



# Heartland Hosta & Shade Plant Society

Fall ~~Summer~~ 2008

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## *President's Message*

Hello everyone! We've changed our meeting date to Saturday September 13th starting at 9:30 a.m. We will be meeting at Faith Lutheran Church in Prairie Village as before.

We have had a wetter and cooler Summer than we've experienced in recent years. Good for our Hostas not so good for the weeds that seem to spring up overnight. We also are experiencing higher gas prices that limit our driving habits.

One of our suppliers, Walters Gardens has changed the way they ship because of rising costs. But it is an improvement for the Hosta Society.

We have 3 new hostas for sale at the Fall meeting which we purchased from Walters. They are "Blue Ivory", "Hollywood Lights", and "Heavenly Tiara". "Blue Ivory" is a medium hosta with a cream margin. "Hollywood Lights" is a large hosta with streaked leaves, and is a sport of "On Stage". "Heavenly Tiara" is small, has been around for a while but it is outstanding.

Our speaker for the September 13th meeting will be Rob Mortko. He will be speaking on "Care and nurturing of mini hostas; What's new in mini hostas; and what makes 'Stitch in Time' unique in the hosta world — a sneak preview on our ploidy research." Rob is a Johnson County Extension Master Gardener. The

American Hosta Society, the Western Nursery and Landscape Association, and the American Hosta Growers Association. He is also the Newsletter Editor Coordinator for the American Hosta Society and contributes an ongoing article on "Hot Hostas" for The Hosta Journal.

Rob and Heartland Hosta will have hostas for sale. Rob will have several Minis and Heartland Hosta will have our new hostas and other hostas from our May sale. They are much larger than they were in May.

Several of us attended the American Hosta Society Convention in St. Louis in June. Gwen Wheeler was entered in several competitions and won several awards. All of us had a great time. The gardens we saw on the tours were awesome. I had no idea of the beauty of the City of St. Louis.

I hope to see you on Saturday, September 13!

*Penny*



**Hosta Meeting Saturday September 13th starting  
at 9:30 a.m. at Faith Lutheran Church, 67th & Roe**



## 2008 Events

**September 13**  
Heartland Hosta Fall  
Meeting  
(Faith Lutheran Church)

## 2009 Events

**March 21**  
Heartland Hosta Spring  
Meeting  
(Faith Lutheran Church)

**May 9**  
Heartland Hosta Annual  
Plant Sale  
(Faith Lutheran Church)

**June 24-27**  
The American Hosta  
Society National  
Convention  
Lansing, MI

**September 19**  
Heartland Hosta Fall  
Meeting  
(Faith Lutheran Church)



*These are some of the  
hostas Heartland  
Hosta will have for  
sale at the meeting.*



**Sweet Innocence**



**Lakeside Ironman**



**Heavenly Tiara**



**Hollywood Lights**



**Blue Ivory**

*This is an article from The Hosta Journal a Publication  
of The American Hosta Society Volume 36, Number 3*

## Handling Pot-Bound Hostas

by Ray Rodgers—Bartonville, Illinois

When shopping for hostas, most of us think that bigger is better. Five divisions are much better than three. But, when purchasing specimens in containers, we should realize larger plants are more likely to be pot-bound. Once root systems grow through the nursery potting mix and reach the inside edge of the container, they start circling around the container wall, occasionally growing back into the potting mix and/or protruding out the drain holes. If the plant is severely potbound, the roots can appear to be almost fused together.

If you suspect a hosta is potbound, give it a good watering prior to removing it from the container. This will help reduce any shock to the plant that may occur while removing it and untangling its root system.

Sometimes the conventional method of removing a hosta—turning the pot upside down, with fingers covering the top of the plant mix, and tapping or shaking the plant out of the pot—is unsuccessful. In this case, a less desirable method, like cutting down the sides of the plastic pot, may be required, but be sure to use extreme care so as not to damage any of the roots.

New roots are produced from the root cap at the very end of the root tip. Cutting or damaging these roots will stress the plant until new roots are grown. Hostas, even with a completely undamaged root system, are already at a disadvantage compared to trees and shrubs, since their long, generally unbranched roots are not as efficient at extracting water and nutrients from the soil.



