

Prairie Hosta Herald

October 2007 Volume 4 Number 9

Illinois Prairie Hosta Society

Promoting knowledge and interest in Hostas, fostering the development of new and improved Hosta varieties and encouraging cultivation and usefulness of Hostas in landscapes.

IPHS Annual Banquet and Business Meeting

Sunday, October 21, 2007 - 12:00 PM

Hawthorn Suites Convention Center, White Oaks Ballroom

101 Trade Center Drive, Champaign, Illinois

Featured Speaker, Pam Duthie

Annual Fall Banquet (Lunch and Speaker): \$13 IPHS members, \$23 non-members Speaker Only (Entry 1:30 PM): \$0 IPHS members, \$10 non-members Registration Deadline — October 13th.
Registration Required for All Seating.

Pam Duthie At A Glance: Author - *Continuous Bloom* and *Continuous Color*. Owner - ‘The Gifted Gardener’ landscape design firm. Instructor - Chicago Botanic Garden. An avid, hands-on gardener! Learn Pam’s “insider tips” for a continually colorful garden from spring through winter with trees and shrubs. Pam shares her vast experience in a lively, spirited presentation that will leave you inspired and energized. Pam’s books will be available for purchase at the banquet, and a book signing will follow her program.

Registration Form available at: www.prairienet.org/iphs/Banquet2007.pdf

The Annual Fall Banquet includes the Annual Meeting and the election of officers for 2008/2009. The nominations for officers are: First Vice President, Programs - Cynthia Helms; Secretary - Vicki Morris; and Member at Large - Fran Smith. Nominations will be accepted from the floor for these offices.

Officers for 2007

President - Barb Schroeder

1st Vice President - Programs - Deb Guardia

2nd Vice President - Membership - Rick Schroeder

Secretary - Ann Stout

Treasurer - Mary Slack

Board Member at Large - Ruth Walker

Board Member at Large - Fran Smith

*Membership - Single \$10, Family \$15 and
Commercial at \$25 per calendar year.*

For more information contact

Vice President - Membership:

*Rick Schroeder, 1819 Coventry Dr, Champaign, IL
61822*

Web Site - <http://www.prairienet.org/iphs/>

Committee Chairs

Audit - Fritz Drasgow

Hospitality - Fran Smith & Vickie Morris

Newsletter- Rick and Barb Schroeder

Philanthropic - Marcia Jurgens

Plant Raffles - Karen Meyer & Cynthia Helms

Plant Sale - Mary Ann Metz

Publicity - Bev Cotter

Leaf Show - Mary Ann Metz

Trips - Rick Schroeder

Ways & Means - Whit & Cathy Daily

Please volunteer and help these chairpersons. Also, please contact Deb if you wish to hold a meeting at your garden next year, its fun and easy.

Future Meetings

The first newsletter for 2008 will be distributed in February. Always nice to get a gardening item in the cold months, right? Cynthia has been working on dates and programs for next year and has some great ones lined up so far.

Our 2008 programs will kick off with Glenn Herold, Horticulture Professor at Illinois Central College. Glenn will speak on Saturday, March 15 at Parkland College Tony Noel Center, 9:00 AM. His presentation will be on conifers with special emphasis on dwarf and unusual conifers. Glenn is the Vice President of the American Conifer Society, Central Region and the former President of the Central Illinois Hosta Society.

The following are some of the dates and programs Cynthia is working on for 2008. These are not firm yet and will be in the next few months

- APRIL, Sat. 26: IPHS Hosta Plant Sale at Allerton Park, Monticello;
- MAY, Sat. 10: IPHS Hosta Plant Sale, Lincoln Square Mall, Urbana;
- MAY: IPHS Member Leaf Show;
- JUNE, Sat. 28: St. Joseph IPHS Member Garden Walk;
- JUNE, Sat. 7????: Day Bus Trip Northwestern Indiana;
- JULY: Cathy and Whit Daily Garden, Champaign—Whit will speak on irrigation systems;
- AUGUST: Rain Gardens;
- SEPTEMBER: Working with Stone in the Garden;
- OCTOBER: Fall Banquet and Annual Meeting.

