



# Hosta HORIZONS

newsletter of the  
*Russ O'Harra Hosta Society*  
est. 1993 [www.rohs.org](http://www.rohs.org)

December 2011

## Stocking Stuffer!



Give your hosta friends who aren't members of ROHS a membership for either one year (\$12) or three years (\$30). They will receive a Gift Card (a \$12 value) to be used toward the purchase of a new hosta for their collection.

To learn more about the New Member Program, click on the link below or go to [www.rohs.org](http://www.rohs.org). Vendors that are supporting the program in 2012 are Bedwell Gardens, Granny T's Garden, Kat's Garden, Lincoln View Farms, Skycrest Gardens, and Piney Ridge Greenhouses.



## President's Message:

*"Gardening Grows the Spirit"*

It's Christmastime



Thanksgiving weekend has vanished leaving me to ponder how things change so greatly over time. Traditions change as life evolves - chapter after chapter after chapter. I so clearly remember Audra Wilson, then ROHS president, saying nearly a decade ago now how she and Fred were entering the winter of their lives. Now I stand at that threshold wondering what the future holds. I wonder too what the future will bring for ROHS. The 20 year anniversary of our society will be commemorated in 2013. Planning is already underway to celebrate this gala event.

When this newsletter hits your mailboxes, it will be Christmas - *"the most wonderful time of the year"*. As I hung decorations on our tree today, I missed my daughters and my grandkids being here with me. Yet I have wonderful memories of Christmases past that bring me great joy. Now my girls have their own trees to decorate with their own families. So things change and life goes on. Our gardens methodically change over time too. I am already looking forward to spring and seeing life in the garden again. Ah, green - what a wonderful color! But for now we will just enjoy our green Christmas trees. That is unless you have *Hosta* seedlings growing under lights someplace warm.

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# Hosta Horizons

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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.

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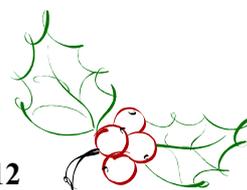
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### *Thoughts and Prayers*

Donald W. Craft, the father of longtime ROHS member Randy Craft, died December 1, 2011. Randy writes, "It is only by the grace of God and support of family and friends and prayer that gets me through this rough time. When I hear of other folks problems it makes me realize quickly just how blessed I am. As a new year approaches we can only pray for better."

Please keep Randy and his family in your thoughts and prayers during this Holiday Season.

## President's Message: **It's Christmastime**

(continued from page 1)



Teresa Innis has resigned as ROHS secretary. Teresa and Ricky have decided to make some changes in their lives which include moving back to eastern Iowa. They will remain ROHS members so they can get our newsletter and keep in touch with what's going on. Thank you to both for all they have contributed to the ROHS! You two will be missed.

Ellen Glasgow has stepped up to fill the role of secretary. Thank you, Ellen! Robin and Carl Vos have volunteered to replace Ricky and help Linda Baer with hospitality chores. Thank you, Robin and Carl!

The letter rescinding our donation to the Iowa Arboretum was sent. The new director, Mark Schneider, called me upon receiving the letter to discuss an ongoing relationship with the ROHS. I assured him the ROHS has been and will continue to be a supporter of the arboretum. Mark asked to meet with our group. Since we do not meet at the arboretum until our 2012 Fall meeting, we will try to include Mark in one of our ROHS executive board meetings before that time.

The ROHS executive board met November 13<sup>th</sup> to review our Fall meeting and to make sure we were all aware of action steps that need to happen.

The ROHS 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration was discussed with "beginning" suggestions for the committee. Those serving on that committee are Frank and Ellen Glasgow, Reldon Ramsey, Bruce and Trudy Van Wyk, and Robin and Carl Vos. Eve Vanden Broek has suggested a ROHS cookbook and will follow through with that part of the project.

Reldon has been in contact with Randy Vos, head of DMACC's horticulture program, concerning the Ted Davidson Memorial Scholarship. He is checking to see what steps need to be taken to set up the scholarship.

Reldon is also working to update our membership list and will distribute it when it's completed.

David Dettmann has distributed historical copies of the ROHS constitution to board members. While the documents are not totally complete, they do give an interesting insight to the beginning and the path of our society. I bet Audra has a more complete record of the ROHS as she told me she has every newsletter ever published and an original constitution.

