



Hosta Happenings

September 2010

Vol. 14, Iss7

M.V.H.S.

**ANNUAL PICNIC
SUNDAY, SEPT. 19, 2010
3:30 PM**

**VANDER VEER BOTANICAL
PARK**

**HOSTA GLADE
215 W. CENTRAL PARK
DAVENPORT, IOWA**

(we can use the conservatory or stone house in case of rain)

**Please bring a dish to share, a chair and your own table service!
The club will furnish chicken and soft drinks.**

We will have H. 'Royal Mouse Ears' and H. 'Kaleidochrome' for sale!

President's Message

Hello Everyone,

Hasn't this been one weird growing season? It has been full of challenges. Too much moisture and too much heat have my garden waning. The hostas are huge! We should have a lot of divisions for next years plant sale.

The following positions for our executive board are open for election this November: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. Please give some serious thought to serving our Society when the nominating committee calls for help. There are several committee chairs that also need to be filled.

Our annual picnic is coming up on Sunday, September 19th. We will be in our usual area by the Hosta Glade in VanderVeer Park, Davenport. Hope to see you all there.

Tom Micheletti will be our speaker on Sunday, September 26th, at 2:00 PM. We will meet at the Scott County Extension Building in Bettendorf. This is also open to the public.

Our October Meeting is at the Riverdale Fire Station on Sunday, October 10th at 6:00 PM.

That's all from me for now. See you all soon.

Shirley



I'm missing two of my good clippers -- and they have been missing since our plant sale. Did anyone accidentally go home with an extra pair of clippers? One has a yellow handle and the other is a pink handle and the blade has "ARS" on it. Please give me a call if you find them. My telephone number is 355-6973. It is a wonderful clipper and I sure do miss them!!!

Carolyn Hamilton

Dean Piatt has 3-55 gallon plastic barrels available to make into rain barrels. Dean's email is dpiatt@mvmhosta.org if you are interested. They need to be modified some and YouTube has a ton of demos on how to do that.

Betty Stohlmeyer has a nice potting bench for sale for \$40. Her email is EJStoh@mchsi.com.

SMALL SPACES? SMALL HOSTAS!!

from Hosta Hotline, Mid-South Hosta Society

Match the cultivar name with the leaf description (introducer and year also given).

Answers on bottom of page 6.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. Cracker Crumbs | A. White with green edge, tapered leaves, Avent '98 |
| 2. Pandora's Box | B. White with green edge, leaves arrow-shaped and rippled, Malloy '98 |
| 3. Silver Streak | C. Blue, sport of 'Blue Cadet', Deckert '00 |
| 4. Banana Puddin | D. Gold, undulating edges, Zumbar NR |
| 5. Hidden Cove | E. White with blue-green edge, sport of 'Baby Bunting', Hanson '98 |
| 6. Country Mouse | F. Gold with green edge, sport of 'Shiny Penny', Solberg '02 |
| 7. Dragon Tails | G. White with green edge, twisted leaves, Klopping '86 |
| 8. Blue Mouse Ears | H. Yellow, 'Peter Pan' x 'Sun Power', Avent '06 |
| 9. Surprised by Joy | I. Blue-green with white edge, sport of 'Bill Dress's Blue', Hansen '06 |
| 10. Teeny-weeny Bikini | J. Gold with green edge, pointed leaves, Malloy '98 |

Mississippi Valley Hosta Society

Presenting

TOM MICHELETTI

Sunday **September 26th**
2:00pm to 3:30pm

**Join us at the Scott County Extension Office
875 Tanglefoot Lane, Bettendorf**



Tom Micheletti, current President of the American Hosta Society, past Vice President Hosta Genus, an exceptional speaker. Tom currently has over 800 hostas in his collection. Join us as he tells us about: The Problem with Hostas - noting a variety of plants with their diverse shapes, colors, and sizes, then goes into problems with maintenance and diseases. For those with a yearn to learn..

There is no cost – a function of the MVHS.

