

# Hosta HORIZONS

newsletter of the  
*Russ O'Harra Hosta Society*



April 2014

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

It's that time! Please check the number in parenthesis on the address label of your paper newsletter or after your name in the address line of your email address. If the number is (13) or (\*13\*), then it's time to renew your membership!

Membership costs are \$12 for one year or \$30 for three years - Individual or Family.

Members who do not renew after receiving the Spring newsletter or at the Spring meeting will **NOT** receive the summer newsletter.

Consider giving a membership to a gardening friend or family member. New members receive a Gift Card for \$12 which is redeemable in 2014 at any of the nine businesses owned by ROHS members who support the New Member Program.

Send all renewals and new memberships to:

**Reldon Ramsey**  
9074 Center Street  
Grinnell, IA 50112

*Thank You!*

## **President's Message**

As you all surely know by now, our president and passionate gardening friend, "Marvelous Marlys" Anderson, left this Earth on February 17 to give nurture to celestial gardens and spread the word about the Friendship Plant. Living with an illness is never fun; stress, uncertainty and fear make for unwelcome bedfellows. Though Marlys may have been uncertain of her future, she remained positive and looked forward to each day with hope. Like me, many of you were recipients of her monthly email health updates; she didn't hide the truth of her diagnosis and was honest about how she felt, good or bad. I especially appreciated her bits of humor to lighten the load of the heavy message she was sending. The structure of her life changed dramatically over the 18 months since her diagnosis and though she had many ups and downs along the way, Ron and her daughters, Robin and Annie, were her constant strength and the focus of her happiness.

Marlys was passionate about many things, gardening (hosta) above all, the Knoxville Federated Garden Club, the Bessie Spaur Butterfly Garden, and volunteering. Did you know that while battling cancer in 2013 Marlys volunteered over 75 hours to gardening-related projects? Remarkable! She was also passionate about the Building A Dream In The Country (BADITC) project. You may remember from our April 2012 meeting held in Orient, Iowa, that Marlys was instrumental in getting the project off the ground. That's all it takes for an idea to grow - a spark. Today the new home has been installed and Sue, Josh, Jackie and Jacob will soon have ample space and much better access to accommodate their needs. And as the end was near, Marlys requested memorials to be designated to BADITC.

**(Continued on page 3)**

# ROHS Officers

**Eve Vanden Broek, President**  
134 Holland Drive, Pella, IA 50219  
[mrstheo@iowatelecom.net](mailto:mrstheo@iowatelecom.net); 641-627-5316

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**Reldon Ramsey, Newsletter Editor**  
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## MISSION STATEMENT:

The Russ O’Harra Hosta Society is an educational society open to all those interested in the genus *Hosta*. Its purpose is to promote the growing and enjoyment of hostas including their use in landscape design and the cultivation and development of new cultivars. The goals of the Society shall be in keeping with those of the American Hosta Society.



2014 Hosta of the Year – ‘Abiqua Drinking Gourd’ – was the #22 favorite of Russ O’Harra Hosta Society members in the 2013 25 Favorite Hostas poll. Visit page 12 for the entire listing and the Top 10 Favorite Mini Hostas.

Photo courtesy of Dan Wols

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## Dates to Remember

**Sunday, April 13 – Noon to 4 PM**

### ROHS Spring Meeting

Neal Smith Prairie Life Center, rural Prairie City

Speaker: **Lee Coates** ~

“Japanese Maples in the Hosta Garden”

**June 11 - 14**

### AHS National Convention

Cedar Rapids, IA

**Sunday, June 13 – 8 AM to 4 PM**

### ROHS Summer Tour and Auction

Indianola area

**June 26 – 28**

### Midwest Regional Hosta Convention

Green Bay, WI

**Sunday, October 12 – Noon to 4 PM**

### ROHS Fall Meeting

TBA

Speaker: **Eve Vanden Broek** ~ “Eve’s Bees”

*“The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just on the body, but the soul.”*

**Alfred Austin**

Access the ROHS website at  
[www.rohs.org](http://www.rohs.org)

## President's Message:

(Continued from page 1)

No doubt her family and friends were generous and happy to share in her passion. A big-hearted woman to the end; we will all feel her loss.

**Many of you may be curious to know how Marlys' passing affects our club. The Constitution of the Russ O'Harra Hosta Society states:**

*The Vice-President shall assist the President in establishing the programs for the Spring and Fall meetings and shall organize plant raffles and the Summer Garden Tour and Plant Auction. The Vice-President shall, upon the event of the President not being able to fulfill the presidential duties, step up to the Presidential role until such time as the President can resume the duties. **If this would become a permanent replacement, a new Vice President would then be appointed by the serving President.***

It was never my intention to serve as president of the Russ O'Harra Hosta Society, but as we have come to learn, life does not always go according to plan. At our upcoming meeting, a new Vice President will be appointed and will be responsible for the coordination and organization of the 2014 ROHS Summer Tour. Fortunately for this person, most of the work has been done and I would provide the individual with the support and direction needed to complete the tour details. It is hoped the newly appointed Vice President would have an interest in running for the elected position in the fall.

