

Hosta Happenings

The Newsletter of the Northern Illinois Hosta Society

ISSUE 87

AUGUST 2014

2014/2015 CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

- Sept 7, 1-4 pm, Hosta Potluck, Annual Mtg, & Plant Swap, @ Judi & Ron Asselborn's, Campton Hills**
- December 7, Holiday Party, Faith & Andy Campbell's, Elgin**
- January 17, 2015, Winter Scientific Meeting, Naperville**
- June 18 - 20, 2015 American Hosta Society Convention, Raleigh, NC, hosted by Bob & Nancy Solberg**
- Summer 2015, Midwest Region Hosta Society Convention, Dubuque, IA**



Hostas filled the storage area when our Bus Trippers purchased plants from K Gardens in Byron Center, Michigan. See complete coverage beginning on Page 8.

Jim King photo

President's Letter

What a wonderful experience it was to be at the NIHS Auction on August 10. There was so much to admire: beautiful plants, the excellent job by Mark Zilis as our auctioneer, and the efforts of so many people who pitched in to make this fundraiser a success. And a BIG success it was! We had good attendance from the public as well as our membership. There were 41 bidders. All but four of them bought something, leading to a gross income for NIHS of just over \$3700! That makes this the highest grossing auction I can remember in my 11 years in NIHS. A little over \$300 of that total came from side events that included a bargain table where all plants were \$5 or less, a raffle of two gorgeous big plants plus some smaller items, and the sale of discount passes to Macy's "Shop for a Cause" Day on August 23 (they are still available—contact Penny Fulkerson at 847-540-8212 pennycarl@yahoo.com).

The most impressive part of this auction was the number of people who contributed to its success. A lot of members (wish I could name them all) brought good quality, great looking plants to be auctioned. Andy Campbell picked up plants from donor vendors. Mark Rekoske supervised auction planning, the set up at Hinsdale Community House, and the cleanup effort after the last plant had been sold and removed.

Continued next page



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President's Letter continued

June Vandervest did her usual stellar job with refreshments and helped with cleanup afterwards. Penny Fulkerson, Lenny Kraus, and Colleen Graudins staffed the side events. Marcia Jendreas' publicity releases were invaluable in reaching the public. Lou Horton and Susan Renwick kept the bidders' records and collected the payments at the end. Jim Morrow, Mike Kraus and Pete Postlewaite displayed and delivered auction plants. As you can tell, this was very much a group effort. A huge THANK YOU to everyone.

Looking back on our July Hosta Walks, we saw three lovely gardens, each one quite unique. On July 13, Colleen Graudins and Marcia Jendreas opened theirs to us—they are neighbors just a couple blocks from each other in Prospect Heights. Colleen's garden features a lot of perennials and unusual ornamentation, while Marcia's displays many hostas along with perennials and is decorated with her own special touches. July 27 brought the walk at Tanner Musso's home on a very large corner lot near downtown Hinsdale. Formal and informal gardens, many of them with whimsical embellishments, surround her 100-year-old home. All three garden hostesses deserve our thanks for their work to prepare their gardens, and thank you for visiting them.

Our busy year of garden activities is winding down. The Annual Meeting and Plant Swap is the last NIHS event of the current garden season—I hope to see a lot of you on September 7 at Ron and Judi Asselborn's beautiful home and garden. The business meeting this year will be fairly short, consisting primarily of reviewing and approving the proposed budget. I will also update everyone on pending issues. Be sure to bring a plant (or other garden item) for the "swap" part of this gathering, which can be a lot of fun. You must bring something to participate.

In closing, I want to extend sympathy on behalf of the Society to Rosemary Sieverin, whose husband recently died. Also, I understand that Faith Campbell is doing well following hip replacement on August 5, but she still needs our best wishes for a speedy recovery.

Barbara

New Member Welcome!!

A special welcome to this large group of new hostaphiles!

