



Shady Notes

Volume 21, Issue 6

October, 2020



President
Phyllis Weidman

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

We had a great September meeting. We understand why many were not there, but I cannot tell you how wonderful it was to see so many happy eyes. I needed to see everyone.

Dave and Joan Poos provided well grown hostas for auction. Basil Honaker had birdhouses that he had made and was our auctioneer. A multitasking person. Bruce Buehrig, who helped secure the meeting location, also donated plants we used as door prizes. Thanks to all.

Thankful for a garden to work in during these times, I look at mine and know it is fall. I want to clean the beds and wait for the cold. It is time to evaluate what worked and what did not, what to move and what to divide next spring, and maybe what to dig for a hosta sale. Hopefully, we will be able to have our sale in the spring. If we cannot have a sale at the Missouri Botanical Garden, we will find somewhere else. The Garden has construction and Covid-19 to worry about. Our Society is strong and will find a way for all our events in 2021.

The Board will meet in January to make plans for 2021, but we always welcome input from you all. This next year will be a chance for us to try new events. Our goal is to promote knowledge and interest in hostas. Learning about hostas is done best by talking with those who grow hostas. Our members know what hostas do here in St. Louis. Ask them!

I ask you to stay safe and well.

Phyllis

2020 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 18
CANCELLED

Meeting with Speaker TBA
1:30 PM, TBA

November
Postponed until 2021

Board Meeting
Time and location TBA

June, 2021

AHS National Convention
Kalamazoo, MI

July 8-10, 2021

Midwest Regional Hosta Convention
Lisle, IL

October 25 Meeting Cancelled **November Board Meeting Postponed**

As reported in the last newsletter, the pandemic continues to curtail our Society's activities. Creve Coeur plans to convert the room where we normally have meetings to a court room for their municipal court. So that location is no longer available. While an outside meeting was possible for September that is not the case for October. The Board decided to cancel this meeting rather than trying to find an inside location that is large enough for social distancing. We will regroup in 2021

The Board decided to postpone its annual meeting until the beginning of January. While it is possible to hold a "zoom" meeting, it is not ideal. Hopefully by January a vaccine will be on the horizon. The Board will also have a better idea of 2021 conditions and restrictions and will not have to wonder from month to month whether events can be held. All members are invited and encouraged to attend Board meetings. This is the time when the budget is reviewed, meeting dates established and programs and speakers planned. Your input is beneficial. Remember this is your society. You will receive notification of the new date and location.

Membership Extended

The Board has voted to extend all memberships for another year. No dues will be collected in 2021.

This will be the last newsletter for 2020. Let's say good-bye to this year and plan to meet again in the new year. Your next newsletter will be in January 2021

September Meeting



Timberwinds owner Mike Curren addresses members. *photo by David Birenbaum*



Plants await the mini auction



Janelle Criscione & auctioneer Basil Honaker



Carolyn Myers and Jolly Ann Whitener talk with Dave Poos after the program.

What a wonderful day! Members, masked and socially distanced, gathered under the shade canopy at Timberwinds Nursery for an informative question and answer session. Mike Curren, owner of Timberwinds, deserves a big 'Thank You' for providing this safe space and setting up tables and chairs.

A lot of acronyms were flying about. A discussion of the differences of OS, OP and TC ensued. One member joking said OS means "more expensive". This is certainly true, but why?

More alphabet soup followed: PP, PPAF and TM. No one present, except Phyllis who had done her homework, knew too much about the process of applying for a plant patent. Why do this and what does it mean? Phyllis had contacted Rob Mortko who explained to her the steps he undertook to patent his signature plant *H. 'Stitch in Time'*.

Another discussion centered on the difference between a TM and a name that some hybridizers prefix to their cultivar names. SHADOWLAND is a TM used by Walters Gardens and is not part of the cultivar's name. On the other hand, "Lakeside" is a word Mary Chastain used to designate her introductions and is considered part of the cultivar's name.

One member asked about registering a hosta. The form and instructions are available on the AHS web-site. The form is not too tedious to complete, is inexpensive (\$5), but requires some planning. First, make sure the name you have selected is not already in use or does not closely resemble one in use. There are rules. Then spend time taking pictures and measurements of your plant – clump, leaf and flower. Submit the form to the registrar. Currently, Gayle Hartley Alley is recognized as the International Registrar for the Genus *Hosta*. The whole registration process takes only a few weeks.

A mini auction of 13 plants, run by David Birenbaum and Basil Honaker, followed the discussion period. Bidding was lively. Everyone was glad to be outside on a beautiful day and being with friends they haven't seen since March.

Membership Roster

Since no one will be dropped from the membership rolls next year, I plan to publish a list of current members with their contact information. We have many new members since this was last done. The list will be sent only to St. Louis Hosta Society members and will not be posted on our web site.

The roster will contain member's name, address, phone number and email address. If you do not wish your name to appear or do not want your address, phone number or email address to be listed, you must call or email me to that effect. The roster will be included with the first newsletter of 2021.