**Speaking of elections, by our April meeting, the current officers will have put together a Nominating Committee for the October elections. Yes, it's time to think about who you feel would be a good candidate or candidates for the officer positions: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer/Membership Chair, Newsletter Chair and Historian/Librarian. Maybe you'd like to serve? We will also be looking for one or more members to serve as hospitality chair(s). All of these roles are vital to the continuation of our 20-year-old club. This is not the time to cower in the corner. We need reliable members to step up to the plate and offer their service for a two-year term. New ideas, a new vision, a new direction and a continuum of new members help keep this club thriving and surviving. Yes, there is work involved for each position; the pay is less than desirable, but the payoff is a sense of accomplishment, and the accolades you receive from your fellow club members is grand. Besides, where**

**else can you relish in the camaraderie of others who hold hosta near and dear to their hearts? Look for specific officer roles and duties in this newsletter. If you'd like to serve, please seek me out at the meeting, and I will gladly visit with you. As a reminder, officers elected at our October 12 meeting will assume their responsibilities on January 1, 2015.**

The planning and organization of the summer tour is well under way. I would be remiss if I didn't give credit where credit is due. A very BIG "Thank You" goes to Ellen Glasgow, ROHS Secretary, for her work researching and contacting most of the garden hosts on this year's tour which is set for the Indianola area. As most of you know, we do not have a designated search committee; instead we rely on our members to open their gardens or make recommendations. Thanks also goes to longtime ROHS members, Kathy and Gary Hoard, for recommending a visit to a garden where the sound of a train whistle will be as common as a bubbling water fountain. Directions, garden descriptions and details about the luncheon will be noted in the June edition of *Hosta Horizons*.

**Marlys was always very good about mentioning the accomplishments of this club in her message. You all know they are many, and we continue to look forward to those pending projects such as an all O'Harra hosta bed at the Iowa Arboretum and the Greater Des Moines Botanical Gardens. If you have a project for our group to consider, please feel free to bring it up at our upcoming meeting.**

Last year at this time (mid-March), my bees were bringing loads of pollen into their hives and the queens were laying eggs galore to elevate the hive population in time for the first honey flow in May. This year is much different. Though I planted hundreds and hundreds of small bulbs last fall, only a handful of crocus have poked out of the ground on the south side of my house. I have learned my bees are storming the birdfeeders and compost piles of my neighbors yet coming up empty. Where are the dandelions when I need them? I have resorted to feeding them pollen patties until the willows and soft maples – and dandelions - come into bloom. My fingers are crossed for a gentle ease into spring and summer with weekly 1" light rains. How about you?

"Gardening Grows the Spirit" is how "Marvelous Marlys" ended her messages and so shall I. May her spirit live on with this club and with all of you.

Eve Vanden Broek



## ROHS Spring Meeting

### Neal Smith Prairie Learning Center

<http://www.tallgrass.org/>

9981 Pacific Street  
Prairie City, IA 50228  
(515) 994-3400

### Noon – 4 PM

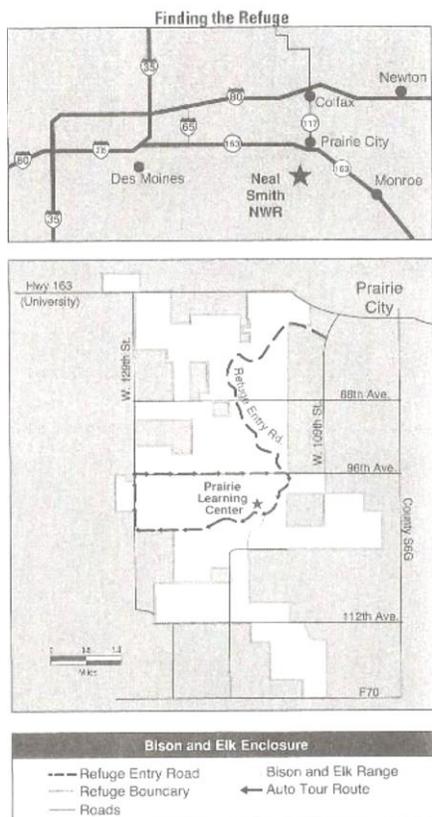
The building opens at Noon, and the potluck dinner will begin at 12:45 PM. Our speaker, Lee Coates, Peggy's Flowers, Highlandville, MO, will have Japanese maples, papercrete, and accessories for miniature and fairy gardens available before lunch and after the meeting. His talk, "Japanese Maples in the Hosta Garden", will be presented before the business meeting.

### Directions

Just 25 minutes east of Des Moines, Neal Smith NWR is 9 miles south of Interstate 80.

If traveling from downtown Des Moines, take Hwy 163 to exit 18, follow the signs along the new paved 4.5-mile entrance road.