Jeanne Annis, Joliet

Beverly Geiger, Schaumburg

Linda Gottschall, Elgin

Sherrie Hughes, Roselle

Suzy Moynihan, Schaumburg

Darlene Nicholson, Schaumburg

Sharon Niedziela, Wheeling

Kerry Perry,

West Chicago

Gail Rhodes,

Carpentersville

Barbara

Springer, West Chicago

Connie Szorc, St. Charles

Sue Topp, Naperville

Kathryn Voland, Geneva

Lynn Walsh, Hinsdale

Susan Zimmer, Maple Park



HOSTA HAPPENINGS

Have Fun in the Fall @ Hosta Potluck, Meeting, & Plant Swap

Join in the fun at our **Sunday September 7** Hosta Potluck, Annual Meeting, & Plant Swap in Campton Hills. Judi & Ron Asselborn will be hosting this year's extravaganza from 1 to 4 pm. Scheduled events include a delectable meal and socializing, a brief business meeting, and a fun plant swap. Be sure to bring a plant (or other garden item) for the "swap" part of this gathering, which can be a lot of fun.

Also, mark your calendar to provide Judi Asselborn your RSVP and what dish you will be bringing. Please **RSVP by September 2** to email: jasselborn@fvi.net or 630-587-1340.



Driving Directions- From North: Take I-90 west to Randall Rd Exit. Turn left onto Randall Rd and continue for 8.8 miles. Turn right onto Bolcum Rd for 2.7 miles. Turn right onto Buckskin Trail into the subdivision for 0.3 miles. Turn left to 39W925 Deer Run Dr , Campton Hills on your left.

From South & West: Take I-88 west to Farnsworth Ave Exit. Turn right onto Farnsworth which becomes Kirk Rd for 3.9 miles. Turn left onto Fabyan Pkwy for 3.2 miles. Turn Right onto Randall Rd for 3.3 miles. Turn left onto IL 64 for 3.5 miles. Turn Right onto Burlington Rd for 0.3 miles. Take first Right onto Bolcum Rd for 0.6 miles. Turn Left onto Deer Run Lane, go 1 block then Turn right onto Deer Run Drive for 0.5 miles to 39W925 Deer Run Dr, Campton Hills on right.



Volunteer Opportunities!

ASSISTANT WEBSITE MANAGERS needed to help the NIHS Webmaster with updating the site and adding new information as needed. It's important to have more than one person available who has some website experience and can handle this important responsibility. Contact Mike Kraus at NI.hosta@gmail.com.

AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHERS wanted to take photos at NIHS events. Any type of digital camera will work for our needs. We wish to document and publish these photos in the Hosta Happenings newsletter and on the website. We have one volunteer and need another person to cover several events. Contact Ron Asselborn at: rasselborn@fvi.net or 630-587-1341.

HOSTA HAPPENINGS

Hosta Garden Walk in Prospect Heights Highlights

Colleen Graudins (center in top right photo) and Marcia Jendreas (center in bottom right photo) show off their marvelous gardens to the many hostaphiles. A wonderful time was had by all!



*Photos courtesy
of Jim Solotke &
Ron Asselborn*



HOSTA HAPPENINGS

Hinsdale Hosta Garden Walk Highlights

A crowd of garden lovers flocked to Tanner Musso's gorgeous Victorian gardens in Hinsdale. Tanner is in above-left photo with glass of iced tea answering questions about the garden's origins. Garden settings displayed Tanner's collections in shady nooks, formal gardens, and sunny open areas. A real crowd pleaser!

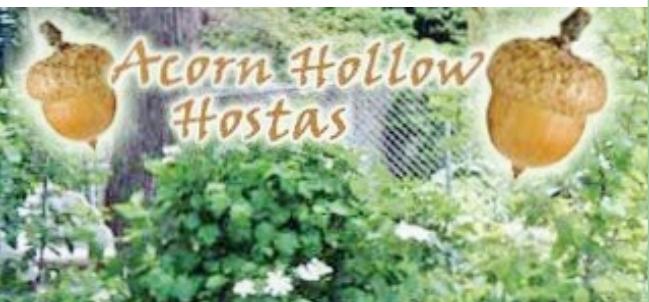


Photos by
Ron Asselborn,
Jim King,
Mike Kraus, &
Mark Rekoske





Hosta edgers in Don Rawson's garden on June bus trip.