You Know You're Addicted to Gardening When...

submitted by Clair Odell - Author Unknown

Your neighbors recognize you in your pajamas, rubber clogs and a cup of coffee.
You grab other people's banana peels, coffee grinds, apple cores, etc. for your compost pile.
You have to wash your hair to get your fingernails clean.
All your neighbors come and ask you questions.
You know the temperature of your compost every day.
You buy a bigger truck so that you can haul more mulch.
You enjoy crushing Japanese beetles because you like the sound that it makes.
Your boss makes "taking care of the office plants" an official part of your job description.
Everything you touch turns to "fertilizer".
Your non-gardening spouse becomes conversant in botanical names
You find yourself feeling leaves, flowers and trunks of trees wherever you go, even at funerals
You dumpster-dive for discarded bulbs after commercial landscapers remove them to plant annuals.
You plan vacation trips around the locations of botanical gardens, arboreta, historic gardens, etc.
You sneak home a 7 foot Japanese Maple and wonder if your spouse will notice.
When considering your budget, plants are more important than groceries
You always carry a shovel, bottled water and a plastic bag in your trunk as emergency tools.
You appreciate your Master Gardener badge more than your jewelry.
You talk "dirt" at baseball practice.
You spend more time chopping your kitchen greens for the compost pile than for cooking.
You like the smell of horse manure better than Estee Lauder.
You rejoice in rain...even after 10 straight days of it.
You have pride in how bad your hands look.
You have a decorative compost container on your kitchen counter.
You can give away plants easily, but compost is another thing.
Soil test results actually mean something.
You understand what IPM means and are happy about it
You'd rather go to a nursery to shop than a clothes store.
You know that Sevin is not a number.
You take every single person who enters your house on a "garden tour".
You look at your child's sandbox and see a raised bed.
You ask for tools for Christmas, Mother/Father's day, your Birthday and any other occasion you can think of.
You can't bear to thin seedlings and throw them away.
You scold total strangers who don't take care of their potted plants.
You know how many bags of fertilizer/potting soil,/mulch your car will hold.
You drive around the neighborhood hoping to score extra bags of leaves for your compost pile
Your preferred reading matter is seed catalogs
And last but not least:
You know that the four seasons are:
Planning the Garden
Preparing the Garden
Gardening
~and~
Preparing and Planning for the next Garden

A LETTER FROM AHS PRESIDENT, TOM MICHELETTI

Hi all,

I realize it has been a while since I have corresponded with everyone, but spring came early and there were many duties to perform earlier than usual here at the Patch. Also since the AHS convention the end of June, I have been to the Midwest Convention in Des Moines, IA, and the Dixie Regional Convention in Waynesville, NC. All were wonderful conventions and a great time visiting with hosta friends and visiting other parts of our grand country. I want to thank everyone that is willing to support their regional society and host a convention. Without the efforts of local societies hosting conventions there would be none and the hosta world would be less fortunate.

It is the regional and local society that the AHS depends upon to host a convention as well and since a major source of our income is derived from the auction and vending at conventions, the AHS would suffer, and if it continues long enough the AHS would cease to exist. Without the programs and services that the AHS provides every level of the hosta world would also suffer. Our last convention is scheduled for 2012. Our Exec. VP Doug Beilstein has been very busy seeking societies to host a convention beyond 2012. He has been turned down countless times, but he continues to persist. I also have been asking locals to host a convention, and have been turned down many times a well. Please consider hosting a convention. The AHS is aware of the importance of a convention and will help and support a society in this endeavor. Contact either Doug dbeilsteindds@neo.rr.com or me and we can send you information about hosting a convention.

Well since I have that off my chest, it is a serious concern however, I can now let everyone know what's happening in the AHS. This summer's board meeting was shaping up to be a long drawn out event. The AHS experienced a major budget deficit last year and this year's budget was shaping up to be a serious deficit as well. There was much discussion via email prior to the meeting and there were many ideas shared as to what to do to balance the budget. Let me first explain that the AHS receives its funding primarily from membership dues and from the auctions, both the online auction in Jan. and the auction at the convention. Both of which were very successful this year. Also venders pay 15% of their sales at the convention to the AHS and this summer venders did very well and the AHS received a handsome sum. A full accounting of our finances will be posted shortly on the website in the Treasurers report. As for membership dues, membership has been declining in recent years. We were at a low point of just over 2400. That number has increased to over 2550 at the time of the summer meeting. It is suspected the increase is due to the new voucher program, whereby a person joining the AHS, or upgrading their membership to a 3 year membership, will receive a voucher for \$15 that can be redeemed at participating nurseries, listed on our website. I want to thank these nursery partners for their generosity as they have volunteered to provide these free hostas to new members.