If traveling on Interstate 80, take the Colfax/Prairie City exit. Turn south onto Hwy 117 and travel 7 miles to Prairie City. Continue through Prairie City across the Hwy 163 bridge to the refuge entry road.



## ROHS on Facebook

Facebook helps you connect and share with the people in your life.

As of March 26<sup>th</sup>, the ROHS Facebook page has 216 'Likes' from those who follow the posts on the page. Marlys Anderson kept viewers engaged in the past year with photos from her gardens and gardens she had visited over the years.

Marlys' last photo posts on Facebook came in mid-January with pictures from her garden of *Hosta* 'Rascal' and 'Abiqua Drinking Gourd'. Her final post on the 31<sup>st</sup> was shared from the BADITC Facebook page for the fundraising group's Valentine's Day promotion.

Several days before her passing, Josh Spece designed a special hosta leaf photo (below) which many of Marlys' friends on Facebook used as their main photo to show their love and their support for her struggle with cancer.

Since her death, I began posting photos taken in her garden in late May and early June of 2011. Her gardens were pristine that spring when the Harshbarger hosta club toured Pella gardens.

Four or more photos are posted in a grouping to the ROHS page and then shared with the American Hosta Society's Facebook page. The photos have been very well-received and the 'reach' has been phenomenal with the latest being seen by nearly 1100 people. AHS and ROHS members who have never been to Marlys' garden have been most appreciative of the virtual tour. Many photos were taken so there is much more for hosta lovers around the world to see of her gardens.

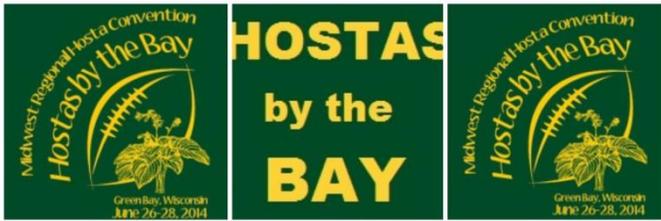


The ROHS Facebook page is accessible through the Facebook homepage or by the link on the homepage of the ROHS website.

<https://www.facebook.com/>

<http://www.rohs.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Russ-OHarra-Hosta-Society/241087079260617>



The Green and Gold Hosta Society of Northeast Wisconsin will be hosting the Midwest Regional Hosta Society Convention, "Hostas by the Bay", here in Green Bay from June 26-28, 2014.

The schedule of activities will include tours of six fabulous gardens with a 'drive yourself' format, a cut leaf show, an afternoon tour of the Green Bay Botanical Garden with a tailgate evening supper followed by the **HOSTA AUCTION** back at the hotel. Vendors are confirmed to be available for the purchase of Hosta plants, conifers and yard art, as well as our raffle table of other garden treasures.

An optional trip to Door County for a fish boil is also in the playbook.

The lineup of seminar speakers includes local and nationally known experts who will bring the latest news about Hostas and their teammate plants.

Contact the Radisson Hotel and Conference Center at (920) 494-7300. Be sure to mention the **MRHS Convention** to get the special rate of \$99.00 per night, plus tax. You will be assured a room for the festivities. A breakfast buffet each morning is included.

If you would be willing to assist in some of the following activities, we would be most appreciative.

For more information contact:

Pat Gwidt at [paten33@yahoo.com](mailto:paten33@yahoo.com)

or

Judy Sytsma at [judysgarden.43@gmail.com](mailto:judysgarden.43@gmail.com)

For further information go to the Green & Gold's website:

<http://greenandgoldhosta.org/2014-convention.html>

## Election Season Has Started!

### Officer's Duties from the ROHS By-laws

**Section A.** The officers of the Society shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer/Membership Chair, Newsletter Chair and Historian/Librarian. These officers shall make up the Executive Committee.

**Section B.** The term of office will be two (2) years. The outgoing President shall be an ex-officio member of the Executive Committee in an advisory capacity only.

**Section C.** The President shall form a Nominating Committee ninety (90) days prior to the Fall Meeting in the year new officers are to be elected. The Nominating Committee will present their slate of officers at this Fall Meeting. New officers assume duties the following January 1.

**Section D.** Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the time of the election. Should there be more than one nominee for any office the election of that office shall be by ballot.

**Section E.** President: The President shall preside at the Spring and Fall Meetings of the Society, shall call meetings of the Executive Committee and act as an ex-officio member of committees. In the event of an elected officer vacating their office, the President shall appoint a replacement officer to fill out the remaining term.

**Section F.** Vice-President: The Vice-President shall assist the President in establishing the programs for the Spring and Fall meetings and shall organize plant raffles and the Summer Garden Tour and Plant Auction. The Vice-President shall, upon the event of the President not being able to fulfill the presidential duties, step up to the Presidential role until such time as the President can resume the duties. If this would become a permanent replacement, a new Vice President would then be appointed by the serving President.

**Section G.** Secretary: The Secretary shall record minutes of both business and executive meetings and the mailing of special announcements required by such meetings. The Secretary shall also be responsible for name tags and attendance sheets at Spring and Fall Meetings and Summer Garden Tour.