So we continue to delve into "where did we come from" so we can move on to "where we are going". It is my wish that the ROHS lives on as a vital organization fulfilling our mission statement and purpose as described in our ROHS constitution:

**"We shall be a not-for-profit educational society open to all those interested in the *genus Hosta*. We shall promote the growing and enjoyment of hostas including their usefulness in landscape design and the cultivation and development of new varieties. The goals of the Society shall be in keeping with those of the American Hosta Society."**

I encourage all ROHS members to join the American Hosta Society. The AHS is the "mother ship" of the Hosta World. Where she leads, we will follow. There is a new member voucher program available when joining the AHS. All details are on the AHS website. [www.americanhostasociety.org](http://www.americanhostasociety.org)

If you are a current member of the AHS, you probably know all about the latest edition of the *Online Journal*. It went live on Thanksgiving Day. Paper editions of *The Hosta Journal* are published twice a year, also. The only way to have access to these fine publications is to be an AHS member. Give yourself a great Christmas gift and join the AHS!

Now remember, you-know-who is watching us. **"He's making a list and checking it twice. He's gonna find out who's naughty and nice. So be good for goodness sake!" "And Have Yourself a Very Merry Little Christmas Now." "And May All Your Christmases Be White."** No, wait - I think that is **"And May All Your Hostas Seedlings Be Streaked"**.



Reldon Ramsey's *H 'Adrenaline Rush'*  
**"Hosta is the Friendship Plant"**



MM  
Marvelous Marlyns



# 2012 Midwest Convention



## "Operation Hosta"

July 12 – 14, 2012

**Video:** See the 2012 Midwest Convention [Promotional Video](#)

**Location:** [Ramada Hotel and Conference Center, Rochester MN](#)

**Convention Plant:** *H 'Candy Kisses'*

[Click here to see H. 'Candy Kisses' cultivar](#)

[Click here to see H. 'Candy Kisses' in tissue culture 3/3/2010](#)

**Schedule:** [Click here to see the tentative 2012 Midwest Convention Schedule](#)

- ❖ Hosta Garden Picnic at Camp Creek Farm
- ❖ Educational Seminars
- ❖ Auction, Silent Auction, and Raffle

**Gardens on Tour:**

[Mona and Rick Keehn garden](#)

[Jeanne and Horst Truestedt garden](#)

[Mary and Vince Herring garden](#)

[Tim Farnham and Kurt Johnson garden](#)

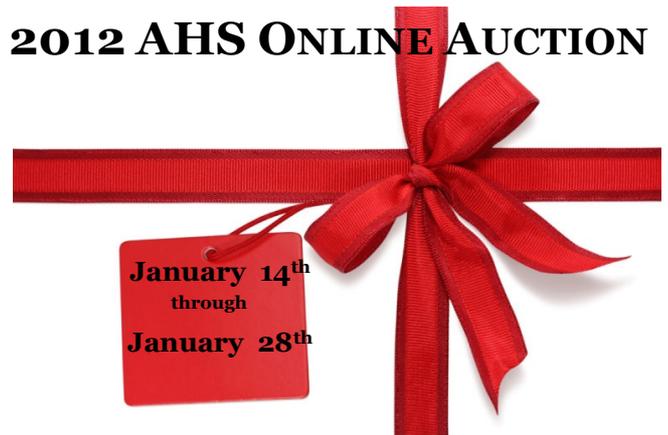
[Joyce and Tom Williams garden](#)

**Convention Committees:** [Committee Chairs](#)

**Hosted by:** [Shades of Green Hosta Society](#)  
of Southeastern Minnesota

*Click on the links to access convention information and see garden pictures.*

## 2012 AHS ONLINE AUCTION



The 10th American Hosta Society On-Line Auction is tentatively scheduled for January 14th - 28th, 2012. Old pros and newcomers alike are invited to join us once again for this much anticipated event that occurs after the soreness of fall garden clean-up has worn off, plant catalogs are being poured through, and dreams of the best gardening season ever are dancing in our heads. Even better, it happens in the dead of winter when we all love to look at plant pictures! If you answered "yes" to any portion of my lead-in question, you are in luck. The auction offers all of the above. Directions at the site are simple and require only a few steps to get you into the auction action.

All communication, news, tips, and more are conducted electronically. The first e-mail notice has gone out to past participants. It regarded taking inventory NOW, before the snow flies, for possible donations. In the event that you did not receive the e-mail in October, be sure to contact Don Dean at [dedean@q.com](mailto:dedean@q.com). Simply request that you be added to the auction e-mail group, and you will begin to receive news as it occurs regarding this auction. Each year, old addresses become obsolete due to a change of service providers, software, etc. Missed the news? You are either new or your address bounced back as undeliverable. You will need to contact Don to be included again. Be sure to add Don's e-mail address to your address book to avoid messages being blocked by your spam filter.

Be sure to check out the article in the 2011 Online Journal for more details and a sneak peek at what is in store for us this year.

**Don Dean**

# Giving Thanks

By Reldon Ramsey

I have struggled with how, and if, I want to share this with everyone in the hosta world. Part of me has wanted to shout it out, but in spite of my public hosta persona, I'm essentially a very private person. I've been dreading it - avoiding it, but I've known for a while now that I have to tell my story to be able to fully put this behind me and move on.

