



# Hosta Happenings

October 2011

Vol. 15, Iss 7

## ***Mississippi Valley Hosta Society***

**Presents! *Dr. Bob Olson***

***"Use hostas to show off your garden"  
(not your garden to show your off hostas)***

**Sunday October 16th 2:00 pm to 3:30 pm**



**No cost, a free public offering !**

**Join us at the Scott County Extension**

Bob comes to us from Minnesota, a "backyard gardener" on an average sized city lot, has been growing hostas for over twenty-five years. He is past-President of The American Hosta Society and has edited *The Hosta Journal* (the official publication of the AHS) for the past 10 years. The Olson Garden has been on the National Garden Tour for the American Hosta Society three times and on the Men's Garden Club of America National Tour twice. The garden won the Harshbarger Award for Best Garden on Tour from the American Hosta Society and the Minneapolis Garden Club's Lehman Trophy for Best on Tour. During the past thirty years he has re-designed his garden three times—most recently in 2007—and now grows *fewer* hostas than he did ten years ago.

**Free: Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup> 2:00 pm, at the**

**Scott County Extension**

**875 Tanglefoot Lane, Bettendorf, Iowa**

The following was taken from the Mid-South Hosta Society's newsletter and contains some of news from this year's AHS Convention:

## AHS award honors Dixie's McDonell

by Larry Tucker

Dixie's own Harold McDonell was honored as the Alex J. Summers Distinguished Merit Award recipient at the American Hosta Society Convention this past June in Marlborough, MA. The award culminated a four-day celebration of New England's Hostas & Heritage.

McDonell, who has been active for many years with the Georgia Hosta Society and the Dixie Regional Hosta Society, served more than two terms (2001-07) as AHS vice president for judging and exhibitions. As a national officer, he was instrumental in creating another AHS board position, vice president for awards and honors.

"My love affair with hostas started in 1984 with 'Tokudama Aureonebulosa'," McDonell told his AHS friends. Unfortunately, because of the Southern climate, "I learned that I couldn't grow it," the Fayetteville, GA, gardener said. However, Harold can grow many other hostas extremely well. One of his favorites is the late Mildred Seaver's 'Spilt Milk'. He chose the unusual white-splashed sport as the Distinguished Merit Award Hosta.

This year's recipient of the Eunice Fisher Distinguished Hybridizer Award was Bob Kuk of Brecksville, OH. Among many hostas he has developed, the merit hosta that he singled out was 'Van Wade' - named for his good friend.

The Benedict Garden Performance Medal, in memory of hybridizer Herb Benedict, was awarded posthumously to Emile Deckert and his widow Jane of Hampstead, MD, for introducing 'Blue Mouse Ears'. Previous medal winners were 'June' and 'Sagae'.

President's Awards went to Bill Meyer and Carol Brashear of Woodbury, CT, for their longtime service with AHS and Region One, where they instigated the First Look event for new hostas. Micheletti also honored Steve Greene of Sudbury, MA, who has been in charge of AHS publication sales for 15 years.

After four years as president, Micheletti passed AHS leadership to Doug Beilstein, whose colleagues on the incoming board are: Cindy Tomashek, executive vice president; Chuck Zdeb, judging and exhibitions; Rob Mortko, genus hosta; Jim Weidman, member services; Ken Harris, publications; Mike Shadrack, awards and honors; Sandy Markland, membership secretary; Kathy Shadrack, recording secretary; Kim Larsen, treasurer; Bob Olson, Journal editor; Joshua Speece, website editor.

Next year's American Hosta Society Convention will be June 13 through 16 in Nashville, Tennessee.

Sincere condolences to Liz Jansen. Her husband, Alan, passed away in September.

## MASTER GARDENER TRAINING

MVHS will pay the tuition of any MVHS member who takes the Master Gardener training course in either Iowa or Illinois.

Iowa's classes have already started on September 8, but the club will reimburse the \$150 tuition, if already enrolled. Otherwise, you'll have to wait until next year to attend. A copy of their brochure follows on another page.

To apply for the Iowa MG Program:

Call the ISU Scott County Extension Office at 563-359-7577 for an application. A copy of the application may be downloaded from ISU Scott County Extension's web site: [www.extension.iastate.edu/scott/](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/scott/). A completed application is required for entry into the program. There is a one time fee to cover the cost of instructional materials (\$150).