**Section H.** Treasurer/Membership Chair: The Treasurer shall receive and acknowledge all dues, keep accounts and maintain a record of monies received and monies paid out. The function of the Membership Chair is to maintain a list of 1. current members, 2. complimentary names and 3. AHS National Newsletter Exchange Editors (NLE). Mailing labels for these three (3) lists shall be printed and given or mailed to the Newsletter Editor(s) for mailing purposes.

**Section I.** Newsletter Editor: The Newsletter Editor(s) shall be responsible for editing, compiling, printing and mailing the newsletter, "Hosta Horizons"; also the complimentary copies of the newsletter as designated including the AHS National Newsletter Exchange editors. The newsletter shall be published no less than three times per year and up to four times at the discretion of the editor, no less than two (2) weeks before the Spring and Fall Meetings and the Summer Garden Tour. The duties of this position maybe split between two (2) individuals. (This office is also referred to as Newsletter Chair, Article V. Section A.)

**Section J.** Hospitality Chair: The Hospitality Chair shall make arrangements for members to bring refreshments to meetings and be responsible for set-up for meetings. The duties of this position may be split between two (2) or more individuals.

**Section K.** Historian-Librarian: The Historian-Librarian shall be responsible for circulation of reference materials and preparation of a notebook recording activities of the Society.



The dream became a reality in mid-January after the \$150,000 needed to order the new home for the Spece family was met in December.

I had the privilege of seeing the Spece family's new home being placed on the foundation on that sunny, bitterly cold day. The first of four modules was hoisted into position by a crane and a surprisingly small crew for such a huge undertaking. Guide ropes and a few experienced men on the ground made short work of the first three sections to the amazement of everyone who had gathered to watch this life-changing event.

The final section didn't arrive on site until work was well underway. Prep for its installation took longer than the others. It was a thrilling sight as it was lifted over the top of the other sections and nestled into place on the east side of the home.

Marlys' dream of a new, handicap accessible home for her friends, the Spece family, began several years earlier when she was asked to write a letter nominating the Spece family to Extreme Makeover: Home Edition. Although another Iowa family was selected for that home, Building A Dream In The Country was launched by a group of friends and supporters of the family in the Independence area. Marlys quickly became one of the main champions of BADITC, and, as a result, the funds raised by the

2012 ROHS Auction (over \$3000) went toward the building fund. Marlys also encouraged hosta clubs across the U.S. to do what ROHS had done and over \$3000 was raised from those efforts, as well.

In May 2013, I hosted an online fundraising auction for BADITC. With generous donations before and after the auction, \$16,000 was raised. Last December, I hosted another online auction benefitting BADITC on behalf of the Hosta Seed Growers group and over \$4700 was raised from hosta seeds, a few select hosta plants, and many generous additional donations.

As Eve wrote in her message, "Marvelous Marlys" was the spark that the hosta world needed to come together to help make Building A Dream In The Country become a reality.

Work continues on the home and many generous in-kind donations have been received from businesses in Northeast Iowa. Work has been slowed at times since the home was placed due to the extremely cold and snowy winter and now muddy conditions around the home.

Fundraising continues. The BADITC fundraising thermometer was updated to \$183,000 on February 28<sup>th</sup>.



From the BADITC Facebook page that day:

Almost to our original goal but increased costs will more than likely have us raising the total needed. We'll know more when we have bills in for the plumbing and basement floor. We have a quote for the garage and porch and are working on the voice activated features. But isn't this an amazing amount of money to have raised in just over two years? So many generous people, so much help from so many. And one incredible family's life is about to change dramatically!!!

For more information and updates about BADITC, visit the webpage and the Facebook page.

<http://www.buildingadreaminthecountry.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/BuildingADreamintheCountry?sk=wall&filter=1>

# Čzech it Out!

## Vitáme Vás

*(We welcome you)*

The 2014 AHS Convention is just a few months away now. **Harshbarger Hosta Society** is excited to be your hosts for this convention. We have been planning and working hard to make your visit to Iowa a positive experience, and the convention a memorial one.

*The convention will feature optional bus tours on Wednesday and Thursday to showcase our local culture and cuisine*

### The Amana Colonies

The colonies are a world renowned tourist destination that offers old world German charm.

### The National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library

This Cedar Rapids Museum celebrates the culture and heritage of thousands of Czech and Slovak immigrants to Linn and Johnson counties.

**Of course, the real reason for attending the convention is for the hostas and gardens.**

The rich black soil of the heartland provides an excellent environment for beautiful gardens accented with the creative flavor of Middle America.

- We have 9 exciting gardens for you to visit on Friday and Saturday
- More optional gardens on Sunday as you return home

**Harshbarger Hosta Society** is excited and proud to be hosting the 2014 AHS convention. We will have the Collins Road Marriott Hotel to ourselves to enhance the experience.

