



Hosta Happenings

October 2010

Vol. 14, Iss 8

M.V.H.S. MEETING

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2010

6:00 PM

RIVERDALE FIRE STATION

(across from ALCOA)

Speaker:

GARY WHITTENBAUGH

WILL TALK ABOUT CONIFERS

Gary has been gardening for over 35 years with emphasis on dwarf, slow growing and unusual conifers plus trough and rock gardening. President of the American Conifer Society Central Region 2001-2005, and was the recipient of the prestigious 'Marvin and Emelie Snyder Merit Award for Service' from the American Conifer Society in 2005. He is an Iowa Master Gardener and received the Lifetime Master Gardener award in 2005. He is member of the American Conifer Society and the North American Rock Garden Society.

Their small garden in Oelwein IA (his brother Tom helps) of conifers, companion plants and trough gardens host many visitors every year. Articles and photos of the garden have appeared in Garden Gate Magazine including the cover of the September/October 2005 issue and Iowa Gardening Magazine cover story fall issue 2006.

From NW Indiana Hosta Society's Newsletter:



FALL HOSTA CLEAN-UP

Fall clean-up of your hosta beds will contribute to the health of your plants in the spring. Removing dead foliage removes diseased foliage, slugs and slug eggs. If the hosta leaves have dried and you can just pull them off, that's great. But, if you have some of those hostas that hang on green until the truly bitter end and you want to finish clearing the beds, take your disinfectant out with you to use on your pruners between snips. The hosta leaves and scapes do not go into your compost pile. Send them off to the landfill or dig a hole to bury them.

Slugs love when you get the lazys and don't feel like going out in the fall chill after a frost. It keeps their little eggs all nice and cozy and gives the adults a good place to hibernate while the birds can't see them for a snack. Are you storing hostas in pots or containers for the winter? Check the bottom for hitchhiking slugs before you tuck them in for the season.

And, do you really want to look at a bed of decaying hosta leaves and flower scape sticks all winter? You can't depend on the snow to cover them. Wouldn't you rather look out in the middle of winter at empty beds and start planning for spring?

Mulching your beds after clean-up is a great idea. But wait until a couple of hard freezes cool down the soil. At this time of year mulch is used to keep the ground cold during the occasional warm spells and may prevent the plants from heaving out of the ground. Then they can emerge gradually as the soil warms in the spring.

Get the teapot ready too! See you out there. *Mary A. Bardens*

DIVIDING CHRYSANTHEMUMS

From the Horticulture Magazine's e-newsletter

Question: When should I divide my hardy mums?

Answer: Don't be tempted to divide your mums in the fall. They respond best to being split in the spring, just as they're starting to grow. Dig up the plant. Discard the center of the clump and replant the vigorous outer roots. Don't repeatedly remove sections from the edge of the clump to give away, or you'll be left with just the old, woody center, which will grow and flower, but weakly.

To make more mums, you can also take cuttings in spring. If you spread some gritty soil among a clump of mums in the fall, you may well find that in spring you can detach new shoots with a few new roots already developing. Pot them up, care for them for a few weeks, then plant them in the ground. Cutting without roots can be stuck in fresh, sterile potting soil on a warm windowsill. Keep them moist and they will take root.





**M.V.H.S.
ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY**

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 3, 2010
SOCIAL HOUR - 6:00 PM
DINNER - 7:00 PM**

\$20.00 per person

**THUNDER BAY GRILL
6511 N. BRADY ST.
DAVENPORT, IOWA**

BUFFET MENU:
Sliced Roast Beef au Jus
Peppercorn Pork Loin
Tilapia with Dill Sauce
Roasted Red Potatoes
Vegetable Medley
Buttered Corn
Tossed Salad
Fruit Salad
Cup Cakes

**Reservations Deadline: Monday, November 29, 2010
Contact: Sally Freeman, 355-8534**



FALL TOOL CLEAN-UP

Clean tools just last longer. Clean tools also help keep diseases, weed seeds, fungi and insect eggs from being unknowing spread in the garden. The best scenario is to clean your tools after each use. But when your tools are going on their winter hiatus, cleaning is most important. Otherwise, you may just find a pile of rust in the tool shed come spring.

In Ellen Sandbeck's book *SLUG BREAD & BEHEADED THISTLES*, she lists these easy and effective natural tool-care tips:

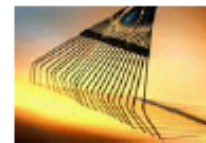
1. **To remove rust from tools**, soak in white vinegar overnight. Then scrub off the rust in the morning.
2. **Keep your garden tools clean and free of rust.** Fill a bucket with sand and pour in enough mineral oil to saturate the sand. After scraping the dirt and mud off your tools, plunge them into the oily sand.
3. **Sand down rough spots and oil wooden tool handles with boiled linseed oil.** Linseed oil, which is squeezed from flaxseed, is a natural preservative for wood. The trick in using it is to apply a thin coat and then allowing it to dry completely before storing tools. Do not apply to damp wood or in cold temperatures.



If you garden in clay soil, you may need to scrub your tools first with a heavy wire brush just to get to the metal surface. To work on rusty surfaces, sand paper is effective using a coarse 80 grit on tough rust, 220 grit for light rust and up to a fine 600 grit to polish.

CLR® is a commonly used household cleaner that is designed to remove heavy duty calcium, lime & rust, hence the name. The main ingredients are water, gluconic acid, citric acid, lactic acid, surfactants, glycolic acid and sulfamic acid. If you decide to go this route, use with extreme caution and heed all the label warnings!

Once you have all your tools all clean and shiny, store them in a dry place. You could take the time to sharpen and file smooth all the metal edges, but if you wait until spring, it will help remove any rust that may return over the winter. If your unheated tool shed is where they will vacation, get the mineral oil soaked bucket of sand and plunge in the shovels, trowels and whatever else metal will fit and leave them in there for a long winter's nap.



Mary A. Bardens

AHS DUES: The American Hosta Society offers participation in all national activities, including a convention, 3 issues of "The Hosta Journal", and a directory. They also have a web page - www.hosta.org. Dues are \$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 AHS and send to the Membership Secretary, Sandie Markland, 8702 Pinnacle Rock Ct., Lorton, VA 22079.

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**Midwest Regional Hosta Society Dues** are \$10/yr. Send your check to: Barbara Schroeder, 1819 Coventry Dr., Champaign, IL 61822-5239.

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MISSISSIPPI VALLEY HOSTA SOCIETY DUES are \$7/YR. Please make your check payable to MVHS and send to Dean Piatt, Treasurer, 2910 Telegraph Rd., Davenport, IA 52804. We offer 8 newsletters a year, reduced prices on hosta offerings, garden walks, first opportunity to buy plants at our annual hosta and plant sale and many other good opportunities.

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

WHAT'S HAPPENING:

- Oct 10** - MVHS meeting, Riverdale Fire Station, 6 PM
- Nov 14** - MVHS meeting, Riverdale Fire Station, 2 PM
- Jan 22** - Winter Scientific, Lisle, IL
- Mar 11-12** - Hosta College, Piqua, OH

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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>

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LET US KNOW!!! IF YOU HAVE MOVED or HAS YOUR EMAIL CHANGED?
Send your corrected info to DEAN PIATT, 2910 TELEGRAPH RD., DAVENPORT, IA 52804. His email is: dpiatt@mvhosta.org