



# Hosta Happenings

June 2008

Vol. 12, Iss. 5

## **M.V.H.S. GARDEN WALK**

**SUNDAY, JUNE 29, 2008**

**Start at 2 PM**

**Frank & Sally Freeman**

**Joe & Sally Stewart**

**End up at Carolyn Hamilton's  
for SOCIAL HOUR at 4 PM**

**(Directions inside)**

**PLEASE BRING AN HORS D'OEURVE TO SHARE,  
A CHAIR AND YOUR OWN "LIBATION" (IF YOU WISH)  
CLUB WILL FURNISH POP, WATER,  
PAPER PLATES, PLASTIC TABLE SERVICE AND CUPS.**

## **HOSTA SALE A BIG SUCCESS!**

Our annual hosta and companion plant sale, which was held on Sunday, June 1, was a big success! We had dug plants from the VanderVeer Hosta Glade, there were some unnamed plants left from those we had from Forrest Johnson's and we purchased some newer varieties for resale. In addition to those many club members helped by bringing plants that Sunday morning.

Our net sales amounted to \$3019! Many thanks to everyone to donated plants and helped at the sale. I think we had more hostas this year than we have ever had.

We did save a few of the newer varieties to plant at VanderVeer Hosta Glade to update the collection. We will have a planting day in the near future and you'll be advised of the date and time.

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## **HELP CHUB HARPER CELEBRATE HIS 80th BIRTHDAY**

Rich and Susan Eyre, of Rich's Foxwillow Pines, are hosting an 80th birthday party for Chub Harper on Sunday, July 13, from 11am-2pm, following the Midwest Regional Hosta Convention being held in Schaumburg, IL.

The event is a fundraiser for the Harper Endowment at Michigan State University's Hidden Lake Garden. A minimum donation of \$30 is requested.

Directions to Rich's Foxwillow Pines Nursery, 11618 McConnell Rd, Woodstock, IL:

From Chicago: Exit I-90 at Route 47 in Huntley. Turn right (N) on Route 47 for 13 miles. Turn right (E) on McConnell Road and nursery is 1/3 mile on the left.

From Quad Cities: Head east on I-88 to I-39 (N). Exit I-39 on Route 20 (E) to Belvidere and Marengo. Head east on Route 20 to Marengo and turn left (N) on Route 23. Turn right (E) on Route 176 to Route 47. Turn left (N) on Route 47 about 5 miles. Turn right (E) on McConnell Rd 1/3 mile to nursery on left.

## **GARDEN WALK DIRECTIONS**

The garden walk will be held on Sunday, June 29, starting at 2 PM, at Freeman's home, and end up at Carolyn's for Happy Hour!

Bring a chair to sit on, an hors d'oeuvre to share and your own drink. The club will furnish pop, water, paper plates, plastic table service and cups. Enjoy an afternoon of viewing pretty gardens and spending time with good friends and Frank Freeman will, most probably, have some hostas for sale!

Following are directions to the three houses:

### **FREEMAN'S**

#### **20599 Utica Ridge Rd., Davenport**

Take 53rd St. exit from Highway #74, turn right on 53rd and go to Utica Ridge Rd (second stop light) and turn left. Drive north (go over I-80) and turn right into lane at Freeman Tree Farm sign (has a flag flying on the sign).

### **STEWART'S**

#### **#1 Windsor Rd., Bettendorf**

Leaving Freeman's, drive back to 53rd St. and turn left, and proceed to Devil's Glen Rd. (2 stop lights). Turn right and drive down to State St. in Bettendorf and turn left. Drive 1.1 miles to Manor Drive (just past the 3rd stop light), turn left, and drive to top of hill and turn right. Sally's home is the brick on left side of street.

### **HAMILTON'S**

#### **909 Mississippi Blvd., Bettendorf**

Leaving Stewart's, turn right on State Street and drive to 10th Street in Bettendorf and turn right. Drive as far as you can (about 6 blocks) and turn left on Mississippi Blvd. Carolyn's house is on the left side of street (beige house with red shutters).

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## ***Future AHS Conventions***

***The AHS 2009 Convention will be in  
Lansing, Michigan on June 24-27, 2009***

***The 2010 Midwest Hosta Society Convention  
will be in Des Moines, Iowa***

***The AHS 2010 Convention will be in  
Minneapolis, MN***

**COMPOSTING— —Green Stuff and Brown Stuff - From the Central Ohio Hosta Society Newsletter**

Spring is an excellent time to start composting. We all know we should do it: for the environment, for the health of our plants. It is an easy and convenient way to handle yard waste and some kitchen scraps. It returns organic matter back into the soil with micronutrients that plants need. It will break up clay soils and helps sandy soils retain moisture. Although the actual process is quite complex using multiple micro-organisms such as bacteria, fungi, insects and earthworms, making the compost pile is simple. But, what goes into making good compost? Nitrogen and Carbon .

**Green** stuff and **Brown** stuff. Layering the green and brown to get the ratios right is a good start, but to make it work you must mix it all together. Here’s a brief list of things to add to your compost pile.

