

Hosta Happenings

The Newsletter of the Northern Illinois Hosta Society

ISSUE 126

MARCH 2023

2023 CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

- **March 12, NIHS Winter Symposium, Cantigny Park**
- **May 21, NIHS Spring Symposium, Cantigny Park**
- **June 3-4, NIHS Leaf Display & Plant Sale, Chicago Botanic Garden**
- **June 7-10, AHS Convention, Ames, IA**
- **June 24, Bus Tour to S. Wisconsin**
- **June 25, Hosta Garden Walk, Crystal Lake**
- **July 9, NIHS Summer Symposium, Cantigny Park**
- **July 13-15, MRHS Convention, Rochester, MN**
- **July 15, Hosta Garden Walk, Warrenville**
- **Aug 6, NIHS Picnic and Hosta Auction, Cantigny Park**
- **September TBD, Annual Meeting**
- **October 15, NIHS Fall Symposium, Cantigny Park**
- **Dec 3, Holiday Party, Cantigny Park**

President's Letter

As I write this article there are only seven weeks until Spring or less than six weeks if you follow the Ground Hogs. Regardless of your prognosticator, we are almost there...HOORAY!

As we get into March, if you have had a problem with 'slugs', it is a good time to start your slug control program. As Lenny and I live in a wooded area, I have had a growing problem with weeds the last couple years. This is also a good time to start your weed removal /weed prevention program.

On a more positive note, please check out the Calendar at a Glance. In 2023 we have a great number of opportunities for you. This year we will have **four Symposiums** (March, May, July and October). The annual **Chicago Botanic Garden 'Leaf Display and Plant Sale'** and the return of our **Bus Tour** in June.

Hosta Garden Walks in June and July and our **NIHS Picnic and Auction** in early August just to name a few activities. It is also getting to be that time of the year to begin work on the AHS National Display Garden that NIHS installed and maintains at Cantigny Park. Please read the articles below detailing our upcoming events. Do not miss out on these opportunities!

Once again, I cannot say enough about what your NIHS Board

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President's Letter *continued*

members and volunteers do to bring you these events. We have increased the number of Symposiums over the last couple of years to provide you with more learning opportunities. These go hand in hand with the NIHS mission to *"share knowledge and love of hostas and to promote wider use of hostas in the landscape"*. Additionally, we have had a table at the McHenry County Master Gardener's "Gardenfest" each of the last 3 years held at McHenry County College. We made a presentation to the Lake Zurich Garden Club last November and we have requests to make presentations this Spring to a garden club in Elgin and to the McHenry County Master Gardener's organization.

This is the time of the year we identify and offer to you the NIHS Sponsor plants. Please read the article below identifying how you can participate in this annual opportunity to purchase great hosta cultivars at a discounted price. This is also the time we start thinking about what we will be adding to our gardens, right? We invite you to check out and visit our NIHS Member Vendors. They have an amazing assortment of hostas to review and obviously purchase. Here is the link to our website that takes you directly to their contact information or link to their website/Facebook Page.

www.northernillinoishostasociety.org/member-vendors.html

I also want to provide an early notification of our upcoming Leaf Display and Plant Sale event at the Chicago Botanic Garden ("CBG"). Each year, around the first week-end in June, NIHS provides from 100 to 150 hosta leaves donated by our members to be displayed for visitors to CBG. The leaves are sorted by size, alphabetized and put out on display for everyone to view. We have a guest speaker on Saturday and we have 2 vendors selling hosta cultivars that you will not find at your local big box store or nursery. More details will be provided in our next newsletter.

Although this "AHS National Award-Winning Newsletter" is worth the price of membership, we invite you to get involved. Check out our events, meet new people and

Lifetime NIHS Members

We Recognize Your 25 Years of Service

Ellen & John VanOstrand

John is a former President and Board Member
of NIHS.



rekindle old friendships.

We would love to get more people involved with the Board or as a volunteer. If you have the slightest bit of interest, please talk to one of the board members or contact me directly at kraus6311@comcast.net.

Get your garden tools cleaned/sanitized and ready for action. It won't be long now!

Hosta-la-vista,

Mike



Beth Botts

Winter Symposium

Sunday March 12

By Mark Meginness

Our winter symposium will be at the Cantigny Education Center on **Sunday March 12th at 1:00pm**.

Our guest speaker will be award winning author **Beth Botts** who will be giving a talk on **“Divide and Multiply”** of our plants - not just hostas.

The guest garden vendor will be our own **Jan Smith**.

Beth Botts has written hundreds of articles about gardens and nature for publications including the Chicago Tribune and magazines including Organic Gardening, Country Gardens and Chicagoland Gardening. Raised on the South Side of Chicago by an organic gardener, she now gardens in deep shade on the north side of a four-story apartment building. She crowds her roses into one small bed where the sun sneaks between the trees and grows tomatoes

and herbs on the third-floor porch. Her website is www.thegardenbeat.com.

The **Spring Symposium** will be held on May 21st also at the Education Center. This event will be held in conjunction with the Spring Sponsor Plant pick up date. Our presenter, who will remain anonymous at this time, has an incredible knowledge of hostas. Currently, the topic chosen is **“Confessions of a Hostaholic”**

Finally, our **Summer Symposium**, held on July 9th, will be in Cantigny’s Joseph Medill Room. This will enable us to once again offer the delicious ice cream treats from Bertie’s Cafe that were so popular with our members last year.

And speaking of popular with our members, Cindy Tyley will be back giving us **“Tips for the Lazy Gardener, Part 2”**. Cindy, who will be presenting all new material, was one of our most engaging presenters last year.

Hosta ‘Neptune’ - Hosta of the Year

This unique blue hosta is popular among hosta collectors and makes a very nice specimen in the home garden. In spring, the narrow wedge-shaped leaves are bright glaucous blue and they hold their color well. As the season progresses, they turn more blue-green. The heavily rippled leaves are of good substance, displaying some slug resistance. This hosta has a lovely cascading form that is displayed to best effect when planted on a ledge or in a container.