This year's only sale day is Saturday, June 7th. Visit other times by appointment. Call me at 630 293 7735.
My address is: 1N735 Ingaltion Ave., West Chicago, IL 60185

Lou Horton

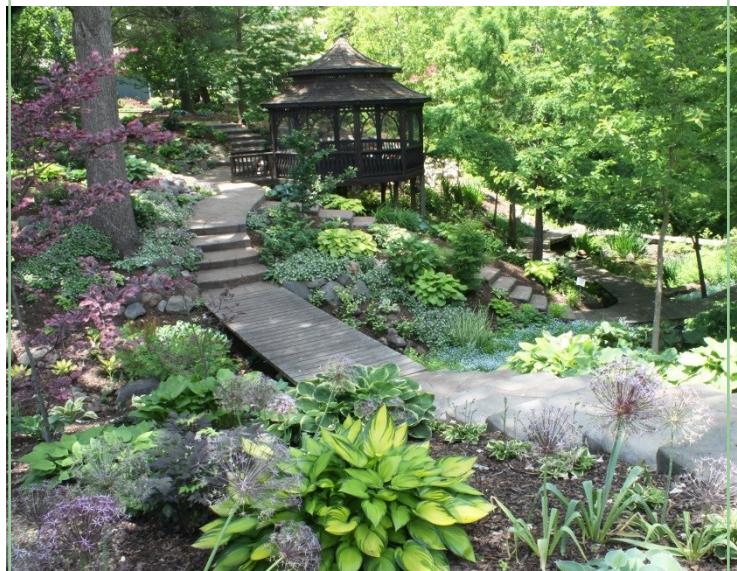


An H.
Empress
Wu
sport
with
gold
edge at
Don
Rawson's.



Botanical Gardens—Arboretum

Garden Center



Princeton, IL

www.hornbakergardens.com



Rich's Foxwillow
Pines Nursery, Inc.

Hosta Sale and Bolivian Arts & Crafts Fundraiser

June 7, 2014 August 23, 2014

9am—4pm

All proceeds from hosta sales benefit Heifer International and Bolivian arts & craft sales benefit Mano a Mano International Partners.

Check or Cash only.

Hundreds of Hosta varieties always available!

Lovely shade-tolerant conifers and Japanese maples make great companion plants for hostas! Tour the nursery and see unusual conifers, ginkgos, Japanese maples, European beeches and more!

March 1 - November 30: 8:00 - 4:30 Monday - Saturday
December 1 - February 28: 8:00 - 4:30 Monday - Friday

11618 McConnell Rd. Woodstock IL 60098
phone: 815-338-7442 fax: 815-338-7446
email: coniflora@richsfoxwillowpines.com
www.richsfoxwillowpines.com



HOSTA HAPPENINGS



Your Growing Concerns Perennial Nursery

We carry over 160 hostas, all from Q & Z Nursery, 55 new hostas this year and 14 new introductions including 'Aladdin's Lamp', 'Epiphany', 'Hypnosis', & 'Tootie May'. We are a full service nursery providing a wide selection of trees, shrubs, shade & sun perennials including 24 Proven Winners hydrangeas. Perennial plant prices start @ \$3.25.

Visit us @ yourgrowingconcerns.net or on Facebook. 8N996 Dittman Rd, Campton Hills, IL 847-826-4769

How does your garden grow?

Contrary Mary's Plants & Designs

We specialize in the unusual!

More than 500 hosta varieties

Dozens of peony varieties

Most available to order online!

Visitors welcome! We're located
35 miles southwest of Chicago.

www.contrarymarysplants.com
(815) 521-9535

HOSTA HAPPENINGS

Outstanding Grand Rapids Bus Trip

Saturday, June 21, was the glorious NIHS annual bus trip. It was our first trip to the Grand Rapids area and the day was a long one. After a week of stormy humid weather the day started out comfortably cool and dry. Only four garden visits were planned, but the distance to travel was greater than our typical trip. 42 members and guests were registered for the bus trip so there was plenty of room on the bus. Nancy Bodinet supplied refreshments and, as usual, no one could possibly go hungry. Our budget did not include funds for a gift hosta this year and knowing how most folks like a freebie, I brought first year seedlings from my winter seed growing for anyone who wanted one. Many of the seedlings were from open pollinated seed of



Members enjoying the Gage's large front bed with specimen hostas, Japanese maple, and companion plants.