The Illinois MG program will start in January, but it is suggested you enroll soon as the class fills out early. Both Iowa and Illinois residents can attend. MVHS will reimburse attendees \$175 of the \$225 enrollment fee as \$50 is returned once the internship is completed. A copy of their brochure follows on a separate page. Website is: <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/hmrs/> That should bring up a listing of sites.. the site that says: University of Illinois Extension serving Henry, Rock Island.. is the proper one. The right side of that page is where 'Master Gardener Training' should be selected. Otherwise, the phone number is: 309-756-9978 for the Extension, and Tracy Jo Mulliken is their Horticultural Coordinator..

## ANOTHER PLEA FOR EMAIL ADDRESSES

Attached is a copy of our membership list, which includes email addresses. If you have an email address and still receive the printed newsletter, will you please furnish your email address to Carolyn Hamilton at [corton02@gmail.com](mailto:corton02@gmail.com). We save so much money sending out the newsletters by email versus U.S. Post Office. An eight-page newsletter costs approximately \$1.00 to print and mail. With email, you receive it faster and it comes with colored photos! At the present time, I mail out approximately 50 newsletters and that would save \$50 per newsletter. I know some of you do not have email but there are some of you who do. So, please save the club some money so we don't have to raise the cost of the dues!!!!

Carolyn

## Master Gardener Program

Iowa State University (ISU) Scott County Extension Master Gardener (MG) Volunteer program was started in 1979 to promote and expand ISU Scott County Extension's research based horticultural education program. Through volunteer service and educational outreach Master Gardeners help home gardeners and community organizations solve gardening challenges, improve gardening skills, and promote a sustainable and healthy environment.

## Qualifications

Membership is open to any Scott County resident with an interest in plants, and an enthusiasm for acquiring and sharing their horticultural knowledge and skills with others.

## Mission

The purpose of our organization is to provide home horticulture information to citizens of Scott County consistent with ISU recommendations. The organization also strives to increase members' knowledge of horticulture through educational opportunities.



## Commitment

Complete approximately 50 hours of training followed by a minimum of 40 hours of approved MG volunteer service in Scott County (internship).

MG's complete annual service requirements of 20 hours of approved MG volunteer service and 6 hours of continuing education to maintain active status. (Following the internship year.)

## Expected Results

Master Gardeners will have timely and accurate responses to horticultural inquiries from the public.

## Training & Support

- Orientation to ISU Extension, it's mission and that of the Master Gardener Program
- Master Gardener training classes on topics which include General Botany, Propagation and Soils, Fruit Culture, Vegetables & Herbs, Houseplants, IPM, Pesticide Safety and Weeds, Herbaceous Ornamentals, Turfgrass, Plant Pathology, Entomology, Woody Landscape Plants, Wildlife Management, Plant Propagation & Garden Design
- Resources available include the Iowa Master Gardener Workbook Iowa Master Gardener Resource Guide, ISU Extension Publications (online and print). Access to the ISU Scott County Extension MG library, samples, and equipment.

## Benefits

- Opportunity to become a more knowledgeable gardener.
- Recipient of publications and other resources.
- Meet, work with, and learn from others who share your interests in gardening.
- Opportunity to share your knowledge with others

Following is a copy of a brochure on Illinois Master Gardener Training.

## Master Gardener Training (Illinois – training to be held in Milan IL)

(Iowa residents are also considered for this training)

### How to become a Master Gardener

Master Gardeners are members of the local community who are interested in gardening and the environment. They participate in an extensive training program and commit to completing a certain number of volunteer hours on horticulture-related community projects each year. They are organized by their local county Extension unit. This year's face-to-face training for Rock Island, Henry, Stark, Mercer and Knox County area residents will take place on Fridays, January 20 - April 6.

The cost for the training is \$225 and includes a comprehensive horticulture textbook. You will receive a \$50 refund once your internship is completed for a \$175 cost to become initially certified. Classes take place on Fridays from 9:00 a.m.–3:30 p.m. at the University of Illinois Extension office at 321- W 2nd Ave Milan IL 61264

### 2011 Dates & Topics:

- January 20–Introduction to Botany
- January 27–Soils
- February 3–Pathology (Diseases)
- February 10–Herbaceous Ornamentals (Flowers)
- February 17–Entomology (Insects)
- February 24–Landscape Principles/Ornamental Grasses
- March 2–Woody Ornamentals (Trees and shrubs)
- March 9–Vegetables
- March 16–Fruits
- March 23–Turf Grass
- March 30–Make up date if needed.
- April 6–Problem Solving, Pesticide Safety, DDDI, Final, Graduation

The classes are taught by University of Illinois Extension educators.