- ◆ Pod parent is (H. ‘Maekawa’ x H. ‘Halcyon’)
- ◆ Pollen parent is H. ‘Salute’
- ◆ It was registered in 2006

Description from the Walters Gardens website



Hosta Garden Walks Preview

2 Great Gardens This Summer

By Zoe Ingersoll

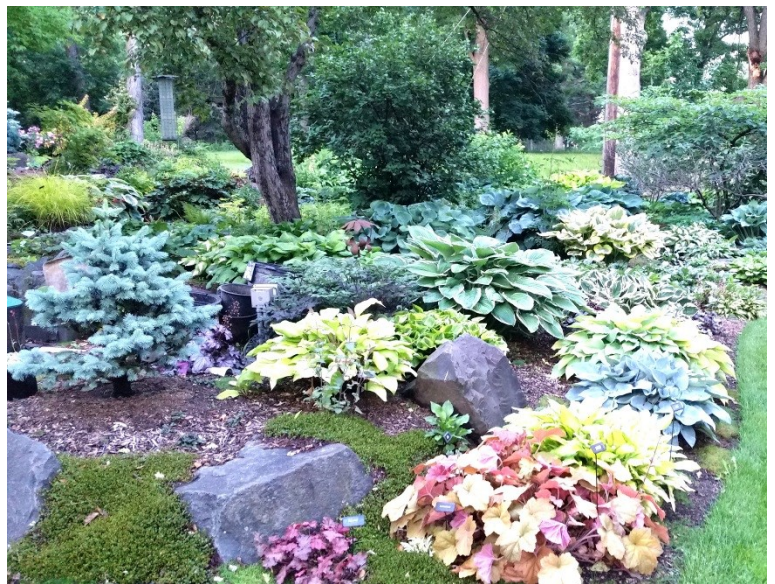
Bill Horn's Garden in Crystal Lake, Sunday June 25

Here is some background regarding our garden ...

We started gardening here in Crystal Lake in 1990. Then, we experienced heavy shade from many large trees and poor soil. After removing the weedy trees and shrubs the remaining trees were groomed and the soil was amended.

Since then, hundreds of plants of many types have been trialed and many have been removed, somebody has to try them out. Mother Nature has removed quite a few of our largest trees over time and damaged some of the others. We now get to plant some specimens that like more sun.

The quest goes on, we will make the most of it...
Thanks and I hope you can come and visit.



Hosta Garden Walks Preview

continued

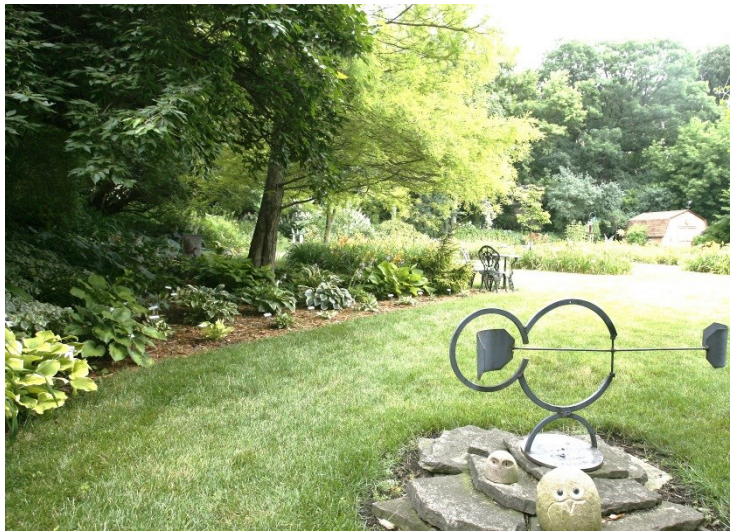
John Richter's Garden in Warrenville, Saturday July 15

John Richter began his garden 40 plus years ago. His acre lot was an empty field. He had his home built and then started his garden – planting and planting! He has planted every blade of grass, every tree, shrub, perennial – hostas, daylilies, ground covers, wild geraniums, shiny ginger and more.

John has over 700 varieties of hostas and thousands of daylilies from 10 different hybridizers (Spider daylilies, double daylilies, many different colors of daylilies, some with ruffled edges). John enjoys his collection of variegated and grafted trees -- everything from a weeping cypress to an alley cat redbud. An *Aralia Variegata*, grafted ginkgo and tri-color beech also appear in his garden. He also loves his camper down elm with all its beauty.

John will be offering his plants for sale – he will dig and cut any plant that he can and sell it to you -- and at the end of the day, he will issue a check to the Hosta Society for 10% of the plant sales.

Come on out for the fun!



NIHS Sponsor Plants

By Mike Kraus

The NIHS Sponsor Plant Program was designed many years ago for the benefit of our members. Allowing members to purchase recent cultivars at extremely favorable prices. We have selected some high-quality cultivars from two of our member vendors, Bob Solberg from Green Hill Farm and locally our own Jim Morrow from Skylar's Hostas. You will receive divisions that are ready to be placed in your garden after the threat of frost. You will not need to grow them out for months in a container.

This year's offerings are four outstanding cultivars that everyone should have in their gardens. A couple are new introductions that you will not find available at your local garden centers. The cultivars that we are offering are priced to you significantly below their retail price.

H. 'Effervescence' (\$14.00)- Small/Medium bright yellow hosta from local hybridizer, Dan Wols has a great Spring impact. As this hosta calls you to come closer, you will appreciate the nice ruffling on its arching pointed leaves. This is a seedling out of 'Marilyn Monroe', 'Neptune' and 'Designer Genes'.

H. 'Voices in the Wind' (\$15.00)- Medium beautifully variegated hosta will catch your eye with sophisticated beauty. Blue-green wedge-shaped leaves have very ruffled, creamy yellow margins. Pale lavender flowers appear in mid to late summer.



Hosta 'Effervescence'



Hosta 'Voices in the Wind'

Important Information

The order deadline is Friday April 28th.

Members only are eligible to order hostas and there is a limit of **one plant per household membership** for each of the four hosta cultivars (Remember our Memberships are per "household" not per "individual"). Any surplus of unsold hostas may be offered for an additional purchase. We have ordered 35 of each cultivar and orders will be filled on a "first come, first serve basis". In 2021 we ordered 25 of each hosta cultivar. Sales through our website were so successful that most plants were sold out in less than a day. Fortunately, we were able to go back to our vendors and obtain more plants to cover our demand. I cannot guarantee that we will have that same opportunity again.

We will be distributing all purchased hosta plants at our Spring Symposium May 21st at Cantigny Park.

As in 2022, all sales will be handled through the NIHS website and you

will pay securely via credit card using Square or Google Pay. It is our hope that this will make your ability to select and purchase these hostas much easier than filling out a form and mailing a check. This is a secure member's only page. If you find that you are unable to complete this type of transaction or are uncomfortable making a credit card purchase online, please contact me directly at kraus6311@comcast.net to see **if** we can accommodate your desired purchase. As we process orders on a "first come, first serve" basis, it would be better and more efficient if you can execute this purchase transaction online yourself.