Hosta 'Fody', a seedling of *H. 'Empress Wu'* I received from Linda Port from Morrison Illinois.

Our first stop was at the garden of Terry and Linda Gage at Schoolcraft, Michigan in a wooded subdivision of attractive homes and gardens. Our hosts were out of town, but they arranged for Ed Steinbrecher, President of the Kalamazoo Hosta Society, to act as our host. Ed is very knowledgeable about hostas and the Gage garden as well. Some of the largest best-grown hostas one might see were attractively arranged in the Gage landscape, including a number of seedlings that Terry Gage grows

each year. Everything, the hosta leaves, the mulch and the lawn were in perfect condition. A number of Japanese Maples and other understory trees were staged throughout the landscape and most of the plants were labeled. I wish we could have personally thanked our hosts for allowing us tour their beautiful garden. *Continued on next page*

Striking H. 'Thunderbolt' (left) in the front bed of the Gage home. Below, H. 'Star Kissed', a uniquely colored hosta plays off a Japanese maple and a corrugated blue hosta.



HOSTA HAPPENINGS

Grand Rapids Bus Trip continued

At the K Gardens members scoop up the hostas across from the display garden in the shade of the barn.

Our next stop was at K Gardens at Byron Center, Michigan, a rural community just south of Grand Rapids. Our hosts, Tim Klamer and his family, listed about 500 varieties of hostas for sale. They had several beautiful display gardens and sitting areas for us to enjoy in addition to six poly house filled with hostas and companion plants bursting from their pots. They provided space for lunch and enough refreshments that bringing a lunch was not really necessary. A shopping frenzy took place at the garden and I wondered if the bus could hold all of our purchases. We could have spent twice the allotted time at K Gardens, but we were overdue at two more gardens.

Our third stop was at the garden of Kay Maitner within the city limits of Grand Rapids. The garden appeared pleasant enough as the bus pulled up out front, but provided no indication of the beautifully landscaped ravine that lay beyond the house. The one acre lot was intensely landscaped and filled with hostas, conifers and many shade tolerant plants. There was far more than we could

possibly appreciate in the half hour left to tour the garden.

Our final stop was at the garden of Don and Pam Rawson, just north of Grand Rapids. Don is the originator of the popular hosta 'Rhino Hide' and he showed us several 'Rhino Hide' sports he may introduce. *Continued on page 11*

(Below) Members explore the multi-path rear garden at the Maitner multi-level garden.



Grand Rapids Bus Trip continued



Kay Maitner's garden scenes. Bed of hostas flowing down the hillside (above left), garden sculpture (above right). Billie Childress and Sam Solomon (below) pause to take in the magic.

Photos this page courtesy of Andy Campbell.



HOSTA HAPPENINGS

Grand Rapids Bus Trip continued

The garden is at the end of a very long private lane and was filled with huge specimen hostas. Waves of small and mini hostas surrounded the garden beds. The large lot gently sloped to a lake with a boggy island where Don displayed some plants for sale. What made the garden truly unique, however, were the rocks and boulders. A sea of rocks made one side of the lot appear to be a moon-scape or a desert scene. Don is very passionate about his collection and could have spoken at length about either his garden plants or his rocks, but time was short and we had to head back to



Orland Park.

The ride back was relaxing except for an intense thunderstorm with near-constant lightning. Fortunately, just as the bus pulled into the parking lot the storm subsided and we were able to retrieve our purchases from the bus's cargo area. This capped off a fine day of hosta camaraderie and outstanding garden touring. I hope everyone enjoyed the bus trip as much as I did.