While the budget was on track to show a deficit again this year, the increase in convention income and memberships will certainly help with this. It is not enough however to balance this years budget and it can not be counted on to continue into the future. In order to take the AHS into the future and also to begin to become a more environmentally responsible as well as fiscally responsible society the board took an unprecedented step to achieve both goals. The third issue of our beautiful "The Hosta Journal" will go in the members section of our website. This is typically referred to as the "Convention Issue" and will contain more information about our annual convention than can be published in our hard copy Journal. There will be more thorough garden descriptions, more photos of the gardens, the awards, the events, and the attendees. There is a committee working at this very moment to create this new Journal and it is scheduled to be ready sometime in September. The remaining 2 hardcopy issues of "The Hosta Journal" will be published shortly after the first of the year and again in the spring.

Another item that the board voted to do in order to achieve the goals mentioned above was to eliminate the paper Newsletter that came out at the beginning of the year. This will be replaced by an email newsletter that will be sent out periodically throughout the year. It will contain timely information about hostas and the AHS as well as pictures pertaining to the articles. It is very important that everyone update their email address with our Membership Secretary Sandie Markland ahsmembershipsecretary@charter.net in order to receive each issue of the newsletter. Please let your members know of this important update information. The same committee that is working on the online Journal is also planning to prepare the email newsletter.

(continued on page 6)

(continued from page 5)

Also at the convention Dr. Ben Lockhart was the keynote speaker at our banquet, and summarized the results of the 2 year study on Hosta Virus-X the AHS contracted with the University of Minnesota. This was made possible through the generous contributions from local and regional hosta societies. A full report on this study is available on our website as well as the brochure that was created to distribute to interested parties. Many local societies are including the brochure in their newsletters and it can be obtained through the AHS newsletter exchange from bardensmary@sbcglobal.net. As with many studies, the more you know, the more you want to know and this study was no different. More questions arose and the AHS is planning to undertake another 2 year study to answer the new questions. Again the AHS is asking societies to make contributions to help fund the new study. Contributions can be made by contacting Rob Mortko at rob@hostaguy.com.

These are the major items actions that members will see as a result of the summer board meeting. The board will also revisit this year's budget as soon as the final totals are in from the convention and do everything we can to balance the budget and begin to rebuild the reserves so that the AHS can continue as a vital society into the future. Remember please consider hosting a convention so that the AHS can continue into the future.

I'll be in touch!

Tom Micheletti
The Hosta Patch
Deer Park, IL
www.hostapatch.com

DO YOU NEED A WINTER PROJECT?
LOVE THOSE DEER - BUT NOT IN MY GARDEN!

by Bev Oliver from Mid-South Hosta Society "Hosta Hotline"

I'm a Master Gardener and I grow vegetables, perennials and especially hostas. These are all favorites of the deer. For years, it seemed whenever the hosta society or the local garden club planned to visit my garden, the deer would show up to do their selective pruning!

I tried all the tricks - putting out hair, soap, blood meal and other remedies to no avail - until I found something that worked (at least so far)!

I enjoy working with wood and have found a source for life-size silhouette patterns of wildlife. My first pattern was for a moose, then a buck, a doe and a fawn deer. They are made from half-inch plywood and spray painted with flat black paint. I think these silhouettes really frighten off the real ones.

I place the silhouettes in a natural position in my woodsy garden. Since putting out my "pets," I have had no deer problems on my property. I take them in during the winter so they will last longer. Last year, I brought them in on a Wednesday night - and that night I had two deer in my yard. As soon as the silhouettes are put out again in the spring, the deer disappear.

This makes a great winter project and they are very attractive in a woodland setting.

My source for the patterns is The Winfield Collection, 315- Owen Road, Fenton, MI 48430-3428, telephone 1-800-946-3435.

Small Hostas - Quiz Answers

1. F 2. E 3. G 4. H 5. J 6. I 7. D 8. C 9. B 10. A

VOLE PATROL

by Mary Bardens of the NW Indiana Hosta Society

My big white tom cat, Beemer, was a rescue cat from a rather tough suburb of Chicago. He has repaid us many times over by bringing us little "presents" which he usually leaves right at the front door. That was my first introduction to voles. The common North American Meadow Vole, sometimes known as a meadow mouse, can live in a network of above ground "runways" in grassy area, along house foundations and stone walls as well as in underground burrows. The burrows are used to store food for the winter and to give birth. Voles are active during the day and all year long. In the winter, they will make tunnels in the snow.

