



Volume 23, Issue 9

October-November, 2022



President
Phyllis Weidman

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Spring will be here soon. What?

Did you get any ideas from the garden walks this year? Maybe you need to get a certain hosta or companion plant, maybe something bigger like adding a water feature or wall. Now is the time to start planning for the spring.

We must thank all who opened their gardens this year so we could steal their creative ideas. Thanks to Dave Poos, it has been a fun full year. Thanks also to all were involved in any way.

But before we close 2022, there are still activities to attend. If you choose to attend only one meeting, this October is the one you should pick. We will have a guest speaker, Rob Mortko, from Olathe, Kansas. Rob has been involved in every aspect of hostas for many years. He is most famous for **Made in the Shade Hostas**. It is a famous tissue culture lab that he runs out of the basement of his home. Tissue culture is a very complicated process and takes time but certainly not as much time as dividing a hosta in your garden to create hundreds of plants. I'm sure his program will be interesting and something not to be missed. See you at 2, Sunday, October 16th!

The Board will be meeting on the 6th of November to start the planning the 2023 year. Let me know your ideas at pow1031@gmail.com or simply come. The meeting is open to all members. We will need more creative ideas for next year programs and meetings.

Phyllis

2022 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- October 16** Meeting with Speaker Rob Mortko
2:00 PM, The Des Peres Lodge
1050 Des Peres Rd., Des Peres, MO 63130
- November 6** Board Meeting
2:00 PM, Home of Phyllis Weidman
508 Pointe Essex Ct., Kirkwood, MO 63122
- December 11** Holiday Party
1:30 – 5:00 PM, Home of Gene Pulliam
822 Brownell Ave., Glendale, MO 63122
- February 25 2023** Midwest Regional Hosta Winter Symposium
8:30 – 4:30 PM
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
- June 7-10, 2023** AHS National Convention
Ames, Iowa
- July 13-15, 2023** Midwest Regional Hosta Convention
Rochester, MN
- July 11-13, 2024** Midwest Regional Hosta Convention
Fond du Lac, WI



October 16

2:00 PM, The Des Peres Lodge
1050 Des Peres Road, Des Peres, MO 63130

Rob Mortko, 'The Hosta Man'

In 2000, Rob Mortko registered his first hosta, H. 'Heart and Soul'. The name aptly describes Rob's passion for gardening and his favorite plant. His truly unique cultivar, H. 'Stitch in Time', hit the retail market in 2004 and has gained popularity across the nation.

A retired chemical engineer, Rob has put his profession to good use by establishing a tissue culture lab, *Made in the Shade Tissue Culture*, in his home in Olathe Kansas. He is a popular speaker at local, regional and national gardening functions. His articles on hot new hostas regularly appear in "The Hosta Journal". Having served in various positions on the Executive Board of the American Hosta Association and the American Hosta Growers Association, he is currently President of the Midwest Region Hosta Association.

Long time Society members should recognize Rob as a vendor at several of our Vendor Day events. His former nursery supplied plants for some of our Member Plant Sales. Rob is a knowledgeable, entertaining speaker and all round nice guy.

Join us on October 16 to hear what new hostas are coming to nurseries in the near future.

Fall Board Meeting

November 6, 2022
2:00 PM meeting, followed by supper

Home of President Phyllis Weidman
508 Pointe Essex Court, Kirkwood, MO 63122
RSVP - 314-630-9036 or Pow1031@gmail.com



All members are invited to join our Board members at the 2023 planning meeting. Come at 2:00 for the meeting then stay for a delicious supper and a fabulous dessert. The meeting agenda includes such items as setting 2023 meeting dates, establishing the 2023 budget, brain-storming about possible speakers and scheduling other interesting events.

Let the Board know what you want for your Society in 2023. Get to know your Board members - they're really a lot of fun to be around, are enthusiastic about gardening, hostas and your Society, and are quite generous with their time and expertise. Don't worry; they won't assign you a task if you come.