NIHS Sponsor Plants continued

H. 'Flash Freeze' (\$18.00)- Medium to Large, First time introduction exclusively for hosta societies. The powder blue leaves of this new introduction from Doug Beilstein are cupped and somewhat puckered and tend to overlap and wrap around their petioles. It is a welcoming upright hosta that reaches out to you palms up. It is a classic blue look.

H. 'Hope Springs Eternal' (\$13.00)- Medium/Large. All gardening is an exercise in optimism, and 'Hope Springs Eternal' is appropriate name for a hosta that will bring joy year after year. Heart-shaped blue horizontal leaves have a crisp creamy white margin and form a formal habit. Its most notable feature is the incredible ruffling on the leaves that undulate all the way to the pointed tips. Near white flowers in midsummer.

Step By Step Directions For Placing Your Order

How do you access the appropriate website page? The following description is presented on a step-by-step basis and appears to be very long and cumbersome. It is not as difficult as it appears as long as you closely follow the instructions. In 2021 we setup a Member's Only password protected page to accommodate the Sponsor Plant sale. You will receive an email from NIHS providing you with the password for access. Do not share this password with a non-member of NIHS.

Directions: Go to our website: <http://www.northernillinoishostasociety.org> and once there you will scroll across the navigation bar to find **Member's Only**. You will gently go to the dropdown menu beneath the calendar and locate: **NIHS 2023 Sponsor Plant Sale**. When you are on that page, you can look at each hosta's image, read the description and decide which hosta(s) you will buy. Once you have decided, click **add to cart**. You will be taken to another page where you will **indicate your quantity of "1" plant** for that cultivar. If you want to purchase a different hosta, you will click on the **back arrow** located in the top left corner of the screen. It will take you back to the main **Spring Plant Sale & Pick-Up** page. You can select another hosta you would like to purchase. Again, you will be taken to another page to indicate your quantity of "1" hosta.

You will repeat this process until you are done selecting your hostas. Each time you add your quantity to the cart, you will see a running



Hosta 'Flash Freeze'



Hosta 'Hope Springs Eternal'

subtotal. When you are ready to begin your purchase, you will click on **checkout button** and fill in the form on our secure site with Square or Google Pay (GPay). After you purchase is complete, you will receive an email receipt thanking you for your purchase with Northern Illinois Hosta Society.

In early May, after we receive the hostas from our vendors **YOU WILL** receive another email, indicating your hostas will be available for pickup at our Spring Symposium May 21st at Cantigny Park in Wheaton. If you are unable to attend the Spring Symposium to pick up your hostas, there will be a contact number in your email, for you to make special arrangements to pickup your hostas at my home in Crystal Lake.

2023 Special Events

Open House & Hosta Walk on
June 9-10-11

10th Annual Artisan Market on
Saturday, September 16th



2023 Hosta of the Year 'Neptune' - just one of 400+ varieties of hostas that we stock!

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for more information about events and workshops

Garden Center open April 10 - October 10

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Southern Wisconsin Hosta Bus Tour

June 24, 2023—We're Back!!

By Mark Rekoske

After a three year hiatus the NIHS bus tour is back! We will spend a full day touring six southern Wisconsin gardens. We will visit **five** private gardens and there will be shopping opportunities at Hollywood Bob's Hosta Farm and plants from Uniquely Hostas will be available for sale at the Geske garden.

We will **depart at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday, June 24** from Parking Lot L at the Southwest end of Woodfield Mall in Schaumburg, near the water tower. This is the same departure point we used in 2019. All registrants for the tour will receive driving directions with their confirmations. We will travel by motor coach. No lunch stop is planned so bring your own lunch. NIHS will provide limited on-board refreshments as well. We will go regardless of the weather so bring rain gear if the weather looks unfavorable.

We are limited to 52 participants so please **sign up early to ensure a place on the bus.**

- **Please arrive at the parking lot by 6:45 a.m. as the bus will leave promptly at 7:00.**
- **COST: \$48 for NIHS members and members' spouses. \$58 for guests (includes a one-year NIHS membership). The cost will increase to \$58 for late registrations received after April 31.**
- **QUESTIONS: Email Mark Rekoske**
- **Use the Order Form at the end of this article to mail your check.**

Garden Descriptions

Bob and Dawn Geske—see pics above

The Geskes have over 2.5 acres of their garden devoted to hostas. While he was in school and living with his parents, Justin Geske began to work with Jeff Miller and both he and his father developed a keen interest in hybridizing hostas. Bob and Dawn began collecting registered hostas and planted the beds nearest the house that are now very mature and mulched with colored mulch. Over a small hill toward the back of the property, visitors will find a large variety of seedlings attractively planted in beds edged with railroad ties. There are seedlings from both Bob and Justin's hybridizing as well as seedlings from Jeff Miller and Jeff Moore, another Janesville area hybridizer. Some of these seedlings are monstrous plants over 10 years old. The back of the property includes seedlings from the joint hybridizing efforts of Jeff Miller and Justin. In addition, a newer bed includes plants acquired from Owen Purvis. The overall effect is quite dramatic. The great variety of leaf shapes, sizes and colorations will encourage you to spend some time viewing the seedling beds.



The Geske garden



Southern Wisconsin Bus Tour continued

Hollywood Bob's Hosta Farm

Much has changed since we last visited Mike and Fran. They have landscaped a large space with boulders, shrubs and a multitude of hostas that have matured beautifully. Hollywood Bob's now includes about 3.5 acres planted with hostas; many are mature and rare specimens. Some of the hostas are up to 14 years old. Construction of display beds is ongoing so some of the property may be roped off due to insurance considerations. They have also added a large hoop house too that displays a large assortment of containerized hostas for sale. Please visit their remodeled website at hollywoodbobshosta.com for more information and to review the new plants offered for sale. Additional plants, not listed on the website will likely also be available.