Mark Rekoske

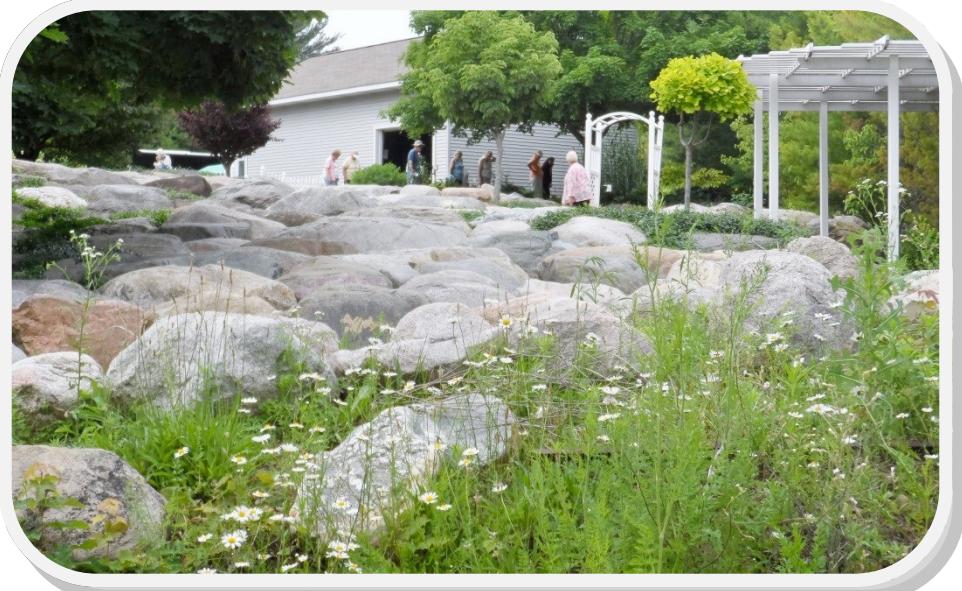
Huge hostas and huge boulders dominate the Rawson garden. "Lots of sun and plenty of water makes hostas grow big and fast" asserted Don Rawson.

Above, Mary Ann Brucher is almost hidden by a H. 'Sum & Substance'.

Left, Don Rawson discusses his sport of H. 'Rhino Hide' with Connie Hood.

Below, the unique boulder garden beside the Rawson home. Some of Don's favorite boulders have names.

Thanks to Mark Rekoske for all pictures on pages 8, 9 & 11.



HOSTA HAPPENINGS

NIHS Awarded Best Hosta Society Newsletter for 2013

The Northern Illinois Hosta Society's "Hosta Happenings" newsletter was awarded the Best Hosta Society Newsletter for 2013 by the American Hosta Society (AHS) recently. The AHS annually recognizes a local hosta society for excellence in serving their members with a timely and visually interesting newsletter.

In the photo to your right, Ron Asselborn, newsletter editor, (left) accepts the award on behalf of the NIHS from Tom Micheletti, Past President of the AHS.

"I am very pleased to accept this award for all the folks who have generously contributed their thoughts, pictures and time to our newsletter. Your input has made Hosta Happenings a great communications tool for the NIHS."

Ron Asselborn, Editor



Join the NIHS by contacting Mike Kraus, Membership Chairman, 6311 Carrie Ct, Crystal Lake, IL 60014 with your check for \$20. Please include your name (s), address, phone #, and current email address.

Family membership dues are \$20 for 2 years includes email versions of 4 newsletters per year.

Email us at Ni.hosta@gmail.com

Call Mike @ 815-356-8569. Visit our website @ www.NorthernIllinoisHostaSociety.org.

Please send membership renewals to Mike at the above address. For mailed copies check the date above your mailing address for your expiration date.



HOSTA HAPPENINGS

Successful and Entertaining Plant Auction

Our annual Plant Auction at the Hinsdale Community House was a bustling beehive of eager buyers and volunteers. The Auction netted NIHS \$3,600 to fund our programs and keep our dues low. Great hostas and companion plants were donated by vendors and many members which were eagerly snapped up. A great job by Mark Rekoske, organizer , Mark Zilis, auctioneer, and the myriad volunteers. Photos:

- Mark Zilis conducts the spirited bidding (top right)
- Barbara King welcomes the crowd with the hostas displayed behind her (center right)
- Jim Morrow and Mike Kraus work the crowd displaying the lovely plants (lower right)
- Mark Rekoske (white shirt) loads up several trays of plants donated by Betsy & Floyd Rogers (below left)



Photos courtesy of Jim Solotke and Jim King.