Cynthia is working on a great speaker for the Fall Banquet. If you are interested in hosting one of the meetings please contact her at chelms@soltec.net. She would love to meet with you to discuss meeting in your garden either this year or 2009. We look forward to seeing you at the Annual Banquet and Business Meeting.

New Members

We welcome the following to the IPHS:

**Japhia Ramkumar, 2918 Valley Brook Dr,
Champaign, IL**

Patsy Rowland, 223 Misty Cove, Savoy, IL

**Nancy Holm, 2404 Peppertree Place,
Champaign, IL**

**Welcome back Aaron Parmelee of Cham-
paign**

Rick

President's Message

Another year has past and this is the last newsletter for the year.

I just wanted to express a big *Thank You* to all that have helped make this Society what it is today. And I also want to express a big WELCOME to all the people that have joined this year. This group is not my group, or the officer's group – IT IS all of ours, yours, mine and all future members.

We have had a great year with speakers in April, successful Plant Sales and great tour gardens in May, A two day bus trip to Indiana and Ohio, great speaker and picnic in June, nursery visits in July, Garden Design talk in August, another speaker in September and finally A special speaker at our October Annual Meeting. What a great year. We sure could not have done this without Deb Guardia. She has put a lot of work into planning the meetings and jumped in feet first when changes had to be made. Next year will be another great year with Cynthia Helms being our VP and Deb to assist.

I also want to thank Mary Ann Metz for all her hard work with the Plant Sale and Allerton Hosta

Continued on page 3

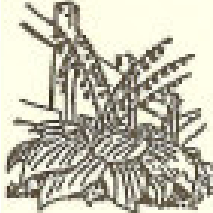
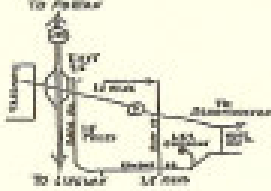
Hospitality

Fran Smith and Vicki Morris want to thank all who helped to make 2007 a success.

Cecilia and John Maggio have volunteered for Hospitality for 2008. Please volunteer your services (read that as food) for next years meetings. They can be reached at cecilmagg@netzero.com.

LEE GARDENS

Hours:
Mon. - Sat.
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Hostas • Daylilies
Wildflowers • Perennials
2088 Bessler Rd.
P.O. Box 5
Tremont, IL 61568
(309) 825-5262
Fax: (309) 825-5018

DIRECTIONS TO TREMONT NURSERY
From the junction of Highway routes 8 & 85, go east 1.8 miles on 85 - turn right, go south 1 mile - turn left, go east .3 miles - turn left on lane, garden and nursery at end of lane.

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE!
www.lee-gardens.com



Decorate for the Holidays

POINSETTIAS, LIVE TREES, WREATHS AND
GARLAND

Available Nov. 24th!

20% OFF


WITH THIS COUPON

5 Acre Farm Daylilies

Rod Kroemer and Jim Wuersch


1578 County Rd 300 North

Tolono, Illinois 217-621-8474



Denny Ricketts
Web Site - aahostas.com

11125 E. 1129th Ave
Effingham, IL 62401 (217) 536-9443
aahostas@effingham.net



**HORNBAKER
GARDENS**

**HOSTAS - IRISES - DAYLILIES - GRASSES
PERENNIALS - TREES & SHUBS**

April 10 to October 10
8 am to 5 pm, Monday - Saturday

www.hornbakergardens.com

Princeton, IL (815) 659-3282

Presidents Remarks - continued from Page 2

Garden. There are seven on the committee but Mary Ann has been the main contact for the last few months getting the design approved and hosta planted. Next year we have two plant sales and hope to get the Hosta Garden designated as AHS Display Garden. And we hope to be planting the new beds with more hosta. I have heard so many great comments about the Garden. With our continued work this is and will continue to be a garden to be proud of and also make Allerton proud to have us as a partner. And a big thank you goes to the person who gave us a big donation that will help us to do some special things to make this garden the best there is. We have only just begun.

And I should also thank my husband, Rick, for planning a great bus trip this year. We all had a lot of fun and almost bought more than we could bring home. He even helped get some more of us together for a second truck to Indiana to get more trees and shrubs. I am prejudice but I think he did a pretty good job.