Ken Nordlund

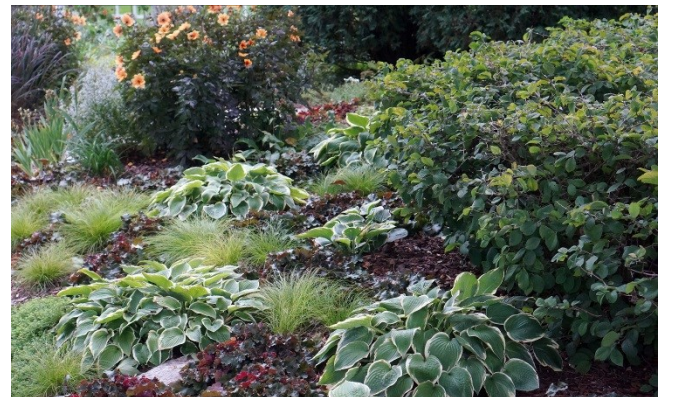
The Nordlunds moved into a newly constructed house with a barren landscape in 1980. Ken's wife directed him to "do something". He was not a gardener then, but through trial and error he set out to create a pleasing place with beds that repeated plants, textures and colors. Using a variety of ornamental trees, perennials, grasses, annuals and vegetables, Ken developed an award winning garden featured on many garden walks. Ken's is not a hosta garden, but hostas are included here. In addition, Ken has utilized a two acre community property adjacent to the his garden to recreate a prairie planted with native plants that provides food and shelter for many insects and birds.

Phyllis Lathrope

Phyllis gardens on a city lot that was nothing but lawn 20 years ago. Her philosophy is to buy interesting plants, find the right site and watch them flourish. The garden includes interesting trees, shrubs, hostas, spring ephemerals, spring bulbs, epimediums, and a variety of shade tolerant perennials. There is also a tadpole filled pond, tree peonies, two arbors, water plants, irises and several Japanese maples. Today the only remaining lawn is used for walking paths.



Hollywood Bob's Display Garden



The Nordlund garden



Southern Wisconsin Bus Tour continued

Rosemary and Thomas Kleinheinz

The Kleinheinzs got serious about gardening in 1997 after they retired. Their garden is on a deep partially shaded lot in Madison. In 2011 their garden was a featured garden at the MRHS Convention and in July their daylilies were in full bloom. Over the years they have reduced the amount of maintenance by adding more dwarf conifers, shrubs and ornamental trees while reducing the focus on daylilies. There are still daylilies and they should be blooming at the time of our visit. The shady side of the lot features hostas, ferns and other shade tolerant perennials. The Kleinheinzs enjoy opening their garden and Tom is well known for his lime cookies.

Char Hanson

Char began gardening in the 1980's and moved to her DeForest home in 2005. She started new beds throughout the garden and at last count the Hansons grow over 700 hosta varieties. To the delight of her garden visitors, all the hostas are labeled and tended with care. Char credits hosta Montana Aureomarginata for starting her addiction. The garden is 80% shade so hostas, ferns, tree peonies and Japanese maples are featured in the garden. A number of shrubs and especially magnolias have found space in the Hanson garden as well. The rear deck has the most sun in the yard so vegetables are grown there in containers. Char is a member of the Wisconsin Hosta Society and her garden has been featured on many tours.

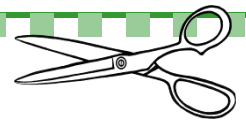


The Kleinheinz garden, above &

The Hanson garden, below



Southern Wisconsin Bus Tour June 24 Registration Form



Pease print this page and mail it with your check. Due date is 04/31/23

QUESTIONS: Email [.com](#) or call

Make checks payable to: Northern Illinois Hosta Society

Member Name _____

Guest Name _____

Telephone _____

Please provide your email address below. Confirmation of your reservation, directions to the parking lot and the tour schedule will be sent to you via email.

Email _____

Members \$48 X ___ = \$ _____

Guest \$58 X ___ = \$ _____

Late Entries \$58 X ___ = \$ _____

Total \$ _____

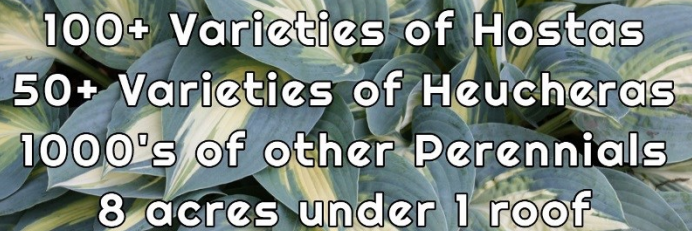
Note: Registration fees are non-refundable. However, I will create a waiting list to facilitate private transfers if you later find you are unable to attend. No guarantees, but sometimes replacements can be arranged.





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Friendly Festive Holiday Party!

Fried chicken, ham and all the holiday fixin's were enjoyed at our Holiday Party on December 18 on a picturesque Sunday at Cantigny Park. The warm fireplace added a holiday glow to the happy faces.

Pics by Ron Asselborn





Friendly Fes-
tive Holiday
Party!
continued



June Vandervest, pic right,
created and raffled off her
holiday centerpieces.





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Be a Cantigny Park Hosta Garden Volunteer for 2023!

By Barbara King



The Cantigny Park AHS Hosta Garden will be ready for NIHS volunteers beginning in late April or early May. Now is the time to sign up to become part of a wonderful team of hosta gardeners!

While we are thrilled to welcome back volunteers from previous years, more are needed to help us maintain the standard of excellence we have set for the hosta garden. Last year our volunteers worked extra diligently to ensure that the garden displayed perfectly for those attending the Midwest Regional Hosta Society convention that NIHS hosted in mid-July. Cantigny's horticulture staff, as always, worked supportively with us. Judging by their comments, convention visitors from throughout the Midwest were very impressed with what we have accomplished together.

If you would like to know what's involved in being an NIHS Cantigny volunteer, the Q & A's following will explain. But one of the most special features of helping in the hosta garden isn't listed there: **It's fun!**

You get to spend time tending a beautiful garden, surrounded by gorgeous plants, visiting with congenial fellow gardeners who share your passion for hostas.

Returning volunteers, remember to tell Barbara King that you plan to continue this year. You also need to take the safety training again; it's an annual requirement for volunteers in all Cantigny departments.

CANTIGNY VOLUNTEER Q & A's

WHAT DO THE VOLUNTEERS DO? They care for the Cantigny Park AHS National Hosta Display Garden beginning each year with spring cleanup in late April or early May, and ending with the fall cleanup in early November. They plant new hostas and companion plants, spread mulch throughout the garden, water, weed, keep the area tidy, and do anything else that's needed to keep the garden looking its best.