HOSTA HAPPENINGS

Midwest Convention Gardens in Green Bay

The Green Bay Convention gardens were a delight! Top right & center right- The Green Bay Botanical Garden features an AHS National Display Garden at the entrance.

Top left - a 'holey' hosta garden.

Bottom left - a serene hosta glade.

Bottom right - the gardeners love rocks so much they created a gigantic rock quarry in their yard with extras for this wall.



Photos courtesy of Jim King and Ron Asselborn



HOSTA HAPPENINGS

How to Make Dormant Bud Cuttings

by Jim Hawes from The Hosta Journal 2001

Propagation by taking bud cuttings is a technique developed by Alex Summers in the late 1960's. He has been using it ever since to propagate hostas (often rare hostas) in the fall. I stumbled upon the technique by accident in the early 1990's and didn't know that Alex was 30 years ahead of me. Alex takes bud cuttings in early October in Delaware. In the mountains of Maryland where fall temperature changes are three weeks earlier; I begin in late September. The Theory and technique are as follows.

In the late fall and sometimes earlier, at the base of each leaf on a hosta there is an axillary bud. This bud arose from tissue in the meristematic dome (the growing point). Cells in the epidermal layer (L1) and sub-epidermal layer (L2) of the meristem divided and differentiated to form a primordial leaf and a primordial apical bud in the axil of the leaf. Since both the leaf and the bud arose from the same cell (or cells) in the meristem, they are histologically identical. [Editors note: perhaps "histogenetically" is a more precise term.] Therefore, if you select a desirable leaf form on a division, you can replicate this leaf form by tracing downward to the bud at the base of the leaf and propagating it (the bud) as a cutting.

To do this, you excise this bud along with a portion of the crown, which has a root or several roots attached, and plant it. Roots will become established; the plantlet will go dormant and will then emerge as a single division in the spring. Of course, there are various techniques that can be used. The technique I use is as follows: In the last week of September in Maryland, dig a plant to the propagated by bud cuttings.

Wash roots carefully without breaking them.

Carefully strip down all leaves on the plant, observing the swelled axillary buds on the inside of the petiole.

Continue stripping down leaves until exposed buds appear



to be very small.

If the size of the crown is about the size of your thumb and you have removed 8 or 10 leaves exposing 8 or 10 buds.

Cut down completely through the edges of the crown creating pie shaped pieces of crown with a bud attached to each piece.

Avoid cutting off roots.

The number of pieces of crown with a bud and roots will depend upon the size of the crown, the number of buds present and the amount of root tissue that is available to be still attached to the pieces of the crown.

You may end up with a central portion of the division with 3 to 5 leaves still attached. Plant this piece of the mother division.

Treat the bud cuttings with a fungicide dust for protection.

Plant bud cuttings about 2 inches deep in a row and label them. Cover with good soil, tamp in to firm the soil and keep watered as necessary.

Cover with mulch in wintertime to protect plantlets from freezing and heaving.

There are many variations of these techniques that can be used with great success.

This is a wonderful and rapid method of propagating hostas. Try it next fall.

HOSTA HAPPENINGS

Hottest Hostas to Have in 2014

Courtesy of the Ontario Hosta Society Spring 2014

Bridal Falls

Sport of 'Niagara Falls'. Attractive mound of cascading green leaves with creamy white margins with a piecrust edge. 2013's 6th hottest hosta is now the tops!

Curly Fries

Perfect for tucking into small spots and contrasts nicely with blue varieties. Forms an arching mound of wiggly narrow gold leaves. Petioles develop red specks as the plant matures. Site in morning sun for the best colour

Cool as a Cucumber

Incredibly showy, cascading clump of sharp-contrasting green and white variegated foliage with long, tapered and pointed leaves. Good substance

Mini Skirt

Cute sport of 'Mighty Mouse'. Forms a mini-mound of wavy, blue-green leaves with creamy yellow margins that turn green and creamy white in the summer.

Empress Wu

Impressive growth. Huge, thick, dark green, deeply veined leaves form a massive upright clump. A top seller the past four years. Make room for this one!