I don't want to forget all the other people that have helped to make this a wonderful year in more than one way. Secretary - Ann Stout (who keeps our minutes and correspondence together); Treasurer - Mary Slack (who keeps immaculate books and makes sure we all report to her everything going on with money); Our members at large, Fran Smith and Ruth Walker; All of our committee chairs: Audit - Fritz

Continued on page 6

Future Conventions & Events

MRHS Winter Scientific Meeting, Schaumburg, IL - January 19, 2008 - see page 8 of this issue.

AHS Annual Convention, St. Louis, MO - June 11 to 14, 2008. This is the 40th Anniversary of the American Hosta Society.

Midwest Region Hosta Society will be in Chicago, Illinois, July 10 - 12, 2008.

Hosta and Garden Web Sites

Hosta Library - <http://www.hostalibrary.org/>

Hosta Forum – questions/answers - <http://forums.gardenweb.com/forums/hosta/>

Wade & Gatton Nursery – a must visit - <http://www.pal-metto.com/hosta/wade/wade.html>

Country Arbors Nursery - membership gets you a 10% discount on Hostas - <http://countryarbors.com>

Green Hill Farms, Bob Solberg - www.HostaHosta.com

Membership

American Hosta Society

Contact Sandie Markland, 8702 Pinnacle Rock Ct., Lorton, VA 22079-3029. Individual membership is \$25 per year (\$30 Jan 1), \$29 (\$34 Jan 1) for family - join now - <http://www.hosta.org/>

Midwest Regional Hosta Society

Contact Pete Postlewaite, 21172 Andover Rd, Kildeer, IL 60047. Individual membership is \$20 for 2 years - join now - <http://www.MidwestHostaSociety.org>

We urge you to join both societies and we have copies of the AHS Hosta Journal for \$5 each which includes the membership application. This is an outstanding, volunteer, hosta publication.

Hostas for Allerton Park Hosta Garden

At the last meeting Mary Ann Metz announced that our friend Tom Micheletti, AHS President, has donated the following hostas for our Allerton Garden:

H. 'Lakeside April Snow', H. 'Irish Eyes', H. 'Warwick Edge', H. 'Green with Envy', H. 'Punky', H. 'Rain Forest', H. 'Winter Vision', H. 'Appalachian Beauty', H. 'Ultramarine' and H. 'Showtime'. This donation takes us over the 100 mark for registered hostas in the garden. We thank Tom for his donation and look forward to spring when everything comes up green again. Remember, we are still looking for additional plants for the new area that is under construction.

From September to Fall Garden Cleanup

By Ray Rodgers - rbrssr@telstar-online.net

Planting hostas can be done anytime as long as the soil is not frozen, but the chances for survival are better if plantings are completed by early September, to allow four to six weeks for the plants to reestablish before first frost (approx. October 14 in central Illinois). Hostas are completely dormant during the winter, making late plantings more susceptible to rot.

Do not try to keep your hostas actively growing late in the year. It is better to let plants die down somewhat naturally rather than letting a hard frost do all the damage. All fertilization should have stopped well prior to September, but it is important for gardens to continue receiving the equivalent of 1 to 1 ½ inches of rainfall per week through September.

Although October is the time to start cutting back on watering, hostas do not want to be dry when they go into dormancy. Each gardener will have to decide for themselves whether their gardens need supplemental watering during October; considering soil type, temperatures, and amount of rainfall received.

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

Continued on Page 5



IPHS donation to Virus X Research Project

In August the members of the IPHS voted to donate \$250 to the American Hosta Society as part of our contribution to the AHS Hosta Virus X Research Project being carried on at the University of Minnesota. To the left is the thank you letter from Mary Schwartzbauer, Immediate Past President of the AHS.

We will keep you posted as reports on the research are published in The Hosta Journal. We thank you for your support and encourage you to make a personnel donation to the research.

Continued from Page 4
 temperatures lead to rotting.