HOW OFTEN CAN I HELP OUT? In the spring, when there

is always a lot to do, we schedule volunteer workdays every week, usually on Tuesday mornings for 2 or 3 hours beginning at 8 or 9 am (depending on weather and what needs to be done) from late April through the end of June. After that we work once every other week until we "put the garden to bed" in early November. You will receive the upcoming volunteer schedule about every 6 weeks with a request to sign up for as many or as few of the sessions as you would like. We like to have around 8 people per session, but we have worked with more or fewer depending on volunteer availability and our workload.

IS THERE ANY TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS? Cantigny requires one hour of training in garden safety each year, and a 1 to 2-hour training session in child safety every other year. The Cantigny horticulture staff schedules several sessions of garden safety training in the early spring, and child safety training sessions are scheduled throughout the year. We will let you know when these sessions are to be held so you can sign up for the ones that are most convenient for you.

WHAT ARE THE REWARDS OF VOLUNTEERING? Aside from the satisfaction of knowing you are helping to create and maintain a beautiful hosta garden for the public to enjoy, additional benefits for **regular volunteers** include free admission to the park with free parking any time the park is open; a 10% discount on purchases at the Golf Shop and on food and beverages (non-alcoholic) at Cantigny restaurants; a beautiful large poinsettia in a color of your choice at Christmas-time; and more. Regular volunteers may also work in other areas of the park at other times if they wish to do so. There is also an alternative category, **special events volunteers**, that may be chosen. No training is required, and the benefit is free parking on the days you volunteer.

QUESTIONS AND SIGN-UP: Contact Barbara King,



SPRING



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FALL



WINTER

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Make sure to follow us for Facebook sales to be shipped to you if you are not able to visit this year!

Open Garden Weekends 2023

May	June	July
Saturday May 27th	Friday June 2nd	Saturday July 1st
Sunday May 28th	Saturday June 3rd	Sunday July 2nd
Monday May 29th	Sunday June 4th	Monday July 3rd
	Sunday June 11th	
	Saturday June 24th	
	Sunday June 25th	

Open 9-3



DAVE'S VIEW

By Dave Trollope



Hostas clockwise from top left - 'Deep Blue Sea', 'Island Breeze', 'Marilyn Monroe', 'Abiqua Blue Crinkles', 'Powder Keg', 'Frosted Dimples', & Queen of the Seas'

As we stride towards spring and look forward to the upcoming year of delights in our gardens, here are a selection of my hosta favorites from our 2022 garden. Dave





NIHS Offers Master Gardening Help for Our Members

The University of Illinois Extension & our very own NIHS Master Gardeners
By Stevie Meginness

We are fortunate to have several Illinois Master Gardeners in our NIHS organization. They have graciously said they will make themselves available at our four NIHS symposiums throughout the year answering your HOSTA questions and sharing their knowledge. You will find them sitting at the Master Gardener's Table in the symposium room. Look for our NIHS Master Gardeners in March, May, July, and October at each of our symposiums.

In addition, the University of Illinois Master Gardeners (MG) will be able to answer your gardening questions in between each of our NIHS symposiums using the Master Gardener helplines found in each county. You can use the Helpline desk phone number below to address your concerns.

Kane County Master Gardener's Helpline: 630-584-6166 Uiemg-Kane@illinois.edu

This support will begin now using the helpline number above or you may contact your own county's Master Gardening Helpline. You will find some of our very own certified Master Gardeners in person at our March Symposium Master Gardener's Table. Please use both helpful resources to support your HOSTA gardening needs and queries using research based horticultural knowledge and best practices.

2023 Open House Sale Dates!

May 27-28, June 24-25 and July 22-23

9am-3pm all days



Come visit us in Cherry Valley, IL

Open from Memorial Day thru Labor Day

Evenings and Weekends by appt ONLY

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Email us for a list
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Large Flowered Bellwort, Uvularia grandiflora

Native Plants for your Shade Garden

By Trish Beckjord

Editor's Note: All these would be great companion plants for hosta and many exhibit interest in spring. Beyond fitting comfortably into our woodland understory, many play a greater role in benefitting pollinators, because they are natives.

- **Bloodroot, Sanguinaria canadensis** - The brilliant white – or rarely light pink – flowers up to 2 inches across open in early spring.
- **Early Meadow Rue, Thalictrum dioicum** - Tough; no special care. Looks good through fall.
- **False Solomon's Seal, Maianthemum racemosum or Smilacina racemose** - lasts all season. Fruit provides nice contrast with hostas.
- **Jack in the Pulpit, Arisaema triphyllum** - Bright red fruit in the fall. Deer don't like.
- **Jacob's Ladder, Polemonium reptans** - does not die back. Good companion planted in masses.
- **Large Flowered Bellwort, Uvularia grandiflora** - Holds foliage through the fall. Pictured top right.
- **Large-flowered Trillium, Trillium grandiflorum** - is a simple, graceful perennial that is one of the most familiar and beloved of the spring woodland wildflowers in eastern North America.
- **Mayapple, Podophyllum peltatum** - Slow-spreading colonies, dies back by August.
- **Sharp-lobed Hepatica, Hepatica acutiloba** - As the first spring ephemeral to bloom in the forest, Sharp-lobed Hepatica is a delightful sight after a long winter.
- **Shooting Star, Dodecatheon meadia** - Spring ephemeral. Can take more sun. Late spring bloom.
- **Solomon's Seal, Polygonatum biflorum** - has a later spring bloom. Arching stems with blue-black fall fruit eaten by birds.
- **Virginia Bluebells, Mertensia virginica** - Food plant for bees, hummingbirds, and early butterflies. Blooms early; dies back. Pictured below.
- **Wild Geranium, Geranium maculatum** - spreads by rhizome or seed. Bright pink-purple bloom in spring. Lasts through fall when it provides some red color.
- **Wild Ginger, Asarum canadense** - can be used as a ground cover. Not evergreen.
- **Wild Strawberry, Fragaria virginiana** - Creeping ground cover and can be aggressive. Try under shrubs rather than mulch.
- **Woodland Phlox, Phlox divaricata** - Mass-plant with hostas for effect. OK to be covered by hostas after they leaf out. Attracts Clearwing Hummingbird moths.

Originally reprinted from MRHS Hosta Leaves; reprinted from Central Illinois Hosta Society newsletter March 2023 with Editor additions.