Island Breeze

Sport of 'Paradise Island' with better variegation and leaf substance. Wide, green margins contrast with yellow centres in spring and showy red petioles.

Risky Business

A mutation of the popular 'Striptease'. It has a pure white centre with an amazing contrast. 2' tall scapes of feature violet flowers

Sparkler

A sport of 'Fireworks' that is excellent in troughs or small containers. The showy variegation offers terrific contrast. Heavy substance. Back on the list for 2014!

Fox Fire Palm Sunday

Unique 'palm leaf' variegation pattern within the leaf. Vigorous growth characteristics and intense 'rubbery' leaf texture. Stunning form.

Guardian Angel

An all-time best seller! Wavy edges with streaking into centre variegation and some misting. It looks great all season. SWOHS Member's Choice in 2011.

HOSTA HAPPENINGS

Over-wintering Containers

We have many containers placed throughout our garden in the growing season. Very few are planted with annuals. Most are planted with hostas, conifers, Japanese maples, and combinations of these plants.

The problem with containers in our climate is that they must be “put to bed” each winter in an effort to save the containers and keep the plants alive from one year to the next. Our biggest enemy is heaving from the alternating cold and warm temperatures that we experience in our area. When the soil in containers has some moisture in it and then freezes and thaws, it causes expansion which can crack the container. We have cracked many a pot.

Most of them were ceramic type pots that had a thin color glaze. The glaze absolutely disintegrates over the winter. You’ll find this out when you go to move the container in early spring and end up with what look like confetti all over the ground. We don’t buy that type of pot anymore.

We have, however, had excellent results over-wintering containers made of the following materials:

decorative foam, plastic, heavy clay, high quality pottery, wood, hypertufa troughs (homemade by us), and even antique crocks. We have been asked this question dozens of times: “How do you over winter your pots?” Based on our years of experience, this is what we do each fall. So far, these methods have worked for us.

We have some very large decorative foam pots and plastic pots containing large hostas. We wait until frost has zapped the hostas in the fall. We cut off the foliage and store the pots in our unheated shed. (At our previ-



Another approach to overwintering hostas in pots.

ous home, we stored them in our unheated, but insulated, garage.) The results are the same. We do not water them AT ALL while they’re in storage. We stack (yes, *stack*) the pots on top of each other. We bring them out in the spring usually in late March or early April. Sometimes the hostas are already popping up. Sometimes they are popping up underneath the pot on top of them. Sometimes they are pale, albino hosta pips for a while until they’re allowed to see the light of day again. They all recover nicely with watering and spring air. We have been using this method with the same hostas in pots for 10 years. We have two antique crocks in our front yard that contain hostas. At our previous house, we used a dolly to bring them into our garage for the winter (after cutting off the post-frost foliage). Now, because our yard is steeper and we’re getting lazier, we have a different method. We cut off the foliage, cover the tops of the crocks with several layers of burlap, and tie some twine around the circumference of the pot to hold it securely. We then tip the crocks over on their sides (burlap side pointing uphill) and leave them for the winter. This has worked for us for three winters now.

Be sure to use “pot feet” under containers when over-

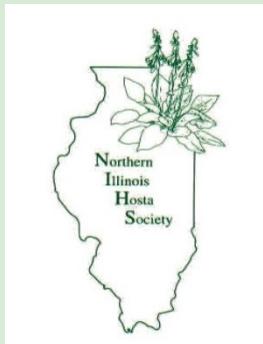
wintering. The containers need to be well drained and if the pots are not raised up a little with some sort of pot feet or bricks, they may freeze to the ground and not drain properly. If the water doesn’t drain, the roots will sit in water and will rot for sure, killing the plant. Our huddled arrangement contains hyper tufa troughs, as well as wood, plastic, clay, and decorative foam pots.

By Kelly Hall, St. Louis Hosta Society

NIHS Membership Secretary

6311 Carrie Ct

Crystal Lake, IL 60014



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.

H. Sum & Substance dominates a corner of Marcia Jendreas' yard during the recent Hosta Garden Walk.



Jim Solotke Photo

We're on the web !

www.NorthernIllinoisHostaSociety.org

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Colleen Graudins displays some of her eclectic garden art.