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

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

It is a good idea to drop poison bait into vole holes throughout the winter. Look for nickel size holes, often right next to hosta crowns. Not being able to easily see the results, I suggest alternating the use of a variety of baits to increase the chances of success. Place a brick or other heavy object over the hole to prevent poisoning of birds and other animals. Several gardeners have also had success with mouse traps baited with a mixture of peanut butter and oatmeal placed next to vole holes. Again, cover the hole and trap in a manner to protect birds and pets. A clay pot turned upside down with a brick on top works well.

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

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

Continued on Page 6

Continued from Page 5

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

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

For many of the above reasons, it is not advisable to put hosta leaves on the compost pile. Burning the garden clutter can be a bit of a challenge, as hosta leaves are typically very moisture retentive, but doing so eliminates any possible problems associated with discarding the waste elsewhere.

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

If additional protection is desired, a thin layer of low moisture retentive coarse mulch, such as various types of wood chips or pine bark nuggets, can be added. A thin layer of mulch will also help prevent heaving of young plants. An additional benefit of a coarse layer of mulch added anytime from fall through winter is by helping to maintain soil temperatures; emergence of new plant growth in the spring will be slightly delayed, making plant tissue less susceptible to freezing temperatures. On

Future AHS Conventions

**American Hosta Society, 2008
Convention will be in St. Louis, Missouri on
June 11-14, put it on your calendar now.**

**The AHS 2009 Convention will be in
Lansing, Michigan on June 24-27, 2009**

the negative side, adding an additional layer of compost before the ground is frozen increases the likelihood of rodent damage.

For trough gardens, putting them on the east or north side of a building and covering and surrounding them with a coarse mulch will provide winter protection. For additional protection, some gardeners prefer to first bury the bottom one-third of the trough in the ground.

For additional detail, I recommend the following articles:

- How late is too late to plant hostas in the fall? <http://www.hostahosta.com/tips.html#late>
- Preparing the Garden for Winter <http://www.hostahosta.com/tips.html#winter>

Both of the above articles were written by Bob Solberg who is very knowledgeable about all aspects of hostas.

Presidents Remarks - continued from Page 3

Dragow (who should be coming to more meeting after the baby grows some more); Hospitality - Fran Smith and Vicki Morris (who did a great job); Plant Sale and Leaf Show - Mary Ann; Newsletter - Rick; Philanthropic - Marcia Jurgens; Ways and Means - Whit and Cathy Daily; and Publicity - Bev Cotter.

And mentioning publicity - I heard the announcement on WILL Illinois Gardener tonight about our speaker that is coming this month, Pam Duthie. I don't know if Deb or Bev did this but a lot of people know your number now. :) Good work!

And last but never least – to all the members' (and we just reached the 130 mark) thank you for making this a great year. I look forward to seeing you October 21st and then again at our March, 2008 meeting.

Barb Schroeder, President

2008 Dues Due

**Thanks to all that have sent in
your renewal. Dues Renewal
Statement will be sent out after the
Annual Meeting.**

Illinois Prairie Hosta Society

Annual Fall Banquet

Sunday, October 21, 2007
Hawthorn Suites Convention Center
101 Trade Center Drive, Champaign, Illinois

12:00 PM – Cocktails (*Cash Bar*)

12:30 PM – Lunch

Mixed Garden Green Salad with Choice of Dressing
Lemon Mint Chicken **or** Working Man's Meatloaf **or** Vegetarian Lasagna
Chef's Selection of Potato, Rice or Pasta
Chef's Fresh Seasonal Vegetable
Fresh Baked Rolls
Caramel Apple Pie and Decadent Chocolate Cake
Coffee and Ice Tea

1:30 PM – Annual Meeting (*Entry for Speaker-Only Registrants*)

2:00 PM – Speaker, **Pam Duthie**, Northbrook, Illinois, *Continuous Color*

Seating is Limited — Reserve By **October 13**

All Seats Require a Reservation.