Virginia bluebells, Mertensia





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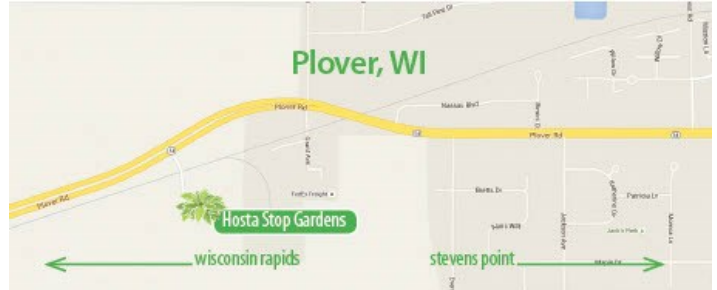
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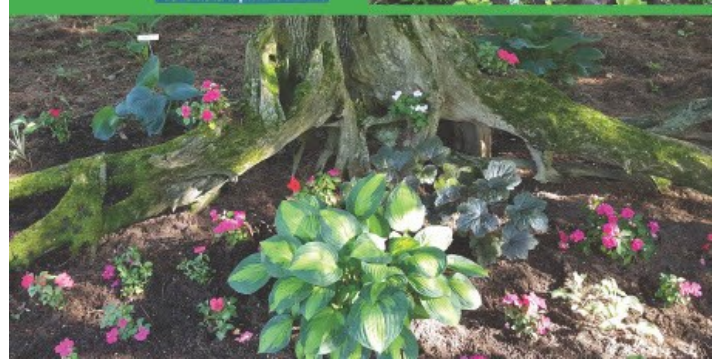


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Hosta dreamin'
2023 MRHS Convention

***Don't Miss
the Convention of your
dreams!***

**Midwest Regional Hosta
Society Convention**

July 13-15 • Rochester, MN

Best Western Rochester Hotel

Information: <http://www.midwesthostasociety.org>
Preview video: <https://tinyurl.com/hostadreamin>

Don't Miss the Convention of Your Dreams!

Midwest Regional Hosta Convention in Rochester, Minnesota, July 13-15, 2023

Join garden enthusiasts from around the country at the annual Midwest Regional Hosta Society Convention, July 13-15, 2023, at the Best Western Rochester Hotel in Rochester, Minnesota. The Convention is hosted and organized by the Shades of Green Hosta Society of Southeast Minnesota.

The theme of the Convention, *Hosta dreamin'*, reflects the ever-expanding love of and interest in hostas, which have become integral components of regional gardens due to their wide variety of color and size and ability to thrive in Minnesota's Zone 4 climate.

Each Convention attendee will receive an exclusive Convention Gift Hosta that has never before been offered to the public. Additionally, the first 75 Convention registrants before May 1, 2023 will receive a second gift plant, *Hosta 'Candy Kisses.'*

Convention highlights include a kick-off Picnic at the breathtaking gardens of Camp Creek Farm in Preston, MN, tours of spectacular private gardens featuring vast collections of hostas in a variety of settings, educational sessions presented by world-class experts, an accredited Hosta Show, a Rod Kuenster Hosta Seed Growers Seedling Show, live auction, raffle, vendors offering hostas of all varieties, garden art and more, hospitality, and a few surprises. The Hosta and Seedling Shows and the vending area will be open to the public, allowing visitors to experience first-hand the captivating colors, shapes and sizes that Hostas afford.

Register today for *Hosta dreamin'*, the Convention of Your Dreams.

Registration and further information at: <http://www.midwesthostasociety.org>.

Convention Preview Video at: <https://tinyurl.com/hostadreamin>



Northern Illinois Hosta Society

HOME ABOUT US CALENDAR MEMBERSHIP NEWSLETTERS & FLVRS RESOURCES CONTACT US MEMBER'S ONLY



Some of our Programs, Events & Activities



Annual Membership Meeting- September 12, 2021

The purpose of this annual meeting is to discuss and approve the NIHS annual Budget and election of new officers to fill vacant positions. Our meeting is usually scheduled on a Sunday in



Sponsor Plant Pick-Ups-May 2021

You will be notified by email regarding your member purchases from March & April 2021 regarding pick up location

As Lou Horton, NIHS Past President, 2003-2011, has always said, "the Sponsor Plant Program is designed for the benefit of

Welcome Our Newest Hostaphiles

- * Carol Berman, Lake Barrington
- * Tom & Linda Cordina, St. Charles
- * Patricia "Pat" Del Giudice, Geneva
- * John & Nicole Egan, East Dundee
- * Donna DeFalco, Naperville
- * Mary Puccinelli, Rolling Meadows
- * Jay Schrock, St. Charles
- * Alisa York, Geneva



Join the Northern Illinois Hosta Society

Join the NIHS by going to our website www.NorthernIllinoisHostaSociety.org and scroll over on the navigation bar to Membership. You can pay your membership dues on-line on our secure server or print out an application form and mail to our membership secretary with a check payable to NIHS. Pls mail to: Stevie Meginness, Membership Secretary, 84 Dunham Place, St. Charles, IL 60174 with your check for \$25. Please include your name(s), address, phone #, and current email address.

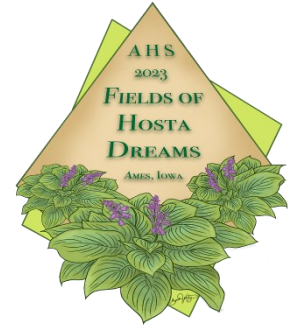
Family membership dues of \$25 for 2 years include email versions of 5 newsletters.

Email us at NI.hosta@gmail.com. Call Stevie at . Visit our website @ www.NorthernIllinoisHostaSociety.org and visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/909377645837528/about/>



The American Hosta Society 2023 Convention will be held June 7-10, 2023 in Ames, Iowa. We look forward to having you join us for:

- 🍷 A First Inning welcome reception with better-than-ballpark hospitality with live music and a light dinner.
- 🍷 Bases-loaded garden tours.
- 🍷 Out-of-the-park educational sessions.
- 🍷 Homerun AHS sanctioned Hosta Show.
- 🍷 Batter-up Hosta auction.
- 🍷 Big League 'hostatality' social events.
- 🍷 Vendors! and we don't mean peanuts.



More detailed information on events, speakers, hosta show, auction, and garden tours is available on the American Hosta Society website at HostaConvention.org. We know you will be as excited as we are when you see what we have in store for you. In the meantime, don't Strike Out! Batter up and get registered for Fields of Hosta Dreams. 🍷

BECOME A MEMBER!