As many in the Midwest know, I moved my entire hosta collection to the yard of a good friend in Ankeny in the fall of 2009 so it could be one of the MRHS Convention tour gardens in July 2010. I had spent most of my weekends in Ankeny that spring and summer getting the yard ready to become a garden. My hostas were dormant and in pots of all sizes - from quarts to halved 30-gallon garbage cans - when they finally began their trek from my garden 102 miles away in southwest Iowa. My worn (and often broken down) old van still had enough life to make the dozen plus trips needed. Barely.

Plant placement had to be 'envisioned' in my mind's eye since only a few hosta leaves remained by planting time. The largest of the four Ankeny gardens consumed three of the overflowing beds from my Corning garden... and many, many more hostas and perennials. I kept the plant relationships in it as close as possible to how they had been. The other three gardens were a blank canvas, and I had a great time designing them. Thanks to a borrowed gas-powered posthole digger and cooperative weather, the pots were all in the ground the week before my mom died on Thanksgiving Day.

I moved to the Ankeny house in early January 2010 to housesit while my friend was travelling. I searched out ceramic pots, garden furniture, and garden art as I settled in and waited for spring. When it finally arrived, so did the heavy rains. I worked in the gardens when I could - which wasn't often. Hundreds more perennials, hostas, and annuals in pots were added. I was forced to replace more than 50 hostas that had unfurled a fraction of their previous sizes. Over 700 hostas - more than 600 cultivars - were in the completed gardens.

Or as complete as they could be at convention time in early July - which came a week too soon for me.

With the exception of my daughter's help for a few days the weekend before the convention, I'd done everything by myself. I greeted the buses saying, "The gardens are a work in progress which is code for they're not finished yet".

After all of the work and the worry and the stress, the tour day was beautiful and sunny, and my efforts were well-received. I have many happy memories of that day, and I wouldn't trade the experience for anything. No one would have ever seen my garden in my small hometown in southwest Iowa where it had been the previous eight years.

After the convention, it was time to relax and de-stress for a few days. Then I hosted the 8<sup>th</sup> Iowa/Illinois get-together of online hosta forum friends on my birthday in late July. It was a fun-filled day and one of the best birthdays I've ever had!

The next week I started doing some travelling of my own. (Have Prius, Will Travel.) Linda Port and I ventured to southeast Michigan for the 10<sup>th</sup> Hallson Forum Friends get-together - our first time there. In mid-August, I made a trip to Ohio at the invitation of Joan and Herbie Altman for the Midlands Hosta Club auction at Van Wade's. About a month later, I surprised the Altmans by showing up at the Fall Forum in northwest Pennsylvania.

There on a couple of vendor's tables, two new hosta releases with emerging scapes firmly pushed me in the direction I'd been heading. The next day I added two more already in bloom from Ran Liddell, and a few days later at the Flower Factory in southern Wisconsin, I discovered more late-bloomers and several blooming out of season. Hosta sex was happening in the backseat and continued in the atrium of the Ankeny house. I was having a blast as I finally had a chance to do some hybridizing!

For my friend's 65<sup>th</sup> birthday on November 6<sup>th</sup>, his son visited to celebrate and to help him deal with some financial things. After being given power of attorney, he put the house on the market and informed his dad that he had to move back to Ohio before Christmas. And of course I had to move too.

We were both shocked. My friend had planned to put the house up for sale the next spring or early summer allowing me time to move my hosta collection back to Corning. That's why all of my hostas were in pots sunk in the ground.

(continued on the next page)

I rented a small house near Pella from Marlys Anderson and began moving my potted hostas and other possessions at the end of November. When I picked up the next to last load a week before Christmas, I learned for the first time that my friend's son intended to keep me from retrieving my hosta collection. I was stunned. It felt like I'd been punched in the gut. I was physically sick that night.

By email, the son told me that I would be allowed to select 10 - 15 hostas. I responded angrily and demanded compensation for the remainder. The next email was from the son's attorney who informed me that since nothing had been in writing between my friend and me (it had never needed to be) then I had no rights at all. But I would be allowed 25 of my hostas. Of 700. I was furious, distraught, depressed. Without my seedlings, the early months of 2011 would have been unbearable.

I wrote a long letter explaining my passion for hostas. My wife died of cancer November 6, 2001, and I closed our floral and gift shop that December. The next spring I discovered the diversity of hostas as I selected perennials for her memorial butterfly garden. By mid-summer, I had found the Hallson Hosta Forum, and the people there were very friendly, very knowledgeable, and very willing to share what they knew. That fall I began to meet a few of those people from Iowa, Illinois, and Nebraska. I had been reeling in grief, but hostas and the friends I made because of them saved me.