### Come to the convention to...

- ✓ See our Hostas!
- ✓ Sample our Heritage  
(be sure to check out yours)
- ✓ Experience our Warm  
Midwestern Hospitality



The garden of Jay & Nancy McWherter in Cedar Rapids  
Photo courtesy of Jay McWherter

Come to Cedar Rapids  
June 11-14, 2014  
to Čzech it Out!



For more information about the convention, visit the Harshbarger Hosta Society website:  
<http://harshbargerhostasociety.weebly.com/index.html>

Access the Registration Form here:  
[http://harshbargerhostasociety.weebly.com/uploads/1/1/1/1/11114869/hosta\\_reg\\_form\\_color-1.pdf](http://harshbargerhostasociety.weebly.com/uploads/1/1/1/1/11114869/hosta_reg_form_color-1.pdf)



## Marlys Honored

as the

## Face of Volunteerism

for the week of September 12, 2013,

## by Volunteer Iowa!

**On Thursday, September 12, 2013, Karen Ackley sent this message to Volunteer Iowa:**

**Good afternoon, Master Gardeners and KFGC members...thought you'd want to join me in congratulating Marlys for this outstanding honor!**

This week's Face of Volunteerism is an avid gardener from Pella. Meet Marlys Anderson! She volunteers extensively with [Iowa State University Extension](#) in Marion County as a Master Gardener, as well as several other gardening related projects and organizations.

Marlys loves gardening and sharing her love of plants with others. She loves creating beautiful gardens and being outdoors. Becoming a Master Gardener was the perfect opportunity to allow her to do all of these things.

Marlys began volunteering as a Master Gardener in 2004. Her Master Gardener duties include overseeing the Lake Red Rock camp grounds' flower beds and planting and tending two perennial beds at Wallashuck Campgrounds every year. She reported 115 Master Gardener hours in 2012 — the same year she proudly received her 1,000 hour Master Gardener pin.

She is also serving her eighth year on the Bessie Spaur Butterfly Garden Committee and volunteers many hours

there planning, planting, weeding, and watering at the garden. In 2012, she spent an estimated 60 hours volunteering at the butterfly garden. The Bessie Spaur Butterfly Garden is a jewel in the Knoxville community and an asset to [Knoxville Hospital & Clinics](#). The garden serves as an area where hospital patients, families, and staff can retreat from the confines of the hospital and relax in the lovely gardens and watch for butterflies.

Marlys currently serves as the volunteer Advertising Director for the American Hosta Society and "The Hosta Journal", which keeps her busy during the winter months. She sells advertising for the journal and the Hosta Society's website, which accumulates an additional 30 volunteer hours per year. Finally, she is serving a second term as president of the Russ O'Harra Hosta Society.

*She says, "I always feel if I am to be a member of an organization I should be doing as much as possible to support and carry out its mission."*



**To learn more about Volunteer Iowa, visit the [Facebook page](#) and the [website](#).**

<https://www.facebook.com/VolunteerIowa>

<https://www.volunteeriowa.org>

Remembering "Marvelous Marlys"



*"It's my favorite."*

# Russ O'Harra

and the

## Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden Connection

By Eve Vanden Broek

Have you been to the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden since they re-opened last September? If you haven't, I've heard from Mel Visser that the entrance has been fantastically re-done and there's no comparison to what it formerly looked like.

My route to work takes me by the botanical gardens daily, and I have watched the revitalization to the outside miraculously take shape over the last year and a half. A dramatic change to say the least and it gives me a good feeling to know that the City of Des Moines, local groups and individuals have recognized the importance and great potential of this domed icon along the Des Moines River.

Phase I of the 14-acre Master Plan: plantings in the newly landscaped areas is scheduled to wrap up this spring and summer at which time Phase II is scheduled to begin. It's a metamorphosis in progress.

On the botanical garden's website there's a drawing of the Master Plan with a legend depicting an incredible 47 points of interest including a possible sculpture area.

If you have been a member of our club for more than two years, you know that long-time hostaholic, Mel Visser, is actively involved with the Greater Des Moines Botanical Gardens and is working to incorporate a hosta bed of all of Russ O'Harra's introductions.

According to Mel, the bed is set to fit into the far north side in an area to be known as the Shaded Woodland Garden, Area #33 on the Master Plan.

Given the amount of hardscaping and landscaping work yet to be done, the timeframe for a hosta bed is still two to three years down the road.

ROHS involvement is uncertain at this time, but Mel assures me he will do his best to keep the Russ O'Harra Hosta Society's name at the front of his hosta conversations with the powers that be.

Mel has all of the O'Harra introductions except five. "I dug them all from Russ' place," he said. They are in safekeeping in his garden and now a quest for the elusive five ensues.

*Hostas* 'Claire de Lune', 'Elizabeth Levy', 'Green Lantern', 'Pearl Buttons' and 'Spit Shine' are needed to complete the collection.

If you have any of these plants or know of someone who does, we would like to visit with you about acquiring an eye or two.

A complete bed of Russ' hybridizing work at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Gardens is the goal, and we need your help.

