

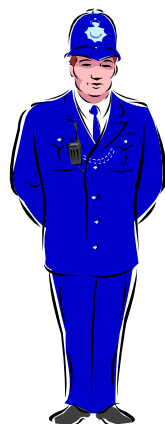
Hosta la vista

Until we meet again

February 2023

President's Message

Our winter seems pretty mild this time around. Although most of us have only had two significant snowfalls they have both been very heavy and disruptive and we still lead the national Snow Derby with 104 inches whilst Anchorage, Alaska can only boast 62 inches. Whilst all this may be good for safe driving, fuels bills and entertaining it might not be so good for our Hostas. We won't be having 'Minnesota' hostas this summer. Whilst a good snow cover protects our dormant plants and prevents them from oscillating between 'It is cold and I need to sleep' and 'Hey, it's warm, maybe it is time to wake up' it is not necessary for the dormant hostas. What is more important is soil and air temperature. For this reason, we cover the hoop house with a layer of white plastic sheeting. It is better if the temperature of the ground and the potting soil in our pots remains constant and constantly cold is best. So, what to do if the winter continues to be mild, with little snow? (Well, we can hope). It might be possible to get out into the yard and do some maintenance, do a little more of the fall clear up that we failed to do because of that early, deep snow fall. Maybe we can dig a little, move hard landscaping around, pick up fallen sticks and branches. All of this will help stave off cabin fever and keep us active and enthused. We talked of growing hosta seeds in the February 2022 Newsletter. We talked mostly of growing them indoors under lights. This winter we might be able to plant them in the ground. If the ground stays reasonably warm we can plant hosta seeds. Two, at least, of our sadly departed hosta hybridizers, Van Wade and Bob Kuk, always did just that.



We usually keep hosta seeds, harvested in the fall, in the refrigerator. Once they have been cooled off for a month or two they can be broadcast onto warm soil and covered with a very thin mulch of fine compost or garden soil. Remember to mark off the seed sowing area and label it so that, in your excitement at the arrival of spring, you don't plant a new perennial or shrub in the exact same space or re-locate a piece of garden art. A mild winter might also present an opportunity to clean and brighten some of the garden art that is left in place during winter or put in the

shed or garage for safe keeping during frosty weather. A bucket of warm soapy water and a sponge will do wonders for a weather-stained bird bath or pedestal and keep hands warm at the same time. Smaller items might be soaked in warm water and empty ceramic pots could benefit from a clean before they are re-used in the spring. Buffalo gardens are famous for that Buffalo Garden Style where re-claimed artifacts, weatherproof art work and statuary, and various whimsies compliment the plants and shrubs in the garden. Such items also draw the eye to the further reaches of the yard and encourage exploration. This year the American Hosta Society Annual Convention will be held in Ames, Iowa. The theme is "Fields of Hosta Dreams" and follows the famous Baseball theme 'build it and they will come' pattern. Ames is a long trek from Western New York but in 2024 the Annual Convention is to be held on June 19-22, in Marlborough, MA. That is not nearly so far away and is certainly drivable. We are planning on encouraging some of our membership to attend the convention. We could maybe hire a bus or a van.

There are many good reasons to register for an Annual Hosta Convention and at our meeting this month we will try an outline some of them and answer questions. Meanwhile, take care

Mike President

February Meeting

Sunday, February 19th
East Aurora Senior Center
101 King St., East Aurora 14052

Doors open 1:30 pm for socializing
 Meeting commences at 2 pm

Short Business Meeting

The B Movie
Art in Garden Design

The Main Event
American Hosta Society
Annual Conventions
Let's Go!

Sue Sickels and Mike Shadrack
will take you on a trip to previ-
ous AHS national conventions.

For details see page 3

Beverages and refreshments
Fond farewells

Directions:

From I-90 - Route 400 to Maple exit, right. Maple to the end, left onto Main, then second right - S. Grove...past the Roycroft to the stop sign, then left on Oakwood.

The Senior Center will be on your right. Park behind, **NOT IN PLAZA**

An American Hosta Society Display Garden

Last summer the American Hosta Society asked the Western New York Hosta Society to create a National Hosta Display Garden in our area.

(www.americanhostasociety.org/Community/DisplayGardens)

They pointed out that there were 27 such display gardens in the USA but none in WNY, or even in New York State for that matter.

(www.americanhostasociety.org/Community/ahs_display_gardens.pdf).

The suggestion was well received by the Board and we told them that we would think about it.