I wrote all of that down. But I never sent it because I knew it wouldn't do any good. The people I was dealing with had no concern for me and my feelings.

After much agonizing, I decided that when spring came, I would simply retrieve the hostas I wanted most – a few longtime favorites, those I intended to use for hybridizing, and most importantly – the ones friends had shared with me over the years.

I did that one afternoon a few days before the ROHS meeting in mid-April. After being seen digging by a neighbor, I was arrested - at the request of my friend's son and the realtor. I spent the night in jail. I was released the next day after my bail was posted by an advocacy group. Eventually, after over a month of uncertainty, the DA determined that the hostas did indeed belong to me and all charges were dropped. However, he was adamant that I couldn't retrieve any of them without making arrangements with the son and the realtor. When I attempted

that, the son was less than cooperative. I contacted an attorney, but the cost was too prohibitive for me to proceed further. So I have no more of my original hosta collection than the survivors of those I moved late last year. Ironically, I doubt that I would have been seen at all if I hadn't dug *H 'One Man's Treasure'* on the berm near the house.

I have told a few hosta friends what happened, but mostly I've kept it to myself as I tend to do, and I realize that isn't a good thing. The more I tell the story, the easier it becomes to tell. Good friends, and now neighbors, Marlys Anderson and Bruce and Trudy Van Wyk, have helped me get through this past year. I can never thank them enough.

With the exception of my wife's death, this has been the most traumatic episode in my life. Last month on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that day, I reflected as I have many times on the fact that hostas and her passing are forever entwined. Life is bittersweet. I would never have found hostas or the friends I have because of them if she were living.

I have put off attempting to write this for months, but as I returned back to my new home after spending Thanksgiving with my daughter in southwest Iowa, I passed a church sign: "*Within a thankful heart there is no room for bitterness*".

I have this newsletter that I love to edit. It allows me to write and be creative, and I have a wonderful time going a bit overboard on it! It's been an excellent distraction for me this past year.

I have a newfound passion in hosta hybridizing: selecting parents, dabbing pollen, harvesting pods, cleaning seeds, planting, seeing tiny leaves emerge to reveal each seedling's unique characteristics, upcupping, recording the data. I love it all!

I have a nice home that suits me well in a beautiful location and wonderful friends 'across the road', in Iowa, the Midwest, across the country, and around the world. All because of *the friendship plant* – hostas. I truly can't imagine my life without either!

And I have my daughter, Sara (soon to be 21), who now attends the University of Northern Colorado. She loves learning and is excelling at her studies. She enjoys her new life there and all that campus life has to offer. She is happy and thriving!

It's time to let go of the past and all of the bitterness I have felt so that I can fully embrace whatever lies ahead for me. I have much to be thankful for!

## 2012 First Look Auction



### February 11<sup>th</sup> – February 25<sup>th</sup>

*It's looking like the two weeks of Saturday, February 11 - Saturday, February 25, 2012 for the 2012 First Look Online Auction. We begin with announcements the first Saturday with first plant donations posting on Sunday, February 12. We will have our usual Valentine's Day special on Tuesday, February 14, and the following week will bring Blue Monday specials, Green Tuesday specials, TGIF may have a new twist if donors have hostas that feature TGI Flowers. The gay, mad whirl will conclude with the mad flurry at the end when all plants close at the same time, unlike any other hosta auction online.*

*We hope everyone joins in the fun!*

*Check in at: <http://www.hostalibrary.org/firstlook/> during the season... Our holiday card is up. Christmas Eve will bring the First Look slide show - 25 of the most beautiful hosta photos that we can gather. New Year's Eve at the stroke of midnight we will post all of the photos from First Look 11 where the competition took place at the 2011 convention. Tune in to see it all!*

*First Look 12 will be held at the Concordville Inn in Glens Mill, PA. Setup and check in will be Friday, June 1, and the competition will be Saturday, June 2, and garden tours will be on your own on Sunday, June 3. Many of the gardens from the 2006 Philly convention will be open to revisit.*

*Carol Brashear*

## I RESOLVE TO...

The final newsletter of the year wouldn't be complete without a list of suggested New Year's gardening resolutions. As you roll your eyes and scowl ("I never make resolutions"), take a moment to read through the list and think about what you would add, replace, or remove because it's something you already do. In no particular order, here are:

### 10 Garden Resolutions for 2012

- ✿ Photograph my Russ O'Harra hostas for the ROHS 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2013
- ✿ Update my "Hosta Wish List"
- ✿ Participate in an AHS auction
- ✿ Volunteer for/get involved with an ROHS event/write an article for Hosta Horizons
- ✿ Mulch, mulch, mulch
- ✿ Start composting
- ✿ Take more time to enjoy my garden
- ✿ Add colorful garden art
- ✿ Take better care of my garden tools
- ✿ Accept that a few weeds in my garden are simply plants in the wrong place