As you visit gardens this summer, especially those hosta gardens near and far, please keep your eyes open for these five.

And if your eyes are craving to see natural color or if you want to feel like you've been to the tropics, a visit to the Greater Des Moines Botanical Gardens is in order!



Iowa State University graduate, Kelly Norris, is the first Horticulture Manager at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, and the Farm Manager at Rainbow Iris Farm, rural Bedford, IA.

In 2012, he authored *A Guide to Bearded Irises: Cultivating the Rainbow for Beginners and Enthusiasts*. Kelly has received a number of awards including the

Perennial Plant Association's Young Professional Award in 2011.

Kelly is a frequent speaker around the United States and will be the keynote speaker this June at the AHS National Convention in Cedar Rapids hosted by the Harshbarger Hosta Society.

To keep up with happenings at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, visit their website and Facebook page.

<http://www.dmbotanicalgarden.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/dmbotanicalgarden>



## Summer Tour Preparations

by Eve Vanden Broek

The 2014 ROHS Summer Tour will mark my fourth year organizing the annual event, and it will also mark my last. As I look at a map of Iowa and reflect back on the last three summer tours, I see we have covered a lot of miles on Iowa's highways and byways visiting the fantastic gardens of our members and friends located in the Marshalltown area, the Ames corridor, and the region of Grinnell.

This year's summer tour will take us to some wonderful private gardens in Indianola, but you're going to have to point your compasses a bit further north as we will begin our day on the south side of Des Moines visiting the garden of a train enthusiast.

If you haven't marked your calendars yet, the Summer Tour is scheduled for Sunday, June 22, conveniently sandwiched between the AHS National Convention in Cedar Rapids and the Midwest Regional Hosta Convention in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Don't you think the month of June should be considered the month for hostas since that's when most tours seem to take place? Forget about a *Hosta Day* let's bid for an entire *Hosta Month*! Who do we talk to about this?

As has been my tradition, I have consulted *The Old Farmer's Almanac* for a prediction of the weather for our special tour day and here's what it says: June 20 – 30; several t-storms; turning cool north, hot south. The summary for the Heartland region states our summer will be hotter and rainier than normal.

Reading those words make me pause and question whether we have chosen the right date. For several years in a row the summer tour was held in July to avoid conflicts with the national and regional tours; however, because July proved to be too warm (global warming the possible culprit), a date in June was the next best option. This year, believe it or not, the almanac shows the entire month of July expecting thunderstorms so it looks like we will not be changing the date and no rain date is scheduled; therefore, should there be rain on our tour date, it's still the date.

Our tour will showcase Rob and Amy Renes gardens in Des Moines, the gardens of Donna Small, Ellen and Frank Glasgow, Jo and John Drost in Indianola, and Patty and Skip Spence's garden in Ackworth where the luncheon and auction will take place. Directions, details and garden descriptions will be featured in the June edition of *Hosta Horizons*.

## AHS President's Wall Awards

For several years, the American Hosta Society has encouraged hosta clubs to select individuals who are the backbone of their clubs and to recognize those individuals at the national level.

A "President's Wall" is on display each year at the AHS National Convention featuring the names of individuals selected for the honor along with the name of the club which nominated them. Each club may nominate two members per year.

For 2013, the Russ O'Harra Hosta Society recognized a pair of ladies who are charter members of the society. One has rarely been seen without the other at ROHS events through the years. Sue Slater and Donna Yeast were Hospitality Co-Chairs for a number of years and also were responsible for the Hospitality Room at the 2010 Midwest Regional Convention held in Des Moines.

ROHS President Marlys Anderson presented Sue and Donna with framed certificates recognizing their contributions to the Society at the 2013 Fall Meeting.



Donna Yeast, Marlys Anderson, and Sue Slater

To visit the AHS President's Wall, go to:

[http://www.americanhostasociety.org/presidents\\_wall.html](http://www.americanhostasociety.org/presidents_wall.html)

