



Hosta Hysteria



Newsletter of the Southeast Wisconsin Hosta Society Number 34 January 2007

Thursday , February 22nd, 7:00 p.m.

Location: UW Extension office
932 South 60th St. = West Allis,

Topic: Planting a native wildflower garden for wild life

Speaker: Dan Panetti
Backyard Bird Feeding Specialist
Wild Birds Unlimited



Since the age of 6 or 7 Dan has been interested in birds. It all started with a book given to him by his grandmother. From that, a keen interest developed which has enabled him to develop a career doing what he loves. Dan opened Wild Birds Unlimited in Mequon in 1991. He has served on the Milwaukee Audubon Society board of directors for 12 years. He has been Vice President of the Milwaukee Audubon Chapter for 6 years. He also serves on the Pineview Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center advisory board. He founded and runs the Schlitz Audubon Nature Center bird club 5 years ago. An avid prairie and wildflower gardener, he began his own prairie 12 years ago to provide for wildlife—both from a food and cover perspective. He lives with his wife— Mary Pat, his children Zoe and Nate, and Buddy the wonder dog on the Cedar Creek in Cedarburg.

SEWHS 2007

Calendar of Events

General meeting-March 29th
UW Extension office
Jerry Nelson (details page 5)

General Meeting—May 5th
Boerner Botanical Gardens
Mark Dwyer speaker 1:00p.m
Multipurpose room
Plant sale 8a.m til 3p.m.
Atrium (Details page 8)

Plant Sale
Saturday June 2nd
130th and North Avenue

Plant Sale
Saturday, August 4th
130th and North Avenue

Garden Walk -
Boerner Botanical Gardens
Marcia Wensing—July 11th
(details—page 8)

Directions to the: U. W. Extension Office

Roosevelt School
932 South 60th Street
West Allis, Wi.



Membership renewals

If your membership expired December of 2006 you will note that a renewal card has been included with this newsletter. Please fill in the renewal card and return it along with your dues. Make check payable to SEWHS:

Mail to: Joy Collura, Membership Sec'y
13600 W. Graham Street
New Berlin, Wi. 53151-2572

You will receive your new membership card with your next newsletter.

**SOUTHEAST WISCONSIN
HOSTA SOCIETY
Board Members**

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Steele4@corecomm.net
(262) 377-4552

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(262)646-8311

**Boerner Botanical Gardens/
Community Liasion**

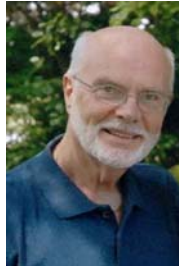
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President's Message



Welcome to a new calendar year and another new weather pattern.

When the 10 inches of snow came in early December I thought we were on track for a “normal winter”. I was worried about our roses as I was not able to get them covered with leaves and plastic. I always wait

for the ground to freeze before covering them but this fall was so warm and then the snow came. I was relieved when the snow melted so I could put the Roses to bed for the winter. It is a good thing we don't have to do that type of work with the mighty Hostas that we love so much.

Little did we know what the next weather patterns would bring. The unseasonably warm weather caused strange and unusual things to happen. During the Christmas season I found 3 slugs sliming their way across our brick walkway. Slugs in December? Spring bulbs were peeking out of the ground on New Years Day. After this mid January snow storm I'm sure no one will be willing to predict the weather from now until June. Whatever the weather may be, I know that we, as Hosta lovers are looking forward to beautiful Hosta leaves appearing in our gardens before June 1st.

No matter what the weather. The following hosta events are scheduled:

Winter Scientific Meeting in Schaumburg, Ill., January 21st

Hosta College in Piqua, Ohio, March 17th and 18th

SEWHS general meeting, Thursday, February 22nd

SEWHS general meeting, Thursday, March 29th

SEWHS general meeting, Saturday, May 5th

SEWHS Chit-Chats, 2nd Saturday of February, March and April

More information is available on the SEWHS website:

www.sewisconsinhosta.org

Your SEWHS officers will be meeting soon to set up our meeting agendas For September 2007 thru August of 2008. If you have any topic suggestions or you are aware of any good speakers, please call or e-mail me with your suggestions.

We look forward to seeing you at all of our SEWHS activities.

Hostas Forever

Chuck Steele.