Yes, all of the above are manageable in one season, but because such a list could easily be forgotten by February, I recommend you write down your resolution(s) and secure the list to your refrigerator. Just think, by spring you'll have the entire list memorized and know exactly what you want to accomplish for the new gardening season. Throw pessimism to the wind and vow to take part in this New Year tradition. So what are you waiting for? Grab a pen and paper and start your list. Keep in mind that the success of your resolution(s) depends on your efforts and determination. Perhaps #11 should be:

### ✿ Don't Give Up!

Care to share your gardening resolution(s)? We'd love to include them in the spring edition of Hosta Horizons. Please send your resolution(s) to one of the executive committee members listed on page 2. Snail mail and e-mail accepted.

**By Eve Vanden Broek**

# The Twelve Days of Christmas

## For Hostaholics



On the **first** day of Christmas my true love gave to me a 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake'.

On the **second** day of Christmas my true love gave to me two 'Mourning Dove's, and a 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake'.

On the **third** day of Christmas my true love gave to me three 'Frances Williams', two 'Mourning Dove's, and a 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake'.

On the **fourth** day of Christmas my true love gave to me four 'Candy Hearts', three 'Frances Williams', two 'Mourning Dove's, and a 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake'.



On the **fifth** day of Christmas my true love gave to me five gold 'Ringtail's, four 'Candy Hearts', three 'Frances Williams', two 'Mourning Dove's, and a 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake'.

On the **sixth** day of Christmas my true love gave to me six 'Gentle Giant's, five gold 'Ringtail's, four 'Candy Hearts', three 'Frances Williams', two 'Mourning Dove's, and a 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake'.

On the **seventh** day of Christmas my true love gave to me seven 'Sherborne Swan's, six 'Gentle Giant's, five gold 'Ringtail's, four 'Candy Hearts', three 'Frances Williams', two 'Mourning Dove's, and a 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake'.

On the **eighth** day of Christmas my true love gave to me eight 'Maruba Iwa's, seven 'Sherborne Swan's, six 'Gentle Giant's, five gold 'Ringtail's, four 'Candy Hearts', three 'Frances Williams', two 'Mourning Dove's, and a 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake'.

On the **ninth** day of Christmas my true love gave to me nine 'Leading Lady's, eight 'Maruba Iwa's, seven 'Sherborne Swan's, six 'Gentle Giant's, five gold 'Ringtail's, four 'Candy Hearts', three 'Frances Williams', two 'Mourning Dove's, and a 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake'.



On the **tenth** day of Christmas my true love gave to me ten 'Leaping Lippizan's, nine 'Leading Lady's, eight 'Maruba Iwa's, seven 'Sherborne Swan's, six 'Gentle Giant's, five gold 'Ringtail's, four 'Candy Hearts', three 'Frances Williams', two 'Mourning Dove's, and a 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake'.

On the **eleventh** day of Christmas my true love gave to me eleven 'Pin Stripe Sister's, ten 'Leaping Lippizan's, nine 'Leading Lady's, eight 'Maruba Iwa's, seven 'Sherborne Swan's, six 'Gentle Giant's, five gold 'Ringtail's, four 'Candy Hearts', three 'Frances Williams', two 'Mourning Dove's, and a 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake'.

On the **twelfth** day of Christmas my true love gave to me twelve 'Komodo Dragon's, eleven 'Pin Stripe Sister's, ten 'Leaping Lippizan's, nine 'Leading Lady's, eight 'Maruba Iwa's, seven 'Sherborne Swan's, six 'Gentle Giant's, five gold 'Ringtail's, four 'Candy Hearts', three 'Frances Williams', two 'Mourning Dove's, and a 'Pineapple Upsidedown Cake'.



That's WAAAY too many hostas!!  
*It's time to downsize.*

## Hosta Travels With Renaldo: 2011 AHS National Convention, Part One

“Livin’ the Hosta Life” with Reldon Ramsey

On Monday, June 20<sup>th</sup>, I headed east with Lee Coates to attend the 2011 AHS National Convention – ‘Hostas and Heritage’. Hosted by the New England Hosta Society in Marlborough, Massachusetts, this year’s convention could have been subtitled *Planes, Trains, and Automobiles* – all modes of transport were utilized by friends to reach their destination.