Call or email Phyllis to reserve your place at the table.

Save the Date – December 11, 1:30 – 5:00 PM

I know, I know, it's only October. But every year the months slip by faster and faster. The holiday season is just around the corner. It has been four years since we were able to be together. Mark your calendars for December 11 for an afternoon of holiday joy. Gene Pulliam has graciously volunteered to host our annual season ending party. Details will appear in the December newsletter.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER!

Gary and Jolene Meyer of New Baden, IL

Join us in October for Rob Mortko's insightful and entertaining presentation on hot new hostas and the future of hostadom.



Dr. Bob Olson

The hosta community has lost one of its giants. Dr. Bob Olson passed away on September 15, 2022. Dr. Olson was past present of the American Hosta Society, past editor of the Midwest Regional Hosta Society newsletter, *Hosta Leaves*, and for the last 22 years editor of *The Hosta Journal*. In 2004 he was awarded the Alex Summers Distinguished Service Award and in 2019 an AHS Lifetime Achievement Award for his years of service to the organization.

Above all, Dr. Olson will be remembered for his gentle humor, quick wit and genuine warmth. He will be greatly missed by all, even those who only knew him through his writings.

September Garden Walk – Debbie Hadley



Debbie and her husband Bob live in a home built in 1895 and purchased by her family in 1909. Bright pink roses, a large hydrangea and a blue bottle bush welcome guests.



The Hadleys have created a bed and breakfast facility in the lower level of their home. The space has its own entrance and easy access to the beautiful garden that lies behind it.



A wrought iron archway leads to the heavily landscaped backyard. Large hydrangeas, hostas, dogwoods, redbuds and Japanese maples abound.



Debbie's grandfather created terraces on the steep slope leading down from the back deck. Two waterfalls flow from the upper terrace to a pond below.



Ivy spills from pots hanging from a branch of a large ginkgo.



Old tools adorn the sides of Debbie's large potting shed.



A handsome bird greets visitors from the safety of a hydrangea.



At the bottom of the terraced hillside lies a large koi pond surrounded by lush vegetation.



Members wander down a flagstone path that leads to a seating area. What a quiet, peaceful place to watch the large koi.



The beauty and serenity of Debbie's garden invites visitors to stop, relax and chat.



A pond teeming with koi is bordered by a large conifer, elephant ears and grasses. A red canna adds a dash of color.



A red fox sits on a tree stump waiting for a hen to fly to the coop.



Debbie's hens have personality. Her husband Bob enjoys petting and chatting with them. They are quite tame and will talk your head off.



What's a house without horseshoe pits? Built by Debbie's grandfather, they are still in use today.

Many thanks to Debbie and Bob for sharing their piece of heaven with us.

September Garden Walk – Phyllis Weidman



To access Phyllis' garden from her back deck, visitors must pass large clumps of hostas. 'Paul's Glory' dominates the left while 'Blue Ridge', 'Marrakech' and 'Liberty' anchor the right.



The path from the front yard shows the steep terrain of Phyllis' yard.



An orange bench, Phyllis' favorite color, affords a perfect view of the dry creek hostas.



H. 'Jabulani' resides along the edge of a dry creek that meanders down the hill.



Gene Pulliam takes the path behind hostas 'Bridal Falls' and 'Earth Angel'.



Amy Priest checks out hostas 'Diva' and 'Inniswood'. Both showed signs of the stress suffered by plants during this brutally hot summer.



Hostas nestle the steps leading to an upper sitting area.



A birthday present from her husband, *H.* 'Phyllis' sits at the top of the steps. The plant has a sport with a white margin which is named 'Phyllis on the Edge'.



Colorful birdhouses brighten the woods.



A prostrate conifer and hostas 'Tears of Joy' and 'Lakeside Baby Face' nestle in the rocks at the base of the steps.



A pot of a beautifully grown *H.* 'Dixie Chickadee' sits on a rock wall.



The retaining wall at the back of the deck is the perfect place to display Phyllis' collection of agave plants.