**It's a New Year. . . Come join us at the Chit Chat's . . .
Eat a great and inexpensive breakfast while visiting
with other SEWHS members.**

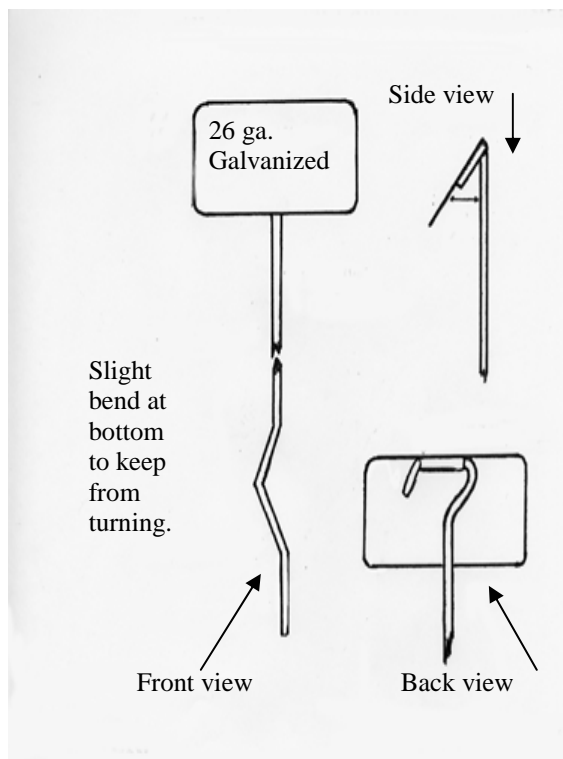
The attendance at our 2nd Saturday of the month Chit Chats continues to be high. We usually have 20 or more members who show up for breakfast at 8:00 a.m. Members eat, talk and mingle until about 10:00 a.m. or longer, but you can leave as early or late as you like. There is no agenda. (Just a lot of talking and visiting.)

The most amazing feature of the chit-chat is the amount of conversation that takes place. I have often looked down the table to see everyone involved. Sometimes there is so much conversation that I am afraid we are too loud for other folks eating around us.

Please join us for the Chit-Chats at 8:00 a.m. on February 10th, March 10th and April 14th at the Old Country Buffet at 16750 West Bluemound Road, Brookfield.

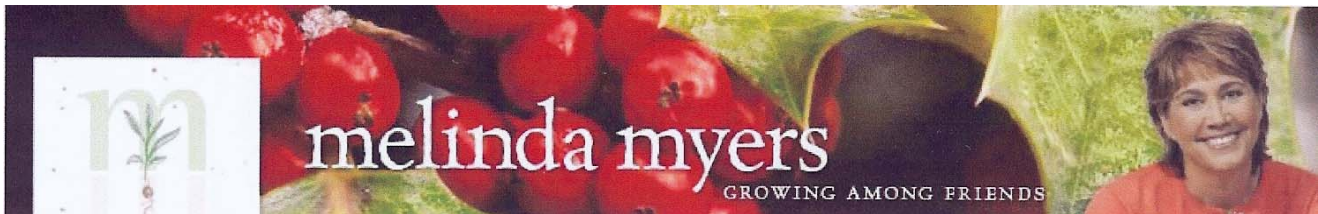
Chuck Steele

See Fine Garden markers—Available now at special price .95 cents ea.



These are heavy duty markers. They are 26 guage galvanized 1-3/4" x 3-3/16" plates on a 20" galvanized rod stake. The plates are slanted for easy viewing.. Several of our members have used these stakes for many years with excellent results. Labels that are punched out on a tape or printed by label makers can be attached to the plate or you can write on them. The height of the stake is easily adjusted by how much of the 20" stake you push into the soil.

We have 1000 markers. They can be purchased for 0.95 cents each at our general meetings, or by contacting Chuck Steele either by phone: 262-377-4552 or by e-mail at steele4@corecomm.net.



What Now???? Caring for your garden this winter.

Gardening in the north is always a challenge – but this winter sure is sure putting us to the test. An early December snowfall had some convinced it would be a long cold winter. As the snow melted and the temperature reached record highs some residents rejoiced while gardeners began to worry about the greenery peeking through the soil.

So how can you protect our prize hostas and other garden favorites? Patience and properly timed mulching can help your plants through this roller coaster winter weather. In the short term, nature stepped in with the best mulch – snow. But we know this can quickly disappear and the temperatures can quickly rise.

At that point, all you can do is wait. That's where the patience comes in. Reset any plants that have heaved out of the ground. The freezing and thawing of the soil causes a shifting in the soil that can push bulbs and plants out of the ground.

Once the temperatures drop and the ground freezes you can apply the winter mulch that has been waiting to go on the garden. Evergreen boughs (hopefully you did not discard the Christmas tree) or straw work great. Covering your plants and gardens helps keep the soil frozen and the plants dormant. When the next warm spell arrives, the soil under mulch slowly warms and the plants stay dormant and escape harm when the temperatures quickly drop below freezing.