Since it was my first visit to New England, I wanted to see as much of it as I possibly could. I registered for both of the optional tour days: south to Connecticut on Wednesday and east to the Plymouth area of MA on Sunday. Friday’s gardens were in MA and Rhode Island, and on Saturday, the buses rolled north to New Hampshire. Marlborough is located about 50 miles west of Boston - a central point between the areas on the tour.

This was also my first opportunity to experience First Look since Region One’s 11<sup>th</sup> Seedling and Sport competition was part of the convention. (AHS members can read my First Look experience in my article “My ‘First Look’ at First Look” in the new edition of the *Online Journal*.)



One of Carol Brashear and Bill Meyer’s sport introductions, *H ‘Luna Moth’*, in their garden.

Rick Goodenough had invited friends from the Hosta Seed Growers Forum to his home for a Tuesday pre-convention get-together. Lee and I were anticipating a relaxing evening in Rick’s gardens. And we were right on time. Until we hit central Connecticut and a traffic stoppage. We

crept along for miles. Minutes were longer than minutes, hours longer than hours. Finally we were through it, but it was too late to reach Rick’s home near the coast. It made for a frustrating start to our New England adventure.



I didn’t think there would be so many trees. Connecticut and western Massachusetts are hidden from view. I know New England is noted for its fall foliage, but I honestly didn’t expect to see trees *everywhere*. I thought the Pilgrims cut them down to build ships and houses centuries ago.

Above, a view in the Brashear and Meyers back garden.

Streaked seedlings in Bill’s seedling ‘laboratory’.



Wednesday began with light drizzle and the second pair of buses arriving over 30 minutes after the first two departed. Drizzle turned to rain soon after my bus finally hit the road. The centrally located hotel wasn’t actually close to any of the gardens. The first Connecticut garden was 2 hours away leaving plenty of time to catch up with friends.

The rain abated slightly for our arrival at the gardens shared by Carol Brashear and Bill Meyer in Woodbury. Bill’s seedling beds are on the left of the drive and the fantastic collection Carol has amassed fills the yard on the right. Many are one-of-a-kind specimens along with Bill and Carol’s sport discoveries that include *H ‘Luna Moth’* and *H ‘Whee!’*. Near the end of our visit a nearby lightning strike and thunderclap triggered a downpour and everyone rushed for the buses.

(continued on next page)

Our next stop was at Kathie Sisson's lovely Avon garden, and unfortunately, the rain never stopped while we were there.



Kathie Sisson greeting visitors to her lovely, waterlogged garden.  
Below, A leaf of Kathie's young *H* 'Empress Wu'. I questioned its placement since the nearby AC unit will be easier to move in a few years.

I know Kathie felt badly about the rain, but as I told her later - no one left her wonderful garden. There was just too much to see!



Her own newly released hybrids fit seamlessly amongst her expansive plantings that were integrated with her children's play area. For the first time, an *H*. 'Empress Wu' wowed me. And it was Kathie's young one with only six divisions.



One of many beautiful views in Kathie's garden.



The restful pond at O'Brien Nurserymen.

The rain had mostly ended when we reached John O'Brien's O'Brien Nurserymen in Granby. Beautiful display gardens with enormous specimens bordered a serene 'green' pond combined with row after row of hostas for sale. Very few left empty-handed. I didn't.



I'm still mesmerized when I recall the impressive *H* 'Lemon Meringue' and traversing narrow paths amidst hosta giants in the diffused light, above.



(Continued on page 14)



The Midwest Regional Hosta Society is once again sponsoring the Winter Scientific Meeting. This popular winter event will be held Saturday, January 21, 2012 at the Wyndham Hotel, 3000 Warrenville Road, Lisle, IL. The hotel has given us a \$79.00 room rate. Please make your own reservations by calling 877-999-3223, and mention the "Midwest Regional Hosta Society Winter Scientific Meeting" to guarantee the rate. You can also make your hotel reservation online or by clicking on the link below:



We have an outstanding program of speakers with interesting and timely topics:

**Roy Klehm ... My Favorite Garden Plants**

**Bob Solberg ... Bringing a New Hosta to Market.**

**Hybridization, Selection, Production & Marketing**

**Mark Zilis ... Tissue Culture - Past, Present, Future**

**C. H. Falstad ... What you always wanted to know about hostas that no one else knew either**

Again this year, the program will include a series of three concurrent breakout sessions. The topics covered in these sessions will be:

**Session A. So You Want to Create a Water Feature  
(by Rafal Feducik)**

**Session B. Trees for the Hosta Garden  
(by Glenn Herold)**

**Session C. Hybridizer's Perspective  
(by Jeff Miller of Land of the Giants Hostas)**

These breakout sessions will be presented twice, so attendees will be able to attend two out of the three sessions.

Again this year, there will be a hosta seed silent auction, proceeds of which will be used to underwrite a portion of the cost of the meeting.

