35 Botanical Painting Class** Thursday, June 24. This all day (9am-4pm) class includes all materials needed. *****Class size limited to 16- sign up early!*****

****There will be several other classes, demonstrations and speakers throughout the convention- a nominal fee may apply, payable at the door. ** See website for further information.**

Judges Clinics – please indicate which clinics you will attend

- Clinic I** (Thurs. 2-5 pm) **Clinic II** (Thurs. 5-6 pm) **Clinic III** (Thurs. 9-10 am)

Judges Handbook – If attending a judges clinic, you must bring a current handbook. Download free at hosta.org

- Check this box to receive the official handbook and binder at the clinic. (\$10 fee payable at the clinic)

Hosta Show (limit of 25 entries in Division I, Sections I-XII. Show Schedule will be online: starsofthenorth.net)

Do you plan to:

- Enter** **Judge** **Clerk**

Please check planned entries & number of entries in each:

- | | | | |
|---|-------|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Containers Div II | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Troughs Div III | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational Div IV | _____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Artistic Div VI | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Specialty Div VII | _____ | | |

\$ _____ TOTAL FEES (including Optional Day and Class Fee) **Payment in U.S. funds (Check or Card):**

- By Check:** AHS 2010 Convention, c/o Desyl Peterson P.O. Box 193, Maple Plain, MN 55359
- By Card:** \$8.95 convenience fee per person will be added to your total.

(circle) VISA/MC/Discover/Amex # _____ Expiration: __/____

Signature _____

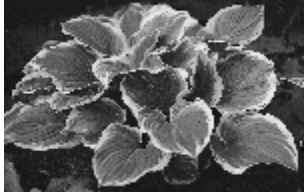
HOTEL: Reserve by June 1, 2010 for convention rate: Sheraton Bloomington Hotel
<http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/book/amerhosta2010> 866-837-4278

Information/questions: Marv: nschwartzbauer@aol.com or 651-437-8899 OR Connie: connielinder@mchsi.com



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Saturday, March 13 at 10am
and **Thursday, March 25 at 5:30pm**
"Design 101: Plan Before You Plant"

Saturday, March 20 at 10am
"Garden 101: Awakening Your Garden"

Saturday, March 27 at 10am
"Garden 201: Shaping Your Garden"

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Central Illinois Hosta Society
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For information regarding dues or membership, please contact Kathy Allen at 309-263-8637 or jkallen9@comcast.net

April newsletter deadline:
March 20th

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 payable to CIHS; mail check and form to: Central Illinois Hosta Society, P.O. Box 3098, Peoria, IL 61612-3098