Joan Poos
314-821-1622
David.poos@att.net

Welcome New Members

Trudy and Rick Effinger of Belleville, IL
Joe Krygiel of Chesterfield, MO

We are delighted that you have joined our society. We look forward to meeting you in 2021.

What's growing well?

During our September meeting, a member asked which hosta were growing well in our gardens this year. Each year seems to have its weather oddities. 2020 featured a cool spring, several gully-washing rains, and then a lack of rain in September. Two week-long cool snaps in August had plants wondering if fall had arrived early. How did this effect our hosta?

Hosta emerged and flourished in cool sunny May and June. St. Louis did not get the late freezes experienced by Eastern gardeners. All was good. But, our hosta seemed to decline after an unusually cool week in early August. The lack of rain in September has caused many to go dormant earlier than usual. Though we water constantly, it is not the same as Mother Nature's sprinkles.

Old favorites, such as, 'June', 'Krossa Regal', 'Regal Splendor', 'Victory', 'Lakeside Shore Master' and 'Lakeside Beach Captain' always look great. New favorites like 'Viking Ship', 'Jaz', 'Beckoning', 'Grand Slam', 'Old Glory' and 'Key Lime Pie' fared well.

For some reason, I struggle with the 'minis'. But this year they were exceptional, that is until the rabbits found them. 'Wrinkle in Time' and 'Mighty Mouse' are thriving planted in the ground. All our troughs survived winter with their tiny plants looking stronger than ever. These include 'Mini Skirt', 'Dry Martini', 'Cherish', 'Lakeside Dot Com', 'Mouse Capades' and 'Pixie Vamp'. New comer 'Road Rage' is in the 'creeping stage', but I'm looking forward to seeing it jump next spring.

Respond to this email and tell me what's new in your garden, how did your plants fare, which hosta surprised you and which ones disappointed. I'd love to include your thoughts (as well as any pictures you have) in a 2021 article. We all learn through the sharing of information.

Oh my goodness! Is that really a hosta?



H. 'Praying Hands'



H. 'Manzo'
photo www.nhhostas.com



H. 'Allegan Fog'



H. 'Road Rage'
photo www.nhhostas.com

Have you or someone visiting your garden stopped in their tracks staring at a plant at their feet. What is that? Is that really a hosta?

As more and more cultivars are registered, hybridizers are stretching to bring more distinctive plants to market. In the beginning, a variegated hosta was new, exciting and in demand. But the shape of the leaves and the colors were fairly refined. Over the years, new leaf shapes and colors have evolved and become more popular.

My husband and I attend hosta conventions and spend our share of time at the vendor tables. We are sure to come home with something different. Here are a few that are available either in local nurseries or on-line. You may or may not like them. As they say "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder."

H. 'Praying Hands' created quite a stir when it was introduced in 1996. The upright rippling leaves are folded and curve in and out looking like 'praying hands'. This unique shape shows off the leaf's attractive, shiny underside and narrow creamy edge. A thick substance and upright stature thwarts slugs. *H. 'Hands Up'* is a tetraploid sport of 'Praying Hands'. I can't yet report on its hardiness as the bunnies in our yard dearly love it.

H. 'Manzo' is a fun little Japanese hosta with twisted and contorted white leaves with deep green edges. At first glance the leaves looked to me like spoons radiating out from the center. A vigorous grower, it forms a tangled clump about 5" tall. It will be an eye catcher in a trough or pot where it gets noticed.

H. 'Allegan Fog' and a similar cultivar 'Ghost Spirit' have heavily mottled leaf centers. The white centers have green flecks and streaks. The centers turn greenish as the season progresses giving the leaves a foggy look.

H. 'Road Rage' is truly a love it or hate it kind of hosta. Some of the adjectives I've seen applied to it are weird, ugly, crazy, strange and awesome. This new hybrid has heavy green leaves that are wildly distorted with intense puckering, corrugation, folds and ridges. If you want something funky, this is the one for you.

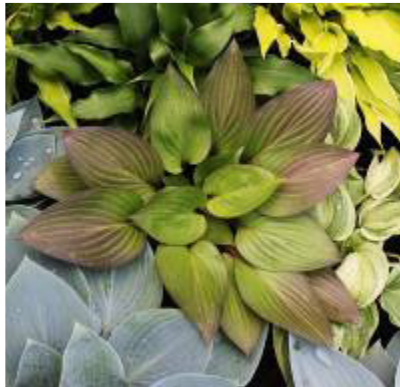
Is that really a hosta?



H. 'Royal Tiara'



H. 'Stitch in Time'



H. 'First Blush'
photo www.nhhosta.com



H. 'Zebra Stripes'
photo www.nhhosta.com

H. 'Royal Tiara' is another twisty, contorted plant. The attractive, in my opinion, and uniquely curling leaves have white centers with a green margin. The center often has a darker green color streaking through it. In spite of its strange growth habit, 'Royal Tiara' is vigorous and will add a flair to a container or to one of your beds.