This winter we were approached by Madeleine McGrady, Gardens Manager of the Buffalo Olmsted Gardens, who asked us if we would help Olmsted make a shade garden in Martin Luther King Park.

We straightway thought "Two birds, one stone".

Sue Sickles and your President recently met with Olmsted representatives at the Brent Garden and were very pleasantly surprised by what we were shown.

Although it was mid-winter, we could see the bare bones of an established garden. It is about 1/3 of an acre, full of mature trees and shrubs with good concrete paths and two round raised beds. It is surrounded by good quality ornate iron railings, and although some of the shrubs and a few of the trees will need limbing-up to create more planting space and allow more light, it seems an ideal spot for a hosta garden.



To establish a mature garden in the space is a five-year project. It is something that the Board would like to do and they would like to hear the opinions of the membership.

February Meeting

For the February meeting we need the following -

Yummies for your Tummies

Volunteers to bring desserts/refreshments

We like to keep coffee, water, cider and lemonade available at our meetings along with cookies and more.

If you are able to bring something to add to the hosta-tality table, please call

JUDY JOHNSON – the hostess with the mostest at 716-649-2764 or email at wjohnson21088@verizon.net

Make sure you come along - and bring a friend.

Remember, finger foods please and remember to put your name on your containers.

Wear Your Name Tag

Hosta of the Year for 2023 Host a 'Nep tune'

Another wonderful cultivar from Hans Hansen.

A seedling from (H.'Maekawa' x H.'Halcyon') x H.'Salute'.

A medium blue-green hosta that at maturity is 24" high and up to 46" wide with pale lavender flowers in late August.



The next meeting
of the WNY Hosta Society is the
**BORED WITH WINTER
Meeting**

Sunday, February 19th
East Aurora Senior Center
101 King St., East Aurora 14052

Doors open 1:30 pm
Program commences at 2 pm

PROGRAM

**AHS Annual Conventions--
Let's Go!**

Sue Sickels and Mike Shadrack

B-MOVIE
Art in Garden Design

Plus

Short business meeting
& review of 2023 calendar

Plus

Refreshments
Door prizes
Hosta bux
And the usual fun and frivolity

**Be there
or be square**

Directions

From I-90 - Route 400 to Maple exit, right. Maple to the
end, left onto Main, then second right on South Grove ...
past the Roycroft to the stop sign, then left on Oakwood.
The Senior Center will be on your right. Park behind,
NOT IN PLAZA

2023 CALENDAR

February 19th

Winter meeting
East Aurora Senior Center

March 4th

Hosta Breakfast

March 17th

Hosta College
Piqua, Ohio

April 1st

Hosta Breakfast

April 23rd

Spring Meeting
East Aurora Senior Center

May 20th

Hoop House Opening and Members' Sale

June 6 - 10

AHS Annual Convention, Ames, Iowa

June 24th - 25^h

Buffalo Garden Art Sale - Plant Society Avenue
Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens

July 7th

Hosta Tailgate

August 12th

Annual Public Sale
Lake Erie Italian Club
3200 South Park Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14218

August 27th

Picnic at Eagle Bay

November 5th

Annual Meeting and Members' meeting
East Aurora Senior Center





Hosta Teas

Following our successful winter 'Hosta Breakfasts', we are continuing with 'Hosta Teas' to help us through the summer.

What is a hosta tea?

It is a planned visit to a member's garden, usually with light refreshments.

The garden is usually open for four hours between 1 pm and 5 pm, but opening hours are totally up to the host gardener.

Members are encouraged to visit during the afternoon, but not for the entire four hours. Just drop in, take a look around and enjoy light refreshments and maybe have a relax and gossip for a bit.

Also, the most successful teas include suggestions for other gardens or places of interest nearby as well as possible places to eat. We will include them in a hosta flash nearer the date.

Members are invited via flyer and newsletter and reminders are sent by **HOSTA FLASH**.

It's just a nice bit of socializing between meetings and a great chance to nose around a garden.

Would you like to host a hosta tea this year? The dates we have available this year are listed below. Thank you and we look forward to another fabulous year.