Mulching warm soil can promote plant growth and create a warm habitat for rabbits and rodents that love to eat your plants. Plus covering those actively growing plants that peeked through the snow can trap moisture and block the sunlight leading to disease and plant decline.

When spring arrives be patient. Many of those plants that broke through the ground in January may be slow to recover. While you wait, check again for frost heaved plants and replant as needed. Look for vole damage. These mouse-like rodents may have been busy this winter munching on seeds, tree and shrub bark, and even the fleshy roots of your hostas, daylilies and Siberian iris. You may be doing a little extra digging and dividing this season to get the garden back in shape.

And as hard as it is to lose your favorite, look at it as a chance to try something new. After all we are optimists or we wouldn't be gardeners.

For additional information year round, on a variety of topics visit Melinda's website at: www.melindameyers.com



Gary Seymour
New Vice President

We searched and found a volunteer to fill the vice-president vacancy for the Southeast Wisconsin Hosta Society.

We'd like you to meet our newly appointed Vice President, Gary Seymour. Gary and his wife Jane have lived in West Bend for the past thirty eight years. He has been a teacher at the West Bend East High School all of that time. He taught social studies for twenty years and for the past eighteen years has been teaching economics. Jane is a cancer registrar at St. Luke's in Milwaukee.

Gary has been involved with model railroad in N scale for twenty years. He's built several modules including one replicating kettle moraine features. He served terms as president of two model railroad clubs, one in Milwaukee and one in Madison, and coordinates the layouts that are built for 6-7 yearly train shows.

Gary and Jane have both been members of the West Bend Beautification committee for fifteen years. They drifted into gardening gradually and through the years reduced their grass cutting considerably by converting grassy areas into garden areas. He and Jane nurtured a few common hostas but decided they wanted to add several special hosta to spruce up yard areas that had been cleared out. In 2005 they both visited with Linda and Steve at Foxfire, and returned to West Bend where they became hosta enthusiasts and soon joined SEWHS. They have enjoyed their brief association with SEWHS and look forward to more activities, the sharing, and the camaraderie they have experienced thus far.

Bibliography - Jerry Nelson

B.S. Horticulture from University of Minnesota
with a minor in turf management

Host "The Garden Show" Sat. am. 7-8
1400 WRJN done this since 1990

Horticulturist for The Bruce Co. in Milwaukee office

Master Gardener Volunteer President
Racine/Kenosha Association

Taught classes at Gateway Technical College
and mini classes at U.W. Parkside

Gardening 25 years or so

Enjoy vegetables, plants in general w/emphasis in lilies

I don't get along with computers!



SEWHS General meeting
March 29th , 7 p.m.

Speaker: Jerry Nelson
Topic: Lilies

Location: U.W. Extension Office
932 South 60th Street
West Allis, Wi.

(For directions see map on page one.)

Interested in learning to make hypertufa troughs?

Hypertufa troughs are a synthetic version of tufa. They are generally made of peat moss, perlite and Portland cement. They are containers that can be made into any size, shape or form. They can be large, small, round, square, tall or squat or whatever suits your fancy. They can be made in a few hours with relatively inexpensive materials you'll find at your local hardware store and the nice thing about them is they weigh only a fraction of stone originals. Sorry there's no photo of a trough in this newsletter, but you can go to this **website** for information: **backyardgardner.com**

The SEWHS officers are wondering if any of our members are interested in making hypertufa troughs for potting up miniature hosta and companion plants. We have volunteers who are interested in teaching the class. There would be a small fee involved to cover the cost of materials used in making the troughs.

We will have a sign up sheet at the February meeting or you can e-mail Chuck Steele with your name and telephone number to indicate you are interested. The class would most likely be held on a weekend or a weekday evening once the weather warms up. Chuck's phone is 262-377-4552, and his e-mail address is: Steele4@corecomm.net

American Hosta Society Membership

Sadie Markland, Membership Secretary
8702 Pinnacle Rock Court
Lorton, Va. 22079-3029

Individual \$25.00 per year
Family \$29.00 per year

AHS National Convention
Indianapolis, Indiana
June 20—23, 2007

Southeast Wisconsin Hosta Society

Joy Collura, Membership Secretary
13600 W. Graham Street
New Berlin, Wi. 53151-2572

Individual \$10.00 for two years
Family \$15.00 for two years

Special offer to NEW SEWHS MEMBERS

If you and/or your family would like to join the American Hosta Society we have a special offer. (limited time only) If you sign up for a two year AHS membership—you pay the first year fee and SEWHS will pay for the second year.

