



Heartland Hosta & Shade Plant Society

Fall 2011

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Heartland Hosta and Shade Plant Society Fall meeting, Saturday, September 10, 2011

The Fall meeting will be held September 10, 2011 at the Faith Lutheran Church, 4805 W. 67th St. (67th & Roe), Prairie Village, KS. Hospitality and registration at 9:30 AM and Meeting and Program at 10 AM.

Rob Mortko, well-known local hosta expert, will be our speaker, presenting, "Tissue Culture for Dummies.... like Me".

We are planning a potluck after the program, so be sure to bring a dish to share and

plan to stay. After the program there will be a short "Ask the Expert" session, to which all are invited to stay and participate. Ken O'Dell will be joining Rob on the Expert panel.

There will be hostas for sale, by the Club and by Rob. Door prizes and a raffle are also planned.

Guests are always welcome.

Info: call Gwen 816-228-9308 or 816-213-0598

President's Message

It was a great season for hostas, at least until the challenges of heat and drought began in the waning days of July to really take their toll. We are opting to brave the prospect of a soaring water bill, to keep our plants a bit happier.

Frustrating as it is to watch our favorite plants burn from uncontrollable record heat, it is a fact that hostas are sturdy and resilient plants. Patience is what is needed and they will reward us next Spring!

Summer is just flying by and September, hopefully with relief from the awful heat, will be here before we know it. September 10th is the date for our Fall meeting, which will be an exciting one that you won't want to miss. Be sure to check out the details on the meeting agenda elsewhere in this newsletter.

We're delighted to have our own member-expert Rob Mortko sharing with us his personal tissue culture experience. You will definitely want to be there to learn more about a process that enables us to have many more varieties, much more quickly than having to wait for mature clumps to be divided.

September is an excellent time to plant hostas so be sure to check out the wonderful selection of plants we will have for sale, including but not limited to Hudson Bay, Victor, Fra-

grant Blue Ribbon, Dragon Warrior, Morning Star, and Whee!, plus minis Snow Mouse and Cherry Tomato. Just be aware that most varieties are in limited quantities of 1 or 2, with the exception of Regal Supreme. Rob will have a



Fragrant Blue Ribbon

very nice selection of hostas, also.



Regal Supreme

Nancy has cast a lovely leaf design and donated as a raffle item, and the door prizes include H.'Curly Fries' donated by Bob Solberg, and a nice plant donated by Rob, as well as other unique items.

Please remember that if you ordered double bloodroots in May, they will be available for you to pick up and get planted.

Keith and I, along with Annella & Andy, and Mary & Ron Wood were privileged to attend the Regional Hosta Convention in Madison, WI, July 7, 8 and 9. As always, it was a refreshing and inspiring event. In fact, we are contemplating holding a Convention, possibly a National, here in a couple years. I urge any of you who would like to be involved, to contact me soon. There will be something for everyone!!

Gwen



2011 Events

September 10
Heartland Hosta Fall Meeting
(Faith Lutheran Church)

2012 Events

March 24
Heartland Hosta Spring Meeting
(Faith Lutheran Church)

May 12
Heartland Hosta Plant Sale
(Faith Lutheran Church)

September 22
Heartland Hosta Fall Meeting
(Faith Lutheran Church)



Rob Mortko Our Speaker on September 10th



Rob is a degreed chemical engineer and recently retired in 2010 from Black & Veatch in Kansas City where he was Vice President of Process Technology. His passion for shade gardening and hostas has grown over the past 25 years since he and his wife Sheri moved into their shaded woodland home in Olathe, Kansas (a Kansas City suburb).

Their shade gardens have been featured on various public garden tours, on local TV, and in "Kansas City Homes and Gardens Magazine". Rob is now devoted full time to Made in the Shade Gardens – a home-based, retail business specializing in hostas. Made in the Shade Gardens offers over 400 varieties of

hostas. Rob also operates a tissue culture laboratory where most of his hostas are propagated. More information can be found on his website at: www.HostaGuy.com.

In 2000 Rob registered and introduced his first hosta cultivar named 'Heart and Soul'. His latest introduction named 'Stitch in Time' has been awarded a U.S. plant patent.

Rob is a Johnson County Extension Master Gardener. He is a member of the Kansas City and Wichita local hosta societies, the American Hosta Society and the American Hosta Growers Association. He is Vice President-Genus Hosta for the American Hosta Society, Executive Secretary of the American Hosta Growers Association, and a Contributing Editor for The Hosta Journal.

The 2011 National Convention by Rob Mortko

The 2011 AHS National Convention was hosted by the New England Hosta Society and held in Marlborough, MA (just outside of Boston) on June 22-26. About 400 attended the event. The convention tour gardens covered four states (MA, CT, RI and NH). Two optional tour days were offered and both were not to be missed. The Wednesday optional tour included Carol Brashear and Bill Meyer's garden, Kathie Sisson's garden, and John O'Brien's nursery. Sunday's optional tour included up and coming hybridizer Rick Goodenough's garden and a quick stop to see Plymouth Rock. Friday's tour included the garden of Paula Lehtola who paid \$3500 for a division of Mildred Seaver's 'Humpback Whale' at the Philly convention auction in 2006. Saturday's tour included the gardens of Mason Hollow Nursery, yet another opportunity for hosta purchases.