The dates for 2023 are:

Saturday, June 6th

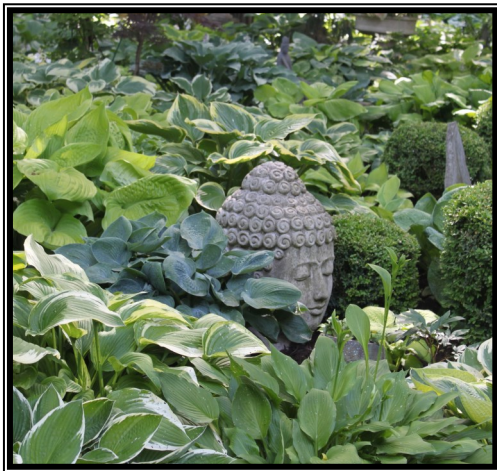
Saturday, July 1st

Saturday, August 5th

And maybe Saturday September 2nd

Yes, that would be all of them.

To volunteer and ask questions please respond to H8staman@aol.com.



HVX and the Big Box Stores

By Harold McDonell, The Georgia Hosta Society

There has been much discussion lately in the hosta social media circles about Hosta Virus X (HVX) and much of the discussion has centered on the part played by big box stores in disseminating plants infected with this incurable virus. This article is being written to better inform our members about HVX, how it has been rapidly spread by some irresponsible hosta plant growers and sellers, and what steps we can take to keep this nasty virus out of our gardens.

First, some basic information about HVX. It is only one of several viruses that can infect hostas but it is by far the most prominent one we have to deal with. HVX has existed in Japan for a long time, probably for centuries, but was not known in the United States until 1996 when it was first identified in specimens from several mid-western states which had been presented to the University of Minnesota as harboring an unknown pathogen. Its spread in the United States has been explosive, primarily due to the rapid increase of imports of field grown hostas from Europe, the Netherlands in particular. It continues to be spread now in not only imported plants but in locally grown plants as well. It can also be spread through tissue culture but fortunately, most tc labs in the United States have been very vigilant in testing plants going both into and out of tissue culture. It is primarily spread mechanically via tools used in cutting roots and leaves of hostas. I will not attempt in this article to go into identification of HVX symptoms, or how exactly we can prevent its spread through our practices in our gardens. There are many sources which can provide more accurate and more detailed information than I can. Some of the best information can be found at the Hosta Library, www.hostalibrary.org. An excellent and detailed HVX video presentation by Chris Wilson is posted at the Hosta Library and I encourage all members to watch it. In the presentation, Mr. Wilson provides numerous illustrations of HVX infected hostas and goes into great detail about just what to look for in determining if a plant is infected. Also discussed are steps one can take to prevent spreading it in the garden through unsanitary practices such as failing to properly clean tools between cutting and transplanting hostas. He also goes into how to test hostas using AGDIA test strips developed specifically for identifying HVX. Just about everything you may want to know about HVX is covered in this video.

The good news about HVX is that, unlike many other plant viruses, it appears to have no insect transmission vector so it is much easier to control. Now, how do big box stores factor in on the spread of HVX? Big box stores have become the major retailers of hostas as hosta popularity has exploded over the last 25 years.

In a quest to meet the demands from their customers for hostas at low prices, they have resorted to using wholesalers who have not been responsible in insisting their growers properly test plants for HVX before, during, and after their propagation.

The administrators of the Hosta Diseases and Pests Facebook site have been soliciting pictures of infected plants found in big box stores and large nurseries along with the accompanying plant or pot labels and have compiled a list of companies providing obviously HVX-infected hostas. The list can be found in one of the featured posts on that Facebook page. I would strongly encourage you, if you are purchasing hostas from a big box store, to copy that list and carry



Hosta Severely Infected with Hosta Virus X



H. 'Striptease' Infected with HVX
Photo: hostalibrary.org

it with you when you shop. Then DO NOT purchase any hostas carrying one of those plant/pot labels.

Please note that the Proven Winners pot/labeled hostas, which are now beginning to appear in big box stores, have so far proven to be free from infection due to the strict standards placed on Proven Winners provided plants. The only caveat to this information is that those plants are often jammed up against plants from suspect sources, increasing chances that they can become infected on the store shelves through sap transfer from damaged leaves.

Plants that do not provide anything more than the big box store labels may come from providers who “fly under the radar” and those plants should also be considered suspect. Of course, the HVX virus can be found in plants from other sources, but most plants coming from hosta specialty nurseries that deal in tissue culture -plants only have a much more reliable record of selling non-virused plants. I try to stick with them when I purchase hostas, even though the prices most likely will be higher than the same plants in big box stores.