The cost of this winter extravaganza is only \$55 per person for MRHS members and \$65 for non-members, and includes a continental breakfast and a deli buffet lunch. At their option, non-members can apply the \$10 difference in the registration fee to a one-year membership in the MRHS. Please make checks payable to MRHS, and mail before January 9, 2012, with the [registration form](#) to:

**Kristine James  
523 E. Calhoun Street  
Woodstock Ill. 60098**

**Registrations postmarked after January 9 require a \$10 late registration fee per person**

Registration at the hotel will begin on Friday, January 20, from 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm, and Saturday, January 21 from 7:00 am - 8:00 am. The program will run from 8:00 am - 5:00 pm on Saturday. Dinner Friday and Saturday nights will be on your own at one of the many fine area restaurants. The Hospitality Suite will be open from 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm, both Friday and Saturday nights, for all that good hosta fellowship.

Questions? Contact Lou Horton (630-293-7735) or email: [lehorton85@ameritech.net](mailto:lehorton85@ameritech.net)

A graphic for AHS Online Journal News. It features a green background with a pattern of white and light green dots. The text "AHS Online Journal News" is written in a large, serif font. Below the title, there is a horizontal line. The text below the line describes the 2011 Online Journal and the 2010 Online Journal.

**AHS Online Journal News**

The 2011 Online Journal was posted on the AHS website ([www.ahs.org](http://www.ahs.org)) on Thanksgiving Day. Featured in it are articles and photos from the 2011 AHS Convention in New England, 'Hostas and Heritage', and much, much more. AHS members can access the new Online Journal with the password which is at the bottom of page 5 of the last THJ. Check it out and ENJOY!

The 2010 Online Journal is now viewable by all in the public section of the AHS website.



Membership dues are for a calendar year and are payable January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year.

Dues received after October 1<sup>st</sup> will be applied to the next calendar year.

|                          |         |                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|--------------------------|---------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | New     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Renewal |
| 1 year                   | \$12.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |
| 3 years                  | \$30.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> |         |

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City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Cell (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to receive the ROHS newsletter by

Mail  Email

Make checks payable to:  
**“Russ O’Harra Hosta Society”**  
 Send application and remittance to:  
**Russ O’Harra Hosta Society**  
 c/o David Dettmann  
 122 Bluegill Ct.  
 Pella, IA 50219

## 2012 Dates to Remember

January 14 – 28

**AHS Online Auction**

Saturday, January 21

**Winter Scientific Meeting**

Lisle, IL

<http://www.midwesthostasociety.org/meeting.html>

February 11 – 25

**First Look Online Auction**

March 16 & 17

**Hosta College**

Piqua, OH

<http://www.ihostohio.org/portal/glhc/college.asp>

Sunday, April 15 - Noon to 5 PM

**ROHS Spring Meeting**

Henry A. Wallace Country Life Center,  
 Rural Orient, IA

[The Wallace Centers of Iowa](#)

Speaker: **Lee Coates**

June 3

**Dubuque Hosta Festival**

Dubuque Arboretum

Dubuque, IA

June 13 - 16

**AHS National Convention**

Nashville, TN

[2012 AHS National Convention](#)

Sunday, June 24 - 8 AM – 4 PM

**ROHS Summer Tour and Auction**

Roland, Jewell, and Ames area

July 12 – 14

**Midwest Regional Hosta Society Convention**

Rochester, MN

[2012 Midwest Regional Hosta Society Convention and Tour](#)

Sunday, October 14 - Noon to 5 PM

**ROHS Fall Meeting**

Iowa Arboretum,

Rural Madrid, IA

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

Speaker: **Bob Solberg**

(Continued from page 11)

Sue and Bernie Apter's garden in Manchester is filled with beautiful hostas and whimsy. Garden art throughout the beds brought many smiles.



Hypertufa mushrooms and a giant toad greet visitors to the Apter Garden.



'Lakeside Circle' is a back yard highlight with 32 of Mary Chastain's Lakeside hosta series. The light rain grew heavier as we made our way through the back gardens and then became a downpour again as we were about to leave.



This crane sculpture surrounded by grasses added an elegant touch to the Apter's back gardens.

Thursday was another day of optional gardens on Cape Cod by car, but I didn't want to miss hybridizer Rick Goodenough's morning seminar, "Hosta Hybridizing: Art or Science?". I wasn't the

only one - the room was jam-packed. I was a bit surprised that he focused more on the artistic side. He engaged his audience to participate in a highly entertaining 'name-storming' session for several of his remarkable newer hosta creations. At the end, Rick hinted that his next talk with the same title could easily be more scientific.