C.H. Falstad, a nurseryman, past AHS Scientific Chair and former President of The American Hosta Society, says that 90% of the water and nutrients are taken up in the small portion of the root system where the root hairs are located, right behind the root cap. Removing this section will greatly affect the plants development once it has used up its reserves from the previous season. "Limited branching will occur, but nowhere near enough to replace the root hairs lost, and there is normally a big delay in this branched root production," Falstad says.

Inadvertently severing a few roots when digging a large clump is inevitable and the setback may not be noticeable. But never cut hosta roots if you can avoid it. Hostas are very forgiving plants and will recover, depending on the severity of damage. The smaller the hosta, the more devastating cutting back roots would be.

If you ever find hostas being sold in very short containers, you should be suspicious, according to Falstad, because it is possible that the root system has been cut. The plant may grow well for you for the first month, while it is living off of its reserves, but then it will likely not flower. Trying to revitalize a hosta with cut roots by continual watering may lead to rotting, as the hosta will be unable to efficiently

take up the water. It is advisable not to purchase a hosta in a short container, unless you physically tap the hosta out of the pot and confirm that the root system has been cut.

Once you carefully remove a root-bound plant from its pot, untangle the roots. Sloshing the root system in a bucket of water will make this easier. For a badly tangled root system, use a stream of water from the garden hose, stopping occasionally to untangle a few more roots, increasing the water stream pressure as required and repeating until all roots are free.

Whether or not a hosta is pot-bound, it is advisable to remove the nursery potting mix before planting. Such mixes can vary a great deal, but most are designed for use in containers and are not as well suited for the garden.

While I don't recommend cutting hosta roots, there may be exceptions. I once asked Harry Able, a Smyrna, Georgia, master gardener who has studied bonsai for 28 years, if there was a short explanation for how to bonsai hostas. His reply was to cut half the roots off and put the hosta in the smallest pot possible!



### Heartland Hosta Society Dues

To ensure your continued newsletter mailings, please make sure you're current on dues. If you're not sure, check your mailing address label for the year next to your name. You are paid up through that year. We ask that you prepay at least 2 years at a time.

### Join the American Hosta Society

The publications alone are worth the annual dues. Visit the AHS website ([www.hosta.org](http://www.hosta.org)) for the latest membership options.

### Join the Midwest Regional Hosta Society

The MRHS (including both KS and MO) publishes two newsletters a year, holds an annual Summer Convention and a Winter Scientific Meeting. Dues are only \$10 per year payable to MRHS.

Send dues to:  
Pete Postlewaite  
MRHS Treasurer  
21172 Andover Rd.  
Kildeer, IL 60047

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*We'll see you at the September 13th meeting at Faith Lutheran*



*Keith Wheeler will have plant stands for sale at our September 13th meeting*

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#### **Gardening Assistant(s) Needed**

*My recent knee surgery finds us in need of a gardening helper this season (3 or 4 days per month minimum.). Beautiful working conditions, lake view lot, free lunch, flexible hours, only light gardening duties, (heavy work hired out to others), but gardening knowledge essential. \$10 'thank you notes' handed out hourly, plus access to surplus plants in this 1500+ shade gardening collection need thinning or relocation.) Arrangements and comp. negotiable. Greg & Eileen Pforr—on Riss Lake in Parkville — 816-746-1327*

Heartland Hosta & Shade Plant Society  
 Penny Balfour, Newsletter Editor  
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## Heartland Hosta and Shade Plant Society Membership and Renewal Form

Your dues are currently paid up through the year noted next to your name on the mailing address label. We ask that all members prepay at least 2 years at a time to minimize the paperwork and bookkeeping. Dues are \$10.00 per year.

Check one... NEW MEMBER  RENEWAL

Name	Street Address
City, State, Zip	Home Phone
Business Phone	E-Mail Address
Fax	Member of American Hosta Society?
Is Your Garden Open to Visitors?	Would You Like To Volunteer?

***Please return this form with your e-mail address even if your dues are paid up. Return this form and your dues to:***

Nancy Erwine  
 900 Hillside, Liberty, MO 64068