The Meadow Vole resembles a mouse but has a stouter body, shorter legs, a shorter hairy tail and short ears which are hard to see through their grey brown to dark brown fur. They are about 4" long with a 2" tail and have a silvery grey underbelly. Voles have the shortest lifespan of any mammal, living less than one year, often only 3-6 months. Their main goal in life is to eat and reproduce. They will have 3-6 litters in their lifetime of about 4-7 young and are monogamous. Their diet consists of grasses, sedges, seeds, conifer needles, bark and the roots of HOSTAS! A nice warm burrow under a large clump of hosta will set up a vole family for the winter months. Tucked away from predators, they can produce a couple of litters before spring.

Damage to hostas may not be evident until spring. Since the voles eat the roots, where there was once a big, beautiful plant will be a big, bare spot. It may be worthwhile to dig in the bare spots to see if you find a tunnel or burrow and not just assume you lost a hosta for another reason. While you may not find the vole, since the food trough was emptied, you will know you have a problem and can begin to work on the little rodents. If you find tunnels running toward a hosta, dig it up and fill in the burrow before replanting to keep the roots from being exposed to big air pockets and drying out. Then you can figure out which method of control is best for you.

It may be hard to prevent voles from moving in, since we set out the HOSTA BUFFET OPEN sign, but there are a few things we can do. Keep the grass mowed. Roll the lawn to collapse visible tunneling. Clean up weedy debris and brush from around the foundation of the house. Remove mulch from the hosta beds or keep it to 1", making it hard to tunnel under. Replace wood mulch with pea gravel or crushed stone - they won't tunnel through it. They don't even like to dig in gravel, so when planting hostas, first throw a shovel full of sharp gravel into the hole. Tilling the vegetable garden in the fall removes a food source and will also collapse tunnels. Pull mulch back about a foot from the base of trees.

Planting your hostas in containers is one method of vole control. Or, place your hosta in a basket of 1/4" hardware cloth before planting in the ground to keep the little devils away from the roots.

To find the entrance to a burrow, look for a hole about 1" to 2" across which may have a roadway eaten in the grass leading to it. You can trap a vole like a mouse. Use the same type of snap mouse trap baited with peanut butter. Place it close to the hole and cover it with a bucket or basket to keep it dark. Wait a couple of days before checking it. Then go daily to empty or keep baited. Continue baiting until a week goes by without capturing anything. This should work for smaller infestations.

For larger infestations, rodenticides (poison mouse bait purchased over the counter) can be placed in the burrow entrance. Great care must always be used when handling any poison. Place it down in the hole but leave the hole open for about a week so they will take the bait into the burrow. After that, fill in the holes. If the poison has done its job, the hole will stay closed. If the hole reappears, put in more bait.

There are some commercial products available that are not poisonous and can be used to repel voles. A product called 'WHOLE CONTROL' uses a hose end sprayer and leaves a residual bad taste in the soil that remains effective for 3 months. It is also reported to repel armadillos, in case that is also a problem for you.

'VOLE BLOCK' is a non-toxic soil additive of coarse particles of expanded natural slate and is applied as a physical barrier in the soil surrounding the root system and as mulch around the plant.

'LIQUID FENCE MOLE & VOLE REPELLENT' is another hose end sprayer type that is formulated to coat earthworms and roots making them unpalatable but does not harm either. Two applications may be needed.

'REPELLEX VOLE & GOPHER REPELLENT' takes castor oil and emulsifying agents and then adds paprika resins for an extra tasty kick. It is also sprayed.

And lastly, 'PESTACATOR', which is a solar powered ground rodent repeller. It emits high tech sonic sounds in complex variable frequencies that are directed by a tube to penetrate the tunnel systems. It is supposed to impact the rodent's nervous system and they cannot adapt and move on. Must be like those cars you pull up next to at the stoplight with the giant speakers blasting that cause your car windows to rattle. That impacts my nervous system. The "Pestacator" will cover a 100' diameter and the end must be inserted into a tunnel or burrow.