Master Gardener volunteers work on behalf of and under the supervision of University of Illinois Extension. The volunteer work is conducted in the local Extension unit and throughout the community on various projects involving parks, schools, gardening, or other city agencies.

Certified Master Gardeners are those who have completed their training and internship.

To remain active, certified Master Gardeners must complete 30 hours of volunteer service and 10 hours of educational training yearly. These are reported to and recorded by University of Illinois Extension.

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This article was printed last year, but is very timely, so here it is again! This was reprinted from Tri-State Tribute-Fall 2011.

## From September to Fall Garden Cleanup

by Bob Solberg, Green Hill Farm, Inc.

*(Note: Reprinted from Shady Business—August 2011)*

Planting hostas can be done anytime as long as the soil is not frozen, but the chances for survival are better if plantings are completed by early September, to allow four to six weeks for the plants to reestablish before first frost. Hostas are completely dormant during the winter, making late plantings more susceptible to rot.

Do not try to keep your hostas actively growing late in the year. It is better to let plants die down somewhat naturally rather than letting a hard frost do all the damage. All fertilization should have stopped well prior to September, but it is important for gardens to continue receiving the equivalent of 1 to 1-1/2 inches of rainfall per week through September. Although October is the time to start cutting back on watering, hostas do not want to be dry when they go into dormancy. Each gardener will have to decide for themselves whether their gardens need supplemental watering during October; considering soil type, temperatures, and amount of rainfall received.

We have very little control during the winter, but keep in mind that hostas prefer to remain on the dry side during dormancy. Excessive moisture and cold temperatures lead to rotting.

Continue to watch for foliar nematodes (brown streaks between the veins of hosta leaves). If you have infected plants, get rid of them, or you'll have more infected plants next season.

Mole activity usually picks up in the fall. Moles won't directly cause damage to hostas, other than occasionally uprooting young plants, but eliminating moles will reduce the likelihood of voles which use the mole runs to reach and eat hosta roots and crowns.

It is a good idea to drop poison bait into vole holes throughout the winter. Look for nickel size holes, often right next to hosta crowns. Not being able to easily see the results, I suggest alternating the use of a variety of baits to increase the chances of success. Place a brick or other heavy object over the hole to prevent poisoning of birds and other animals. Several gardeners have also had success with mouse

traps baited with a mixture of peanut butter and oatmeal placed next to vole holes. Again, cover the hole and trap in a manner to protect birds and pets. A clay pot turned upside down with a brick on top works well.

Depending on how early, cutting your hostas back before they go dormant may reduce the amount of energy that they are able to store, resulting in smaller plants the following season. If you prefer this method, it is advisable to sanitize your garden tools between each plant. One commonly used sanitizer is a bleach/water solution (10-50% bleach). Most people use a mix closer to 10%. If your confidence level goes up proportionately as the percent of bleach increases, it may be worth the extra expense. It is your decision, but do use some form of sanitizer. Remember that viruses spread when the sap from an infected plant comes in contact with the sap of another plant.



Mother Nature can make the removal of hosta foliage much easier than cutting petioles at ground level. After one or more hard freezes, it becomes very easy to pull hosta foliage off without any tools. If you try pulling the foliage off too early, you may end up completely pulling some divisions and/or smaller hostas out of the ground.

Some of the reasons for cleaning your gardens in the fall include:

- Removal of all hosta leaves and other debris from the garden helps reduce slug populations the following year, as slugs often lay their eggs on these surfaces.
- Eliminates cover for rodents (mice, moles and voles).
- Reduces a variety of fungal diseases the following year.
- May reduce the spread of foliar nematodes. Some people believe that if infected leaves are not removed in the fall, they can be blown around infecting other areas. If unsure, why risk it?

For many of the above reasons, it is not advisable to put hosta leaves on the compost pile. Burning the

## From September to Fall Garden Cleanup (Continued)

garden clutter can be a bit of a challenge, as hosta leaves are typically very moisture retentive, but doing so eliminates any possible problems associated with discarding the waste elsewhere.