<b>GREEN (nitrogen)</b>	<b>BROWN (carbon)</b>	<b>NEVER ADD</b>
Fresh cut grass, dried out sod clumps	Very dry grass, straw, corn stalks	Hosta leaves, diseased plants, seed heads or walnut tree leaves & twigs
Animal Manure, bone meal, blood meal	Leaves (Oak leaves & pine needles may be put in but take longer to decompose)	Human, dog or cat manure may contain harmful parasitic organisms
Fruit & Vegetable scraps	Sawdust or wood shaving from unpainted wood, scatter- don't clump	Sawdust or wood shavings from pressure treated lumber-it contains arsenic
Coffee grounds with filters & tea bags (Free at Starbucks)	Shredded newspaper, paper napkins, paper towels, paper towel rolls	Colored, shiny printed papers as they may contain ink with heavy metals
Hair & fur	Shredded cardboard boxes (wet for easier shredding)	Limestone can kill the composting action
Weeds (let them dry out first), spoiled alfalfa hay	Old bread, peanut shells	Meat, fish, bones, dairy or oil products will attract pests and cause an odor
Pond algae or aquarium water	Dryer lint & Dust bunnies	Coal or charcoal ashes, chemically treated yard waste

Crushed eggshells are neutral and are welcome in the pile. Chop everything up as small as you can before you throw it into the pile. A lawn mower, chipper or machete is handy for this. The smaller the surface area, the faster the micro-organisms will start breaking it down. The depth or volume of the pile is important for heat retention from the microbial activity. The microbes do their best work between 113 degrees and 158 degrees. The heat can help kill off some but not all weed seeds and organisms that you don't want to put back into the soil. If you make it at least 3 ft deep and 3 ft wide, the pile will insulate itself and the center will heat up. If too deep, such as over 5 ft, it may not allow in enough necessary oxygen and you will have to turn the pile more frequently. The microbes will work at lower temperatures but may take over a year to have compost. At the right temperature, it may take 3-4 months.

Moisture is also important to all of the following methods. Slightly damp like a wrung-out sponge is best. Too dry and the pile may never cook. Too wet and it will fill all the tiny air pockets and kill off the microbes. There are several 'recipes' for compost. Want the fastest compost? This is called a **HOT** compost pile. Use 2 parts finely chopped green grass to 1 part shredded dry leaves. Turn daily—a pitchfork works the best. Keep slightly moist. You could have compost ready for curing in 4 weeks. Want it a little easier? A **COOL** compost pile (it still heats up) can be made by adding about 6" of dry brown to 2" of green and top with a 1/4" of soil. Turn the pile once a week. Keep moist. Build the pile over a small pile of brush and it will help oxygen to get to the microbes. This method will give you compost ready for curing in about 3-4 months.

(Continued on page 4)

### Composting(continued from page 3)

How do you tell when the compost is done? It will look dark and crumbly with little or no discernible plant material remaining. The internal temperature will no longer feel warm as it comes close to the outside temperature. Now you need to let the compost cure. This simply means letting it rest for one to two months. It allows the microbes to stabilize. If you add fresh compost to your soil the microbes could actually steal nutrients to feed themselves and retard plant growth. Keep the compost moist during the curing process but it is not necessary to turn it. Cover to keep out excessive rainwater and to store when the process is complete.

How should you use your finished compost? Unlike fertilizer, you may use it spring, summer or fall. For your lawn, it will help create a denser root system. Sprinkle about 1/2" over the lawn and rake in so it doesn't cover the grass blades. If you use an aerator, rake in after aerating. You can topdress around established plants by adding up to 3" and working into the top 4" of soil. For trees, broadcast 1" to 2" about 2 feet from the trunk and 1 foot beyond the drip line of the branches this not only supplies nutrients but helps with moisture for the plants and trees.

Another way to use your compost is to make "Compost Tea". Fill a burlap bag or cloth bag (like an old pillowcase) with finished compost and tie closed. Place in a 5 gallon bucket for about 3 days. Dip your 'Tea' bag up and down a few times a day. You can water your plants every 2 weeks with the "Tea". The bag of compost can be reused several times and just like a regular tea bag, when it doesn't color up the water, it's time to change the compost. Toss the old stuff in the compost pile!



**Dues for the Mississippi Valley Hosta Society are \$7 per year. Please make your check payable to MVHS and send to DEAN PIATT, 2910 Telegraph Rd., Davenport, IA 52804.**

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**AHS DUES.** The American Hosta Society offers participation in all national activities, including a national convention, three issues of "The Hosta Journal", and a directory. They also have a web page - [www.hosta.org](http://www.hosta.org). Dues are now \$30/yr, \$57/2 yrs and \$600 life for an individual. Family memberships are also available at \$34/yr and \$62/2 yrs. Make your check to American Hosta Society and send to the AHS Membership Secretary, Sandie Markland, 8702 Pinnacle Rock Ct., Lorton, VA 22079.

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Dues for **Midwest Regional Hosta Society** are \$10/yr. Send your check to: Pete Postlewaite, Treasurer, 21172 Andover Rd., Kildeer, IL 60047-8604.

Mississippi Valley Hosta Society  
909 Mississippi Blvd.  
Bettendorf, Iowa 52722

**WHAT'S HAPPENING!**  
**JULY 10-12**—MRHS Convention, Chicago  
**OCT 3** – Bob Solberg here

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**Visit our MVHS WEB SITE**  
**[mvhosta.org](http://mvhosta.org)**

Other hosta and garden web sites:  
American Hosta Society - <http://www.hosta.org>  
Midwest Hosta Society - <http://www.midwesthostasociety.org>  
Hosta Library - <http://www.hostalibrary.org>  
Hosta Forum - questions/answers - <http://forums.gardenweb.com/forums/hosta>  
Mini Hosta Forum - <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/minihosta>