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H. 'Royal Mouse Ears' and 'Kaleidochrome' for sale at Annual Picnic

Sally and Carolyn will have the above hostas for sale at the picnic. "Kaleidochrome" will sell for \$20 and 'Royal Mouse Ears' will be \$18.

That sounds a little expensive, however, they are brand new in the hosta trade and the Hosta Finder prices are \$100 for 'Royal Mouse Ears' and 'Kaleidochrome' \$53. So you see, it is a bargain!!!

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## **WAYS TO CLEAN SEED**

from the Horticulture web site

It is usually necessary to dry and clean the seed after harvesting. For seeds in pods, heads or capsules, a week or two at normal room temperature and humidity will dry them sufficiently. Once dry, the vessels will crack or split open and spill their contents. You can gently roll a rolling pin over stubborn pods to open them.

Separating the seed from the chaff is much easier when the seed is fully dry. You can separate the seed from the chaff (dry coverings and other debris) by shaking it through a screen or kitchen sieve. It also will flush out any insects lingering in the pods. A good trick is to place the seed and chaff in the crease of a folded piece of heavy paper or poster board, tilt the paper and lightly shake or tap it. The seed will roll off the chaff and onto the table.

If you collect fruits or berries - for example tomatoes, blueberries or hollies - clean the seed of pulp before you store it. It may be easiest to mash fleshy fruits on a screen with holes smaller than the seeds. Rinse water through the screen to wash away the pulp and skins. Tough or unripe fruit can be left in a cup of water to ferment for a week to make the pulp easier to wash away.

Get illustrated how-to articles with Horticulture's Smart Gardening Techniques downloads.

## **THE HOSTA LISTS**

Wonderful New Resource for Hosta Gardeners  
excerpts from AHS Members Newsletter, Winter 2010

Hosta gardeners can now take advantage of a new resource known as the Hosta Lists. This excellent reference work by Don Rawson of Comstock Park, MI is a collection of 57 individual lists which group cultivars and species according to various facts and characteristics.

Compiled over an 11 year period and containing nearly 10,000 entries, the Hosta Lists represent the most comprehensive and accurate collection of lists available. Some of the lists, for example, are "branched-scaped hostas", "drawstring hostas", and "difficult-to-grow hostas". Of course, there are many, many more - in fact, just about any list you can think of. Never before has there been such an extensive and helpful reference tool of this magnitude.

As a charter member and first president of the West Michigan Hosta Society, Don realized the need for a club notebook when the group began over a decade ago and he set about gathering worthwhile hosta information, including several lists. Every year or two his notebook and lists were expanded to include newly introduced varieties.

The Hosta Lists have grown in size and quantity over the years as a result of continuously reviewing new information. This is a never-ending task, particularly with the onslaught of new plants we have seen in the last few years. So the Hosta Lists are revised, updated and published annually every spring.

The compiler's has two goals. The first is an effort to make the Hosta Lists as comprehensive and accurate as possible. This extends not only to which hostas should be placed on each list, but also making sure that the names are correct. This resource remains a "work in progress" and Don says all input is appreciated. Send any additions and corrections to: [donrawson@juno.com](mailto:donrawson@juno.com).

These lists are now readily accessible for all hosta lovers simply by logging onto the internet. With the help of Pieter Klapwijk and Box Axmear, the Hosta Lists are posted on [www.hostalibrary.org](http://www.hostalibrary.org) and [www.pwk.resteddoginn.ca](http://www.pwk.resteddoginn.ca). The files can be downloaded and saved on your own computer. Since the lists are not copyrighted, they can also be printed and photocopied. The 2009 Hosta Lists are 40 pages, using font size 10.

Spiral bound copies are available for a small fee of \$8 each to cover printing and mailing costs. Contact Don Rawson, 426 9 mile NE, Comstock Park, MI 49321 or email [donrawson@juno.com](mailto:donrawson@juno.com).

Checks should be made out to Don Rawson and mailed to the above address and payment can also be made through Paypal by using the compiler's email address ([donrawson@juno.com](mailto:donrawson@juno.com)).

**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](http://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:**

- Sept 26** - Tom Micheletti, IA Ext Ofc, 2 PM
- 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**
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](mailto:dpiatt@mvhosta.org)

SEE YOU AT THE PICNIC ON SEPT. 19th

**2009 DUES ARE**