## 25 Favorite Hostas

1. *H.* 'Sagae'  
K. Watanabe (N) AHS (R) 1996
2. *H.* 'June'  
Neo Plants Ltd (R) 1991
3. *H.* 'Praying Hands'  
G. Williams (ONIR) 1996
4. *H.* 'Guardian Angel'  
C. & R. Thompson (OR) 1995
5. *H.* 'Liberty'  
J. Machen, Jr. (ONIR) 2000
6. *H.* 'Whirlwind'  
J. Kulpa (R) 1989
7. *H. montana* 'Aureomarginata'  
Japan/AHS 1987
8. *H.* 'Blue Angel'  
F. Shaw (O) P. Aden (R) 1986
9. *H.* 'Gunther's Prize'  
R. Solberg & G. Stark NR
10. *H.* 'Rainforest Sunrise'  
Winterberry Farms & J. Anderson (O) J. Anderson (NIR) 2003
11. *H.* 'Guacamole'  
R. Solberg (ONIR) 1994
12. *H.* 'Parhelion'  
Walters Gardens, Inc. (ONIR) 1997
13. *H.* 'Sum and Substance'  
F. Shaw (O) P. Aden (R) 1980
14. *H.* 'Paradigm'  
Walden West (OIR) C. Purtymun (N) 1999
15. *H.* 'Olive Bailey Langdon'  
R. O'Harra (ONI) Russ O'Harra Hosta Society (R) 1999
16. *H.* 'Striptease'  
C. & R. Thompson (R) 1991
17. *H.* 'Russell Lee'  
R. O'Harra (OI) O'Harra family (N) Russ O'Harra Hosta Society (R) 1999
18. *H.* 'Empress Wu'  
B. & V. Skaggs (OIR) B. & B. Skaggs (N) 2008
19. *H.* 'Krossa Regal'  
G. Krossa & A. Krossa (R) 1980
20. *H.* 'Paul's Glory'  
P. Ruh & P. Hofer (R) 1987
21. *H.* 'Quilting Bee'  
R. O'Harra (ONI) Russ O'Harra Hosta Society (R) 1999
22. *H.* 'Abiqua Drinking Gourd'  
Walden West (R) 1989
23. *H.* 'Tattoo'  
T. Avent (ONIR) 1998
24. *H.* 'Diva'  
R. O'Harra (OR) Russ O'Harra Hosta Society (NI) 1999
25. *H.* 'Dorothy Benedict'  
R. Benedict (R) 1983

## 10 Favorite Mini Hostas

1. *H.* 'Blue Mouse Ears'  
E. & J. Deckert (ONIR) 2000
2. *H.* 'Pandora's Box'  
H. Hansen & Shady Oaks Nursery (OR) 1996
3. *H.* 'Popo'  
R. O'Harra (O) R. Riehl (R) 1993
4. *H.* 'Tiny Tears'  
R. Savory (R) 1977
5. *H.* 'Cat's Eye'  
Japan/Dan Heims NR
6. *H.* 'Frosted Mouse Ears'  
M. Zillis & E. & J. Deckert (ON) M. Zillis (IR) 2006
7. *H.* 'Bobbin'  
R. O'Harra NR  
*H.* 'Silver Threads  
and Golden Needles'  
Winterberry Farms & J. Anderson NR
9. *H.* 'Mighty Mouse'  
Walters Gardens, Inc. (ONIR) 2006
10. *H.* 'Little Maddie'  
T. Van Wyk (ONIR) 2006

Due to a less than overwhelming number of responses to the ROHS Popularity Polls in previous years, I took advantage of a "captive audience" at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration in July and again at the ROHS Fall meeting and was much more pleased with the results.

Since most ballots were filled out at the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, it isn't surprising that many ROHS members (and the 4 O'Harra girls) selected a number of Russ O'Harra's introductions in their 10 Favorites and 5 Favorite Minis. *Hosta* 'Olive Bailey Langdon' came in highest at #15 in the Top 25 Poll followed by 'Russell Lee' at #17, 'Quilting Bee' at #21, and 'Diva' at #24. In the Mini Poll, ROHS members voted 'Popo' into the #3 spot and 'Bobbin' came in at #7.

ROHS voters preferred tried and true hostas in the Top 25 poll. Only two on that list were registered after 2000 while about half of the Top 10 Mini poll were registered or originated after the turn of the century.

Many of the Top 25 Favorites are similar to those in the yearly AHS Popularity Polls, but 'Gunther's Prize' with its Gunther Stark/ROHS connection came in at #9 while the ever finicky 'Tattoo' was a surprise at #23. *H.* 'Dorothy Benedict' had the hybridizer's votes and squeaked into the final spot.

## ROHS Fall Meeting Minutes

Iowa Arboretum October 13, 2013

### Speaker

Josh Spece of In the Country Gardens and Gifts, started our meeting off tantalizing our pocketbooks and dreams with a slide show presentation of hostas he thought would be interesting, new and exciting to watch for in the next growing season. As we watched and noted the names of some that caught our eye, only to realize ours are slowly dying off preparing for winter, and we need to wait till spring again. It was a great presentation, and I'll manage to keep my new and growing list handy.

### Business Meeting:

Marlys Anderson, President called the meeting to Order. She thanked Linda Baer for her hospitality and Marilyn and Deke Gliem for our lovely table decorations, and the Iowa Arboretum for our meeting venue.

### New Members, Guests and Visitors

Rod Kuenster from the Iowa City area joined our Society today while attending the meeting with long time hosta friends the Van Wyks, Whites and R. Ramsey. He loves to hybridize Hostas and has several registered in the Hosta Library.

Don and Dee Draper have been members for a year now and introduced themselves. They have over 1000 different Hostas.

### Officers Reports

**Secretary Minutes** of the Spring Meeting were published in the newsletter and on the website. Motion to approve minutes as published was made by Marilyn Gliem, Second given by Kathy Witkowski, All Ayes.