- Receive *The Hosta Journal*, mailed to you
- Gain access to members-only online materials
- Participate in exciting events and auctions
- Further your love of hostas and gardening

HOSTA.org



MIDWEST REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY

The Midwest Regional Hosta Society represents Region 5 of the American Hosta Society that includes 9 states.

Membership in the society is \$20.00 for 2 years, which includes two issues per year of the newsletter. Please mail a check made payable to MRHS to:

**MRHS Membership
Kathy Rustad
4011 10th Avenue NW
Rochester, MN 55901**

Along with Name, Address, Phone, and email (Most correspondence is by email). For questions email MRHS.hosta@gmail.com.

Confessions of a Convention Groupie

By Roberta Chopko

Why, you ask, would anyone drive more than 950 miles over the course of two days in June, to attend a Convention of plant nuts in St Louis, MO? Why indeed?

For the same reason, I suppose, that we drove over 700 miles last year to spend some time with a similar group in Indianapolis, or a few years ago when we drove 1,200 miles to attend another Convention of the American Hosta Society in Minneapolis, or the 1,100 miles we drove to Des Moines, Iowa a few years ago for the same reason.

It is an opportunity to see the world, or at least places in the United States that we would probably never go to otherwise. Or perhaps we like getting up at 6 am to board a bus before 7:30. Or like to spend a day trooping on and off the same bus, viewing many beautiful gardens in the course of the next nine hours...stopping only to eat a delicious box lunch (often on the bus), or to use the toilet as little as humanly possible (cause it is also on the bus), or pray that this same toilet doesn't malfunction THIS year.

Perhaps we just like the camaraderie of being on a bus that sometimes gets lost on back country roads, or has a window broken when the driver tries to maneuver a tight turn under low-hanging tree branches. Or maybe it is the anticipation of finding out how the banquet chef has tried to creatively disguise the chicken this year (while we were spending a long day on our bus tour).

Do you suppose it is the waking up at 3 am to discover that your husband is missing

Pics by Ron Asselborn from the Midwest Region Hosta Convention July 2022



from his side of the bed (because he woke up at 2:30 and remembered that he left his hosta purchases down at the bar)? Or perhaps it is the suspense of discovering that this same husband has bid too much for a plant at the auction? Or maybe it is the growing realization that I packed warm clothes when it is destined to break all heat records in St Louis (or packed for the heat when it turns that they will have an unprecedented cold snap this June)?

One can never tell what one will encounter at a National Hosta Convention, though you can be sure of meeting with old friends who share a similar addiction. It is always something we look forward to. We come home exhausted, functioning for 6-7 days on very little sleep, but always reflecting for months afterward on what a good time we had.

So if you want to share in this experience, as a frequent hosta flyer, or as a first time attendee, look for the registration information elsewhere in this

newsletter. If you can spare the time or the money. I don't think that you will be disappointed!

Originally from Hosta la Vista, newsletter of Western New York Hosta Society. Currently reprinted from the newsletter of the Central Illinois Hosta Society, March 2023.



Favorite Tools Make Garden Cleanup Easier

By Don Rawson

Garden maintenance does not always have to wait until spring, especially when there are periodic warm spells during the winter. After all, any chores done during the winter will place you in a good position when spring arrives. That's why I always remind myself to do as much as possible in the off season in order to get a jump on spring. Besides, getting some fresh air outdoors is a healthy option to spending so many hours indoors.

Now, I will be the first to say that cleaning up the garden after the previous season is like doing house chores. It seems more like work than enjoyment. That is the downside to a hobby which is supposed to be fun. So, I am always looking for shortcuts in getting those tasks done quickly and easily. That is where I am reminded of some popular adages: Work smarter, not harder. Do it cheaper and faster. Be more efficient, my boss used to say.

When I step outdoors in winter to survey the backyard, it always looks like a tornado went through. It is a sad sight indeed. I am thankful that few of my gardening friends stop in at those atrocious times. Things are a wreck. The ground is littered with debris. Leaves have blown in from the neighbor's and have found a resting point at the side of the house and under the bushes. The ornamental grasses need to be cut. Garden ornaments which were previously

hidden from view are still waiting for indoor storage. And someone forgot to turn the bird bath on its side. What a mess! And what does it reveal about the gardener himself?

A good gardener is not only ambitious, but is also a wise gardener. And a wise gardener is a well-

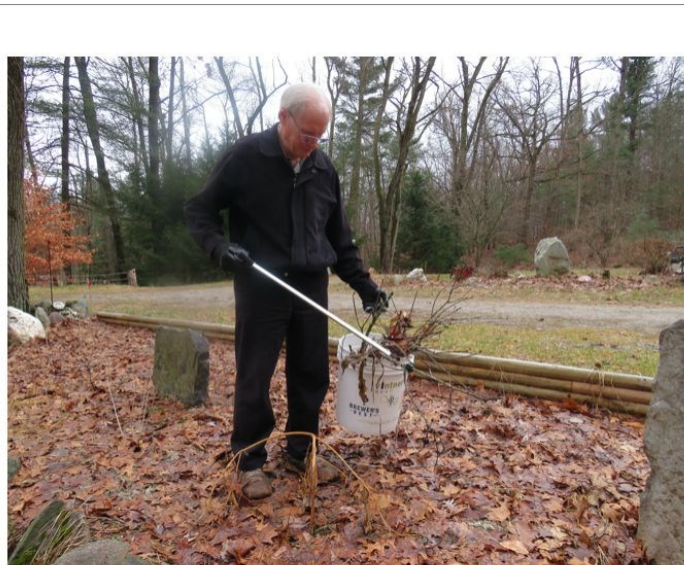
organized and well-equipped gardener. The individual has an adequate assortment of garden tools and he keeps them in good shape. The wise gardener has worked out a monthly garden calendar of what to do when. The person conserves energy by looking for ways to reduce watering and weeding. When it comes to adding new plants to his or her private sanctuary, the wise gardener selects "maintenance-free" varieties (are there any, really?) ... those which are easy, hardy, disease-resistant, and reliable. Any self-seeders are avoided. Invasive plants and spreaders

are dispensed with. Hand edging is reduced or eliminated. Underground sprinkling is installed, if there is any way the wise gardener can afford it. This person is always on the search for ways to do things easier... and better.

Certain Tools and Supplies Make Gardening Easier

Just like almost everything else in this day and age,

Continued next page



A reacher grabber makes easy work out of an otherwise back-breaking chore. Here, Don picks up sticks which are littering the landscape.