Thursday's events at the hotel included Region One's First Look Seedling and Sport Competition where hybridizers and "sport fishermen" showcase their latest hostas. Notable in the competition was a 'Stitch in Time' sport found by Dave

Chopko just the week before in Tony Avent's nursery. Among Thursday's convention presentations were speakers Rick Goodenough who talked about the art and science of hosta hybridizing; the always entertaining duo of Mike and Kathy Shadrack who covered "Little Hostas"; and nurseryman Leo Blanchette who discussed five genera for the shade. Leo has one of the largest astilbe and polygonatum collections in the country. Leo will also be our guest speaker for the Heartland Hosta spring 2012 meeting.

The convention plant given to all attendees was 'Mayflower Moon', a Carol Brashear seedling with rugose gold foliage.

The Alex Summers Distinguished Merit Award was presented to Harold McDonell, a true southern gentleman, for his outstanding service to the AHS over the years. The Eunice Fisher Distinguished Merit Award for hosta hybridizing was presented to Bob Kuk. Bob's 54 registered hostas include: 'Emerald Necklace', 'Gray Cole', 'Little Bo Peep', 'Punky', and 'Queen Josephine'. The Benedict Garden Performance Award winner was 'Blue Mouse Ears'. Sadly Emile Deckhert passed away just a few days before the convention.

Regional Convention – Madison WI 2011

Convention was great fun! I always look forward to the tours. There were five, all very different, with a couple featuring lots of perennials. There are always so many ideas to try out at home.

The leaf show seemed surprisingly large for the 180 people in attendance. Annella passed judging Clinic I. Congratulations, Annella! The judging panel I was assigned to was very interesting. It was a real challenge to find good leaves to enter. Too many tree twig holes and July is a little late for us to have pristine leaves. One of the ribbons I received was a Best of Class for Rob's introduction H. 'Heart and Soul'. Exciting! There were a couple very good speakers. One really hit home with his assertion that young people aren't showing interest. We intend to work on that.

Their hospitality room consisted mainly of cans of mixed nuts, bags of chips, and drinks, but the conversation was great. Met lots of interesting hostaholics!

The Vendors are a high point and had mostly hostas this time, with one having a great variety of small maples and conifers. Gary, from Naylor Creek, agreed to sell us several really nice plants for our September sale.

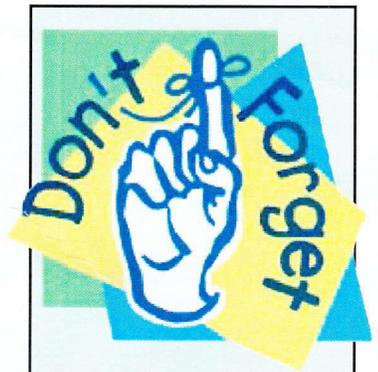
Bob Solberg donated a H. 'Curly Fries' for a door prize at our meeting.

There weren't enough donations to hold a silent auction, but the live auction was lively. I believe Andy and Annella, Mary and Ron Wood and the Wheelers all took home auction plants. Keith donated a hypertufa pot in the name of Heartland Hosta and it sold very well.

If you have never attended a Convention, do really consider doing so next summer. The National will be in Nashville, TN, June 13 – 16, 2012, and the Regional in Rochester, MN, July 12 – 14, 2012. Both are easy trips. We hope to see you there!

Gwen

Photos from this year's Regional Convention



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. Dues are \$10.00 per year. Membership dues for 3 years are \$25.

Join the American Hosta Society

The publications alone are worth the annual dues. Visit the AHS website (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



Members need to keep dues up to date!

Heartland Hosta & Shade Plant Society
Penny Balfour, Newsletter Editor
4912 Pawnee Dr.
Roeland Park, KS 66205

How late is too late to plant hostas in the fall?



August is a great time to plant hostas almost anywhere in the country. You can safely plant them all month in the Midwest and North and the latter half of the month in the South. My standard rule is you want to get them in the ground 4-6 weeks before the first frost. This allows them to make some new roots

while the soil is still warm and then have some time to prepare for winter.

Most of us, though, have planted hostas in the ground later than that with good success. I have planted them as late as the first week of November without any noticeable ill effects. You do run a risk with late planting however. Hostas are completely dormant during the winter, and they will not produce new roots until after they have made new foliage in the spring. They literally sleep through the winter.

Late planted hostas may rot over the winter if 1) the ground is frozen and stays frozen shortly after they are planted, 2) they are very dry when the ground freezes, 3) the soil stays too wet because of poor winter drainage or 4) heaving occurs during cycles of the soil freezing and thawing. Snow cover or a covering of mulch will help with all these situations. Remember, blue hostas, as well as many gold hostas, with *H. sieboldiana* and *H. 'Tokudama'* parents as well as some *H. longipes* types are the most susceptible to winter kill. Miniature hostas may also completely heave out of the ground, resulting in cold damage to the crown.

So, with late hosta planting, first make sure the plants are full of water when the first hard frost hits. Then try a little mulch to protect the hosta crowns and moderate soil temperatures. (Beware! Deep mulches may entice mice and voles to make their winter homes in your hosta garden.) With a little luck from the winter weather you can probably extend your planting season another month or so, even after the first frost.

Most members in Kansas City plant, divide or move hostas in September or October when cooler without problems.