A most unusual but quite distinctive hosta is *H. 'Stitch in Time'*. This unique sport of 'Summer Breeze' features broad, golden leaves, complemented by a small, dark green pattern that appears to be stitched into the leaf center. The pattern is likely the result of a difference in the chromosome count in the different layers of the hosta leaf. Maybe that is why it has proven very difficult to propagate, even with tissue culture. Although a slow grower, 'Stitch in Time' has good leaf substance. This picture was taken just a day or two ago.

The holy grail of hosta hybridizing has been to develop a red-leaved hosta. First there were plants with vividly colored petioles, then came color extending through the mid vein. *H. 'First Blush'* goes a step further. It emerges in the spring with smooth, green leaves that are outlined with a fine red edge. A few weeks after emerging, the green foliage begins to blush red from the leaf tip down. You can almost watch this green hosta turn red. When summer temperatures begin to hover around 90°F, the red blush begins to fade. I saw this plant at the botanical garden in Green Bay WI during the 2019 AHS convention - stunning. Cool temperatures and some direct sun seem to encourage the most intense coloring.

What about a hosta with no color! As we all know from basic high school biology, plants need chlorophyll to grow, a substance lacking in quantity in white hosta. While they certainly look weird in the spring, all these hosta develop some shade of green by late summer. *H. 'Zebra Stripes'* emerges pure white, but once the leaves are fully unfurled they develop green striped veins and some green speckling in the leaf. The leaves continue to get greener as the season progresses.

Maybe it is time to try something new in your garden. Are you ready to give one of these beauties, or "uglies" depending on your point of view, a home in your yard?

The people behind the plants Mary Chastain

A recent visitor to our yard stopped suddenly to admire our *H.* 'Lakeside Paisley Print'. Walking a bit further, she pointed out another Lakeside and then another. What's the story behind that Lakeside name? What better way to start a series of articles on our hosta pioneers than to introduce Mary and Roy Chastain to our new and not so new members?

While doing research I found a wonderful article in **The Hosta Journal** from 2004 (vol. 35, number 3) written by Glen Williams. He tells her story.

Mary and her husband Roy made their home on the shore of Lake Chicamauga in eastern Tennessee. Hence the name "Lakeside". They always seemed to be dabbling in growing plants. Early on it was vegetables and fruit, then hybridizing iris and daylilies. In the mid-1980s Mary fell in love with hosta, but found that the varieties that she could purchase did not grow well in her area of Tennessee. So without any formal training, Mary decided to develop her own. Her goal was to create plants that would grow in spite of adverse conditions.

Mary said "All of my work is done from observation of the plants that I work with. If I want to introduce a trait into a line that I am breeding into I just run my plant material through my mind and select the best example of that trait. For me, hybridizing is a process of creating something new, something exciting. God gave me a gift for discernment."

Mary and Roy developed quality hosta. By "quality" they meant that the plant must exhibit four key components: the ability to thrive in most conditions, an average or greater rate of natural increase, foliage with good substance and a personality that sets it apart. The plant must be distinctive; it must grow well in the heat and soil of Tennessee; it must have good substance – no paper-thin leaves. It took from 10 to 15 years for Mary to perfect a cultivar for market.

The AHS Hosta Treasury lists over 150 Chastain hosta. Her first introduction *H.* 'Lakeside.Symphony' was an instant sensation winning grand-champion at the 1989 AHS Hosta Show in Atlanta. One of the last, *H.* 'Lakeside Paisley Print' was voted 2019 AHGA 'Hosta of the Year'.

Mary and Roy retired from Lakeside Acres in 2009. The 'Lakeside' name and all her breeding stock was purchased by Rob Canning, who then moved everything to Michigan. Rob intends to continue her work.

Photos were taken yesterday; Lakeside plants still look good.



Mary Chastain



H. 'Lakeside Symphony'



H. 'Lakeside Paisley Print'



H. 'Lakeside Zesty Zeno'



H. 'Lakeside Cindy Cee'

St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

Phyllis Weidman – President
314-965-7027
Pow1031@gmail.com

Jolly Ann Whitener – Secretary
jawhit6@gmail.com

Melinda Ligon – Hospitality
314-749-7307
meligon@sbcglobal.com

Lynn Teller – Webmaster
314-306-1478
lvnn.teller@gmail.com

Josh Jagger – Vice-President
573-822-1777
Nemojosh82@yahoo.com

Dave Poos – Treasurer
314-821-1622
david.poos@att.net

Joan Poos – Newsletter Editor
314-821-1622
david.poos@att.net

St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

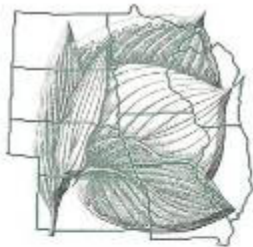
Contact: Dave Poos
9904 Crestwood Drive
Crestwood, MO 63126
david.poos@att.net

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

Meetings held at the **Creve Coeur Government Center, 300 N. New Ballas, 63141** (between Ladue Road and Olive), 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:

Sandie Markland, AHS Membership Secretary
P O Box 7539
Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

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/>