Reservation Fees:

IPHS Members — \$13 with Lunch, No Charge for Speaker-Only

Non-Members — \$23 with Lunch, \$10 for Speaker-Only

Featured Speaker, Pam Duthie, Northbrook, Illinois

“Continuous Color - Ideas For Fall”

Don't miss this opportunity to learn Pam's "insider's tips" for a continually colorful garden from spring through winter with trees and shrubs. Pam will share her vast experience in a lively, spirited presentation that will leave you inspired and energized. She is the author of two wonderful books, *Continuous Bloom* (2000), and *Continuous Color: A Month-by-Month Guide to Shrubs and Small Trees for the Continuous Bloom Garden* (2004). **The Gifted Gardener** is Pam's landscape design and consulting firm specializing in continuous color gardens. Pam is an instructor at the Chicago Botanic Garden. She is an accomplished author, garden designer, consultant, teacher, national speaker, volunteer, photographer, and an avid hands-on gardener! Pam's books will be available for purchase at the banquet and a book signing will follow the program.

SIGN UP NOW! Registration Deadline is OCTOBER 13TH!

To print a copy of the Registration Form, go to: www.prairienet.org/iphs/Banquet2007.pdf

Hypertufa Pots - Want to make some?

The Schroeder's are going to have a "Hypertufa Party" in their garage on Saturday, October 27 starting at 9:00 AM. We will be furnishing most of the supplies such as cement, sphagnum moss, vermiculite and perlite. We will have a wheelbarrow for mixing along with mixing tools. The cost will be \$15 per pot per family and you must reserve a space in advance. We plan to have a maximum of 8 people the first time due to



space and time it will take to mix, form and set aside in groups of 2 persons per time frame. Times will be 9-10:30, 10:30 to 12:00, 1:00 to 2:30 and 2:30 to 4:00. It takes at least one hour per batch and we need cleanup time. You can come and watch or come when nearer your time to work, it is up to you.

Perlite, being white, will have white beads showing when the pot is complete, but it is also lighter. Vermiculite will give a grayer outside. We also have some sand for those that might want to make a leaf mold.

You will need to bring face breathing mask, good rubber

gloves (not surgical gloves), trowel and molds that you wish to cover or put the concrete mix on the inside of. We would suggest no more than 2 molds the first time. Molds can be any container that is of a shape that the hypertufa will come off of or out of when hard. We will coat the outside or inside with an agent or plastic bag for relief. Containers should be a minimum of 12 inches in size if molding on the outside, a little bigger if the mold is to be on the inside. Be sure to wear old clothes and bring a foam mat or old pillow to kneel on when you make the molds. You will need a flat piece of plywood of such size for all of the molds to sit on (with 4 inches or more all around) because they will have to remain there for 3-5 days. All work will be left in our garage and will be available for pickup the following weekend. Once you take it home you will need to set it outside for the winter and let the lime get washed away. By spring it will be ready for planting.

We prefer you contact us at 359-2868 so we can let you know what slots that are open. If you can't get into the class this time, but want to come watch and learn, you are welcome through out the day. The class will be rain or shine, as all work will be inside the garage. We will do another class in the spring. Please make your reservation by October 21st.



Winter Scientific Meeting of the Midwest Regional Hosta Society Hosted by the Northern Illinois Hosta Society

It's time to begin planning for winter. The Winter Scientific Meeting of the Midwest Regional Hosta Society that is. This year's big winter event will be held Sat. Jan. 19, 2008 at the Hyatt Regency Woodfield Hotel, 1800 East Golf Rd., Schaumburg, IL (800) 223-1234. They have given us an \$87.00 room rate. Please make your own reservations, before Jan 6, and mention the Hosta Society to guarantee the rate. The Hyatt Regency Woodfield Hotel is the same great location, as last year's very successful event.

Again we have an All Star line-up of speakers with interesting and timely topics

Glenn Herold-"You're Barking up the Right Tree"

Roy Klehm-"Plant Developers of Note"

Doug Beilstein-"Hybridizing and More..."

Bill Segatto-"Water Gardening"

Chris Wilhoite-"Arisaemas"

Mark Zilis-"Hostas of Distinction"

The cost of the winter extravaganza is only \$45.00 per person, which includes a continental breakfast and a deli buffet lunch. Please make checks payable to the Northern Illinois Hosta Society, and mail before Jan. 6, 2008, with your name, address, phone, and the number attending, to:

Morgan Wilson
1880 N. Hennepin
LaSalle Ill. 61301
Phone (815) 224-1383

Sign-up after Jan. 6 2008 is \$55.00.