The day is over. Members sit awhile to chat about the beautiful gardens they just visited.

Thank you Phyllis for inviting us to spend time in your garden, beautiful even in September. Your deck is a wonderful place to sit back and relax on a delightful Sunday afternoon.

Hot Hostas

Over the years, our October speaker, Rob Mortko, has written a series of articles for **The Hosta Journal**. He titled them “Hot Hostas”. I first started reading his pieces in 2006. What has Rob considered up-and-comers over the last 16 years? Have his choices lived up to his hype?

In 2006, Rob profiled *H.* ‘Blue Mouse Ears’. I think we can all agree that this hosta is as popular today as it was back then. Discovered by an azalea grower and hybridizer at a friend’s hosta nursery, it was sitting in the discard pile because it didn’t match its mates. It is amazing how many truly great hostas were originally headed to the scrap pile only to be rescued by someone who saw their potential. Besides being cute with a great name, ‘Blue Mouse Ears’ has earned its accolades, growing well in all parts of the country.

Also in 2006, Rob wrote about *H.* ‘Stained Glass’. Introduced to the retail trade in 2001, it had already appeared on the AHS Popularity Poll two times by 2006. Surely this was an up-and-comer. Again this hosta is as popular today as it was in 2006. Why? Maybe it’s the suburb coloration that doesn’t fade all season long or the fact that it grows equally well in hot humid St. Louis as it does in more hosta friendly northern climates.

Many of my favorites such as ‘Curly Fries’, ‘Paradigm’, ‘Hacksaw’, ‘Skylight’, ‘Yellow Polka Dot Bikini’, ‘Lemon Meringue’ and ‘World Cup’ caught Rob’s eye. More recently he wrote about ‘Bridal Falls’, ‘Skywriter’ and ‘Valley’s Lemon Squash’. Only the later is unfamiliar to me. I noticed a large specimen of ‘Bridal Falls’ in Phyllis’ garden last month. How many of these are in your garden?

Why are all these plants known to so many of us? Is it just good marketing? Is it just catchy names? I don’t think so. All of these plants are distinctive, easily recognized at a distance. Whether large or small, they are all good growers. What more do we want?

Join your fellow members on October 16 to learn what is lurking in Rob’s tissue culture lab, soon to be available at a nursery near you. Which ones are the “Hot Hostas” of 2022? Will they be our favorites in 2035?



H. ‘Blue Mouse Ears’
photo nhhostas.com



H. ‘Stained Glass’
photo waltersgardens.com



H. ‘Skywriter’
photo nhhostas.com



H. ‘Bridal Falls’
photo nhhostas.com

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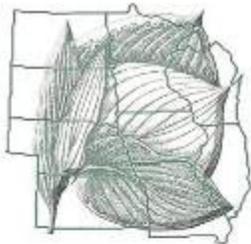
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d.birenbaum@sbcglobal.net

Dues: \$7 per year, \$18 for three years
Family or Individual

Meetings held at **The Des Peres Lodge, 1050 Des Peres Road, Des Peres, MO 63130** (near I270 and Manchester Rd) unless otherwise noted.

Visit our Web site: www.stlhosta.org

Visit us on Facebook, **St. Louis Hosta Society**



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:

Barbara Schroeder,
Treasurer
1819 Coventry Dr.
Champaign, IL 61822

along with Name, Address, phone, and email (Most correspondence is by email). For questions email MRHS.Hosta@gmail.com.



AMERICAN HOSTA SOCIETY

Members receive three issues per year of The Hosta Journal, which includes color photographs of hostas, reports on national conventions, scientific information concerning current research pertaining to hostas, and advertisements of interest to hosta families.

Membership checks should be made out to "AHS," and mailed to:

Barry Ankney, AHS Membership Secretary
1104 Oxford Ct
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

Dues for one year are \$30 for an individual and \$34 for a family. For more information, visit the AHS website: <http://www.americanhostasociety.org/>