I strolled through vending several times. With my current focus on acquiring breeding plants, I was drawn again and again (like a moth to a hosta flame) to Bridgewood Gardens' corner tables filled with seedlings from hybridizer, Chick Wasitis. When I asked the parentage of one of his beautifully streaked seedlings, he replied that he could tell me, but that it was so deep into his breeding lines that it would mean nothing to me. Chick said, "I live to breed hostas. I only sell them so I can afford eat."

I lunched at a nearby restaurant with Bruce and Trudy Van Wyk, and Jeff White and Marie Rahman. Lobster Rolls (hot dog buns overstuffed with lobster meat and drizzled with melted butter) x 5 were the catch of the day. Delicious!

Back at the hotel, we waited anxiously in the hallway for the doors to open into First Look, and we weren't disappointed when they finally did. The room was filled with fascinating sports (19) and amazing and mind-altering seedlings (74) from 28 entrants. We walked around the room several times in the hour we were allotted for voting. With our two favorites selected and the First Look doors closing, Trudy and I ventured into the leaf show. While there perusing the aisles of beautiful leaves, we discovered H 'Regal Heir' - a H 'Krossa Regal' sport we hadn't seen previously - and spoke with a gentleman from Long Island, NY whose nursery introduced it.

And we again waited for the First Look doors to re-open so we could see what ribbons the judges had awarded, and if our favorites had done well. Jeff White and Michigan friend, Joanna Kovalscik, had entered seedlings from their breeding programs, and they were both rewarded with a good number of blue and red ribbons.

The day concluded with New England specialties: a lobster tail dinner followed later in the evening by an ice cream social. I returned several times to view the Seedlings and Sports of First Look. There was no shortage of inspiration in that room for me. I ended the evening with friends in Hostatality. Talking hostas, naturally.

[Part Two will appear in the next ROHS newsletter.](#)



## 20 Favorite Hostas for 2011

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_
11. \_\_\_\_\_
12. \_\_\_\_\_
13. \_\_\_\_\_
14. \_\_\_\_\_
15. \_\_\_\_\_
16. \_\_\_\_\_
17. \_\_\_\_\_
18. \_\_\_\_\_
19. \_\_\_\_\_
20. \_\_\_\_\_

*You do not need to own a hosta to vote for it.*



## 10 Favorite Mini Hostas for 2011

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_
8. \_\_\_\_\_
9. \_\_\_\_\_
10. \_\_\_\_\_

**Your Top 25 Favorite Hostas and Top 10 Favorite Mini Hostas will be published in the 2012 Spring newsletter.**

*Please fill out a ballot for each ROHS member in a household for both polls.*

### **2013 Hosta of the Year**

What would you pick? Why?

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# 2011 Garden Experiences

*Your responses will be featured in a  
Hosta Horizons article.*

**Your name and location:**

**What was your favorite new hosta this year. Why do you like it so much?**

**What was the thing you enjoyed most about gardening/hostas in 2011?**

**What was the biggest gardening challenge you faced this past year?**

**What new garden projects did you start this past year?**



**An unlabelled hosta  
in the Brashear and Meyers Garden.**



**A view of the vending area at O'Brien Nurserymen.**



**H 'Sage' - elegant in a terra cotta pot - in the Apter Garden.**



**H 'Rosedale Misty Pathways' –  
a stunning specimen in the Sisson Garden.**

# The Twelve Days of Christmas

The 12 days of Christmas carol has always perplexed me. What in the world do leaping lords, French hens, swimming swans, and especially the partridge that won't come out of the pear tree have to do with Christmas?

From 1558 until 1829, Roman Catholics in England were not permitted to practice their faith openly. Someone during that era wrote this carol as a catechism song for young Catholics. It has two levels of meaning: the surface meaning plus a hidden meaning known only to members of their church. Each element in the carol has a code word for a religious reality which the children could remember.



The six geese a-laying stood for the six days of creation.

Seven swans a-swimming represented the sevenfold gifts of the Holy Spirit - Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Exhortation, Contribution, Leadership, and Mercy.



The eight maids a-milking were the eight beatitudes.

Nine ladies dancing were the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit - Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, and Self Control.



The partridge in a pear tree was Jesus Christ.

Two turtle doves were the Old and New Testaments.



The ten lords a-leaping were the ten commandments.

The eleven pipers piping stood for the eleven faithful disciples.



Three French hens stood for faith, hope and love.



The twelve drummers drumming symbolized the twelve points of belief in the Apostles' Creed.

The four calling birds were the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke & John.



This knowledge was shared with me and I found it interesting and enlightening and now I know how that strange song became a Christmas Carol...so pass it on if you wish.

Marlys Anderson

## Merry (Twelve Days of) Christmas Everyone!

Picture source: <http://www.guy-sports.com>



The five golden rings recalled the Torah or Law, the first five books of the Old Testament.