One of the arguments against cleaning gardens in the fall is that the old foliage helps to maintain soil temperatures and protects hostas from extreme cold. This is not without merit, but generally speaking, if your gardens are already mulched, and any exposed buds are covered with a little surrounding soil, there is no need for additional protection of established plants.

If additional protection is desired, a thin layer of low moisture retentive coarse mulch, such as various types of wood chips or pine bark nuggets, can be added. A thin layer of mulch will also help prevent heaving of young plants. An additional benefit of a coarse layer of mulch added anytime from fall through winter is by helping to maintain soil temperatures; emergence of new plant growth in the spring will be slightly delayed, making plant tissue less susceptible to freezing temperatures. On the negative side, adding an additional layer of compost before the ground is frozen increases the likelihood of rodent damage. For trough gardens, putting them on the east or north side of a building and covering and surrounding them with a coarse mulch will provide winter protection. For additional protection, some gardeners prefer to first bury the bottom one-third of the trough in the ground. For additional detail, I recommend the following articles:

- How late is too late to plant hostas in the fall?

<http://www.hostahosta.com/tips.html#late>

- Preparing the Garden for Winter.

<http://www.hostahosta.com/tips.html#winter>



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11	Rita	Thompson	2336 Fairhaven Rd.	Davenport, IA 52803	563-359-6013	
11	Jennifer Meyer	VV Bot Park	214 W. Central Park	Davenport, IA 52803	563-326-7894	
11	Wm & Marsha	Waters	302 W. 28th Ave. Ct.	Coal Valley, IL 61240	309-799-5807	
11	Mike	Waskowlak	2953 Middle Rd	Davenport, IA 52803	563-359-3271	waskowlak1@mchsi.com
11	Shirley	Waters	3519 - 38th St.	Moline, IL 61265	309-797-5379	waters1@mchsi.com
12	Kris	Whalen	23240 260th Ave.	LaClaire, IA 52753	563-349-6468	kjaners1@aol.com
12	Jay & Janet	Wilhelm	1010 - 25th Ave.	Moline, IL 61265	309-797-9651	
11	Karolyn	Williams	616 - 23rd St.	Rock Island, IL 61201		karolynjwilliams@hotmail.com
11	Dorothy	Wilson	704 S. Illinois St.-Room 104	Geneseo, IL 61254	309-944-5224	
11	Tom	Witt	#4 Hillside Ct.	Eldridge, IA 52748	563-448-4904	Halfwit4@gmail.com
11	Pat	Wohlford	5102 Crow Creek Rd.	Bettendorf, IA 52722	563-332-5190	pataww@mdeodusa.net
12	Kathleen	Wolfe	2733 E. High St.	Davenport, IA 52803	563-355-5641	kefow1@ecois.p.com
12	Karen	Wulf	24520 60th Ave	Walscott, IA 52773		wulfstien@nets.net
12	Rich & Gloria	Yakich	303 Robin Hill Dr.	Shorewood, IL 60431	815-725-4734	

**AHS DUES:** The American Hosta Society offers participation in all national activities, including a convention, 3 issues of "The Hosta Journal", and a directory. They also have a web page - [www.hosta.org](http://www.hosta.org). Dues are \$30/yr, \$57/2 yrs and \$600 life for an individual. Family memberships are also available at \$34/yr and \$62/2 yrs. Make your check to AHS and send to the Membership Secretary, Sandie Markland, PO Box 7539, Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

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**Midwest Regional Hosta Society Dues** are \$10/yr. Send your check to: Barbara Schroeder, 1819 Coventry Dr., Champaign, IL 61822-5239.

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**MISSISSIPPI VALLEY HOSTA SOCIETY DUES** are \$7/YR. **Please make your check payable to MVHS (not Jim)** and send to JIM CATO, 12915 - 25TH ST. CT., MILAN, IL 61264. We offer 8 newsletters a year, reduced prices on hosta offerings, garden walks, first opportunity to buy plants at our annual hosta and plant sale and many other good opportunities.

Mississippi Valley Hosta Society  
909 Mississippi Blvd.  
Bettendorf, Iowa 52722

**WHAT'S HAPPENING:**

**Oct 16** - Dr. Bob Olson, Free Talk at Iowa Extension Office, 2 PM

**Nov 13** - 2PM - MVHS Meeting - Ellen Kelley on Conifers

**Dec 2** - MVHS Annual Christmas Party

**Jun 13-16** - AHS Convention, Nashville