### Correspondence Report

Sue Spece told us about how Building A Dream In the Country's fundraising efforts were coming along. They need \$142,500 raised so they can have the house ordered and have in by Christmas. Many organizations and people have been helping raise funds, providing labor and/or supplies. The Spece family is very grateful for the donations received by ROHS and its members.

**Treasurer's Report** was given by David Dettmann. Expenses incurred since our spring meeting: the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration; the Summer Tour; Spring Meeting Expenses. David summarized the auction stating we had 22 donors with 108 items with 36 buyers. We made \$3,309 that day, with Julie Johnston being the highest overall bidder. Jeff & Marie White were second highest. Items donated by Marlys Anderson brought in \$695, and Jeff & Marie White's donations raised \$460. David gave the beginning balance after the spring meeting and our ending

balance after the noted and other miscellaneous expenses. Motion to approve the treasurer's report was made by Herman Kopitzke and Don Draper provided the second. All Ayes

**Newsletter Editor** Reldon Ramsey noted that the online auction for BADITC raised \$16,000. Don Dean, our new AHS President, has passed the torch to Reldon for the *Online Journal* Editor. With that comes more meetings and other added responsibilities for the AHS that Reldon will be a part of, meaning he will be busy. He will be working on the Hosta Seed Growers Online Auction which will be the last week of November.

**Vice President's** report was given by Ellen Glasgow in Eve Vanden Broek's absence. Ellen reported that they are working on the ROHS 2014 Summer Tour in the Indianola, Norwalk, Carlisle, Des Moines, and Milo areas. Anyone that knows of someone in those areas with lots of Hostas should contact Eve or Ellen.

The spring meeting date is set for April 13, 2014, with Marlys Anderson as our speaker and her topic will be "Green Is A Color". Eve Vanden Broek will be our speaker at the fall meeting set for October 12, 2014, and her topic is "Eve's Bees". We are still looking for hosts and hostess and meeting places. Please contact Marlys if you wish to help out.

### 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee Report

A big thank you goes out to the committee members Reldon Ramsey, Bruce & Trudy Van Wyk, Frank & Ellen Glasgow, and Carl & Robin Vos for their hard work. The "Memories by Russ" booklet was marvelous and well put together. Everyone enjoyed taking away a commemorative pot with *Hosta* 'Unbridled Passion' by Greg Johnson. And we can't forget the delicious food and entertainment that everyone enjoyed. Again, we thank everyone that attended and the committee members for all their time and efforts.

**2014 AHS Convention Update** by Judi Pohorski, President of the Harshbarger Hosta Society. There are currently 241 days till the convention is here. They will be meeting again in April and will have a whole list of items our members will have the opportunity to volunteer. Reldon has been attending the planning meetings and will keep us informed via our newsletters.

### Unfinished Business

**Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden** David Dettmann will act as our liaison keeping in contact with Mel Visser since the project may extend another couple of years. Mel has noted he has all the Hostas for the new O'Harra Hosta bed.

(Continued on page 14)

**Iowa Arboretum O’Harra Hosta Bed** Joe McNally, project coordinator, received feedback today from the group regarding the O’Harra bed. We discussed expanding it and possibly adding companion plants or keeping it just full of Hostas. He also discussed having an All Iowa Hybridizers collection. Don Lewis and Herman Kopitzke will keep in contact with Joe. There may be a spring work date in 2014.

### New Business

Marlys presented plaques to Sue Slater and Donna Yeast for the AHS President’s Wall Award. She thanked them for all their hard work and efforts as Hospitality leaders over the years.

Nominating Committee will need to be formed for Election of Officers for 2015 – 2016.

### Reminders

Executive committee members contact information is posted on the ROHS website and in every paper newsletter. Please call with questions, concerns, comments or just to visit.

The ROHS Constitution is also on the website, if you do not have access to a computer, contact an executive member and we can provide a paper copy to you.

The Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 and clean-up was done by many.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ellen Glasgow, Secretary

*Do you receive the emails I send? I suspect that some of you do not. All group emails from me are sent from [rohseeditor@gmail.com](mailto:rohseeditor@gmail.com). The most recent with the subject line of “2014 Hosta Finder” was sent 3/29/2014. If you did not receive this email, please add the email address to your contacts and send me an email so that I may get your correct email address into my databases.*

*Thanks! Reldon*



*H. ‘Sagae’ was at the top of the ROHS 25 Favorites for 2013. It was also Russ O’Harra’s favorite. When he received the Alex J. Summers Distinguished Merit Award from the AHS in 1995, he named H. fluctuans ‘Variegated’ (as ‘Sagae’ was known at the time) as his Distinguished Merit Hosta.*

*H. fluctuans ‘Variegated’ in the O’Harra garden*

*Photo of courtesy of Bob Olson*



**ROHS President Marlys Anderson announces that Donna Yeast and Sue Slater are the ROHS recipients of the 2013 AHS “President’s Wall” award - to the surprise of Donna and Sue.**



*Sue Spece and Josh Spece at the ROHS Fall meeting. Josh is preparing to give his talk about exciting new hostas releases just on the market or soon to become available.*