Contact Chuck Steele

Midwest Regional Hosta Society

Pete Postlewaite, treasurer
21172 Andover Road
Kildeer, Illinois 60047

Dues—\$20.00 for two years

Midwest Regional Hosta Society
Convention Dates: July 12-14th, 2007
Davenport, Iowa

Re-cap of our October and November general meetings

Our October and November meetings were excellent. This is what you missed if you weren't able to attend. The October meeting was highlighted by our Pot Luck supper. We all enjoyed food prepared by the members present from their favorite and family recipes. The discussions that followed were initiated by the membership and covered current topics. Group questions and discussions centered around using mulches, diagnosing Hosta diseases and solving minor gardening problems. Controlling slugs, how and when to handle the clean up of the Hosta garden, caring for potted Hostas and how and when to fertilize Hostas were other hot topics.

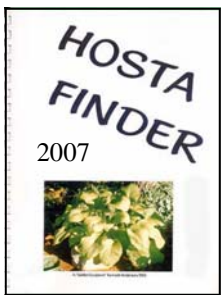
Several members brought plants to share with other members because they had far too many to get planted in their gardens and wanted to make sure they'd get planted somewhere before winter set in. There was so much information generated that it was well after 9:00 p.m. before we realized that the time had flown by so fast.

The November meeting was one of the best meetings we have ever had. The presentation of over five hundred slides of flowers, plants and especially Hosta leaves and flowers set to music was very impressive. The presenter is a retired music teacher and has a hobby of photography. By combining his interest in photography, music and the beauty of colorful flowers he presented the breathtaking slides with just the right timing to his specially selected recorded background music.

Many of the slides were presented in color families. Some of the flower closeups were so detailed and focused that one would almost have to be an insect to see what the photos depicted. A new appreciation for color, creations of nature and beauty of the plants that we grow was had by all. Many expressions of amazement came from the people who attended.

Both of these meetings were concluded with wonderful door prizes acquired by Cheryl Rausch. Several of the door prizes were valued at over \$25 each. We certainly hope you will be able to attend our next meeting on Birds In Our Backyards. The first people to arrive will receive a copy of a bird watchers magazine.

Chuck Steele



Hosta Finders will again be made available. We will be taking orders for them at the February meeting. If members want a copy and can't make it to the meeting they can order one by phoning Chuck Steele at home, at 262-377-4552 or e-mailing him at Steele4@corecomm.net. **ORDERS WILL BE ACCEPTED THROUGH February 28th.**

The cost per copy if picked up at a meeting will be \$12.00 or if we mail it to you they will cost \$14.00 (postage included).



Just a brief re-cap of SEWHS involvement at the Boerner Botanical Gardens.

Since 1996 the Southeast Wisconsin Hosta Society and The Boerner Botanical Garden staff have worked cooperatively to develop a world class hosta collection. Last June the American Hosta Society presented the Boerner Botanical gardens with a very impressive plaque to be displayed at the gardens. The plaque indicates that we are recognized by the AHS as a national hosta display garden. (One of possibly only ten throughout the United States.)

Each spring, with the exception of 2006 SEWHS has donated hostas to be planted in the trial gardens where they are evaluated before they can be planted into the permanent Boerner perennial gardens. To insure that the trial garden hostas would look their best for the Regional Hosta Convention we hosted in July of last year, hosta that were planted in 2004 and 2005 remained in the trial gardens. As a result, atleast forty of the sixty hosta currently in the trial gardens will need to be moved to the permanent gardens. (Sounds like a mega task) We are going to reduce the size of the hosta trial gardens to help expedite the removal and relocating of these forty hosta. Marcia Wensing and Pat Skiera met with the Boerner horticulturists this past week. The horticulturists are now in the process of deciding where these hosta will be permanently planted. In the mean time they will be submitting a request for about twenty new hosta for the trial gardens. (There are currently over 350 hosta in the gardens.)

We are happy to announce that the **Boerner Gift Shop** now has a starter collection of hosta books for sale. It isn't a large selection, but it is growing. The Hosta Adventures are also available.



Marcia Wensing will be conducting a Hosta Walk at the Boerner Botanical Gardens at 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 11th



On Sunday May 5th we will have a guest speaker, Mark Dwyer representing the Rotary Gardens of Janesville. His talk will begin at 1:00 p.m. and will take place in the multimedia room of the education center. There will also be an SEWHS plant sale in the education center atrium that will run from 8:00 a.m. til 3:00 p.m.