Favorite Tools Make Garden Cleanup Easier continued

gardening has advanced remarkably. To a degree, it is no longer like how our grandma gardened. She did not have Preen. She did not have slow-release fertilizer. She did not have a digital water timer or a powered garden hose reel. She did not have half of the gardening gadgets which are commonplace nowadays.

The good news for us is that over the years, industry professions have consistently introduced many new accessories to make the gardener's life easier. Does your arm get tired when dispensing fertilizer with a hand-held spreader? There's a solution: a Scotts battery-powered spreader. Is your back aching after hours of weeding? A stirrup hoe is great for weeding in close proximity to your cherished plants. Many of these tools can be a worthwhile investment.

A Bucket and a Grabber

At this point, I'd like to share with you two of my simple, but favorite, garden tools: an 8-gallon bucket and a reacher grabber. It is surprising that sometimes the simple things in life are the best.

When weeding the garden, the 5-gallon bucket is generally our go-to container for weed disposal, and

if you are like me, 5-gallon buckets seem to accumulate from who knows where. I put them in the shed and they must breed!



A serrated sickle (aka landscape scythe) is the tool of choice for cutting back plants in the fall.

They work reasonably well, but they fill up fast when I get serious about my weeding chore. My time during those weeding days involves dumping the bucket more than pulling or digging out the weeds— an interruption which costs both time and energy.

Did you know that an 8-gallon bucket is 60% larger than a 5-gallon bucket, and yet it is easy to carry and maneuver? That means that time spent dumping the bucket is substantially reduced. The larger bucket is also better-suited for larger weeds. When doing garden cleanup, you can place larger sticks and more leaves and pine cones in an 8-gallon bucket than in the smaller 5-gallon size. When mulching, it holds more woodchips or shredded bark. The size difference may seem insignificant until you try it, but once you switch up to the larger container, you will love it!

Eight-gallon buckets, called fermenting buckets, are available from brewing and fermentation suppliers for making batches of your favorite home brew. But when it comes to purchasing one for the garden, you do not need the lid or the spigot – you only need the



Conventional hand-crank spreader vs. the newer battery-powered spreader.

Continued next page

Favorite Tools Make Garden Cleanup Easier continued

container itself. Go to your local brew shop and they will sell you just the bucket. It will be well worth having an 8-gallon bucket in your gardening arsenal.

The other tool that I have recently discovered is the reacher grabber. Typically, this clever invention is for older people (like me) who can't bend over and for those folks who are vertically challenged, in which getting something off the top shelf is a near impossibility without getting a ladder. A reacher grabber makes life much more manageable. For the gardener, it saves on your back and legs. Hosta gardeners generally have forested landscapes, which is ideal for growing hostas. However, all of those trees drop many sticks and twigs which litter the forest floor, not to mention spent flowers, seed pods, acorns, walnuts, pine cones, and so on. A reacher grabber is your answer to what otherwise is a back-breaking job. It actually turns a tedious task into an entertaining activity.

Now, on a final note I should mention that a reacher grabber and an 8-gallon bucket go hand-in-hand. The bigger bucket will allow you to pick up larger sticks than a 5-gallon bucket

can hold and you can place them in the bucket with the reacher grabber without much precision in mind. With these tools in hand, you will be unstoppable when it comes to fall clean-up...or when venturing into the garden during those warm mid-winter spells. In any case,



An 8-gallon bucket is 60% larger than the common 5-gallon bucket, and yet it is still easy to carry and maneuver. It accommodates more weeds and larger sticks, and it does not need to be emptied as often.



A stirrup hoe is more efficient and quicker than a conventional hoe.

The trapezoidal shape allows for easy maneuvering between plants for highly effective weeding without disrupting or injuring your precious garden treasures.



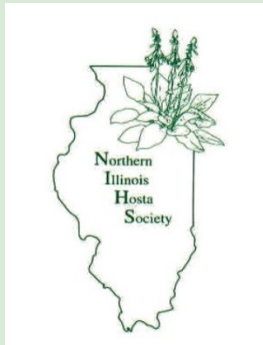
A 32-inch reacher grabber is the perfect size for picking up sticks and placing them into a bucket. This model (E-Z Reacher 32S EZ) is ideal. Available from Tractor Supply for \$19.99.

the important thing is to have fun – because this is the way that time in the garden should be! *Reprinted from the Newsletter of the Michigan Hosta Society, January 2023 with permission.*

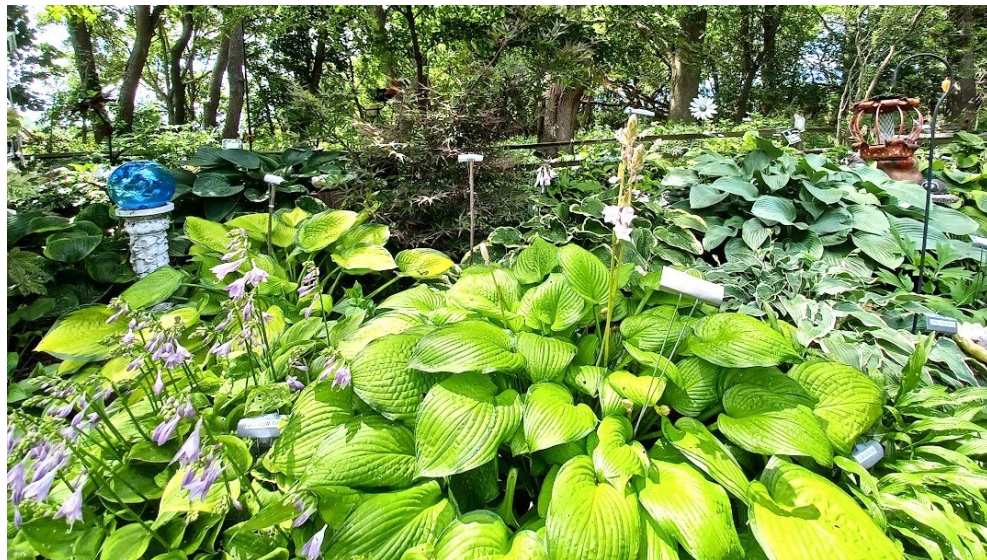
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St. Charles, IL 60174



The Northern Illinois Hosta Society is dedicated to educating the public and promoting the use of hosta in the landscape. NIHS serves the people of Northern Illinois and surrounding areas.



Visit the private garden of Char & Randy Hanson on the Hosta Bus Tour on June 24!



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