I would not go so far as to say don't buy from big box stores but I do caution anyone who does to be very careful. Check the source of the plant on the labels or pots and look closely for HVX symptoms on any of the plants. Also, keep those plants isolated in pots for a few years before considering planting them in the ground because it may take several years after infection for HVX symptoms to appear in a plant. HVX should be a disease that is easily eliminated from the hosta production process. However, many growers, wholesalers, and retailers have so far resisted adopting the simple steps needed to stop its spread. It will be up to us consumers to stop buying suspect plants from suspect sources. Until we do that and begin negatively affecting sales, HVX in newly purchased hostas will continue to be a major problem.

Editor's note:- A short conversation in a box store. Me, to man pushing a trolley loaded with infected hostas, “Do you know that those hostas are diseased and the disease might infect the plants you already have? Response, as man continued towards the check-out, “They are only a dollar each.”



H. 'June' Showing Classic “Inkbleed” Symptoms of HVX Along the Veins
Photo: hostalibrary.org

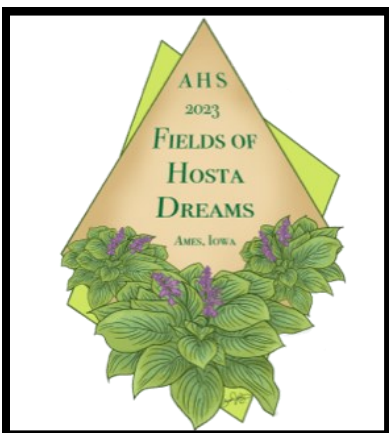


2023 Hosta College Gift plants

H. 'Cool as a Cucumber'



H. 'Trendsetter'



June 6 - 10 Ames, Iowa



GRI
AHS

2023 Hosta College In-person!



March 17-18, 2023

Upper Valley Career Center
Piqua, Ohio

Sponsored by the
Great Lakes Region of the
American Hosta Society

Details and Registration at:
<https://hostacollege.org>

This Year's gift plants (pick 1) see pg. 6
H. 'Trendsetter' or H. 'Cool as a Cucumber'

WNYHS Members will have already received a
Hosta Flash detailing Hosta College



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 Court
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181-5249

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/>

The Members' Garden Directory 2023

It is time to start putting together the **2023 Members' Garden Directory**.

This is a free booklet issued to members of the WNYHS and our partners, The Buffalo Area Daylily Society and the Western New York Iris Society.

It lists members of those societies who are willing to have other members visit and view their gardens. We do not publish addresses, just names, town of residence and contact information.

In previous years we have telephoned our members to have a chat with them and ask them if that would like to be in the book for the first time or remain in the book as a veteran. It is not going to be possible to make those phone calls this year.

Members will receive a **Hosta Flash** email asking them if they wish to have their garden listed in the booklet. Members will need to be positive and respond to the Hosta Flash if they want to be listed. No response will be interpreted as 'no thank you – I don't want to have my garden listed.'

Members who do respond will be contacted individually at a later date.

So, please look out for the **Hosta Flash** and please respond so that the booklet can continue to be a sought after WNYHS publication.

Hosta la vista

Mike Shadrack, President
8399 Zimmerman Road
Hamburg, NY 14075
H8staman@aol.com



We're on the web
wnyhosta.com

Next Breakfast - 3/4/23

Winter Meeting - 2/19/23

Hosta College - 3/17-18/23

2023 FALL HOSTA FORUM

DATE: Saturday, September 16
(preview night Friday, September 15)
SITE: Edinboro University, Edinboro, PA

PROGRAM

HOSTA SPEAKERS

Bob Solberg
Tammy Borden

NON-HOSTA SPEAKERS

Michael Vaughn
SHADE PLANTS
TBA

Registration remains the same

2023 FALL HOSTA FORUM

DISCO

Plans are pretty much in place for the 2023 FALL HOSTA FORUM... the speakers are booked (mostly) the hotel is booked, the committee has met and agreed on a few things and we are *ready to go*. The fervent hope is to have registration material available for you by March.

We have a fabulous theme this year - **DISCO** - just because it's fun!

As you know, our formula for the event is two hosta speakers, two non-hosta speakers, a Friday night preview night - plus vendors, a live and silent auction and more!

If you plan on going, it's not a bad idea to book a room right away: call the Comfort Suites directly at 814-969-7000 and select #2 for the front desk. Tell them you're with the hosta folk and you will get the guaranteed rate of \$114/night.

We will feed you information as it becomes available... but put it on your calendar now!