Registration will begin on Fri. Jan 18, from 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm, and Sat. Jan. 19 from 7:00 am - 8:00 am. The program will run from 8:00 am - 4:30 pm on Sat. Dinner Fri. and Sat. nights will be on your own at one of the many fine area restaurants. The Hospitality Suite will be open from 7:30 pm -11pm, both Fri. and Sat. nights, for all that good Hosta fellowship. I look forward to seeing you there.

Sincerely,
Tom Micheletti, Northern Illinois Hosta Society

Name of first attendee _____ @ \$45.00 \$ _____

Name of 2nd attendee _____ @ \$45.00 \$ _____

Late fee if paid after Jan 6, 2008 is \$55.00

Total \$ _____

Address of attendee, or contact person

Street _____ City _____

State _____ Zip _____ Phone () _____

Confirmation notices are not sent out. Please retain a copy of this registration form and your check if you are in doubt of registration. Please allow 5 working days for registrations to reach us before the event date. We will be unable to issue refunds after Jan. 6, 2008.

To Host or Not to Host

Editor: Our program chairperson for next year, Cynthia Helms, will be looking for volunteers over the next two years to host a meeting in their garden. Also, the C-U Master Gardner's are usually in need of a garden to be added to their summer garden walk. As you know, several members of the IPHS have volunteered their garden over the last few years. This year George Grubb had his garden open and thoroughly enjoyed the experience of meeting so many wonderful gardeners that he would do it again. I read the following article by Dan McConnell of the CIHS of Peoria and thought it fit all of us that have been on garden walks or hosted a meeting. Barbara and I were on the 2003 garden walk, really enjoyed the day and will do it again. For the IPHS group you don't need to do all of the items that Dan lists below, but as you read them there are several that are a good excuse to be open for a meeting (like No. 1 - buy stuff). We look forward to visiting your garden in the future.

A few days before the CIHS Garden Walk this year, our excited six year old granddaughter, Brenna asked, "Papa are we going to do a hosta walk again next year?" I explained to her that the Hosta Society only has the walk every two years and doesn't usually repeat the same gardens. So, it would probably be at least four years before we could be on another garden walk. To which Brenna replied, "Granny said we will never do this again!"

Ignoring granny's comment for the time being, I would like to point out some of the many advantages of being a host/hostess on a garden walk or of a hosta meeting.

1. You can buy lots of stuff and rationalize the purchase. Plants, garden art, pergolas, arbors, trees, rocks, furniture, a new patio; anything you desire and your credit card can handle. All those things you have wanted but were hesitant to buy, you now have the green light because you are hosting a walk/meeting. (Like we really need an excuse.)

2. You will get a lot done. Those projects that you've been meaning to do for the last several years, but always seem to get delayed, will get finished.

3. You will lose weight. Gardening burns 300 calories per hour and you will be putting in a lot of hours in the garden. (I did not say this was easy but let's focus on the positive.)

4. Your garden will look the best it ever has and you can enjoy it the rest of the year.

5. Complete strangers and your gardening peers will compliment and appreciate the garden and all your hard work. It amazed me the amount of people that were taking notes as they toured the garden and also the several that took pictures. I spoke to one couple that was from Carbondale, IL. I asked if they were in town visiting relatives and their reply was that they came solely for the Garden Walk and it was worth the trip!

6. If you are lucky (or unlucky) you will get your picture in the Journal Star using a broken rake that you have duct taped together while standing next to a very dead bush. Or you could be assertive like granny and inform the paper, "no photos and no ages".

7. The best reason for hosting a walk/meeting; it is fun! You will see some long lost friends. You will spend time really enjoying and relaxing in your garden. And you will get to see your garden through others eyes. Your garden will never be perfect nor will it ever be done, so don't use that as an excuse. Every garden is unique and reflects the personality of the gardener. I always learn something and get ideas from every garden I visit.

Start planning now and you will have plenty of time to make a to-do list, buy plants and begin to fine tune your garden. Please consider hosting a meeting or being on the next garden walk. Now if you will excuse me, I only have a few years to convince granny.

By Dan McConnell, Central Illinois Hosta Society Treasurer