



President's Letter

Bob Iames, President

Hi Gardening Friends,

Well, that was a quick year. Seems like just a little while ago we were anticipating the spring flush and rush and now we're admiring the colors of fall. Be sure to get out and enjoy your garden in all seasons.

25 years and still going strong.

Thank you to all those who helped make this year and our club a success. Your ideas, input and participation is appreciated and will ensure our club stays strong for the next 25 years and beyond. Please

call or email me or any of your officers with your thoughts and ideas. Robin Mann, our newsletter editor, is always looking for articles and pictures for the newsletter.

The planning committee has been busy getting ready for next year. We have some fun and exciting meetings planned. Be sure to mark your calendars now so you don't miss a thing.

Something new for the Yearbook next year will be an asterisk beside members' names that will open their garden by appointment. You will be able to

call or email these members and set up a time to visit their garden. Please note on your dues renewal form if you are willing to open your garden to other members.

Plan now to attend Hosta College in Piqua. We are so fortunate to have this great educational gardening forum in our backyard. Be sure to take advantage of it.

Make time for family and friends this holiday season. Hope to see you at the Christmas party.

Happy Gardening,
Bob

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H. 'Paradigm'



December 5 Holiday Party



You are cordially invited to a Holiday Party at Karen Warner's home December 5 at 7pm. Her address is 25 Triple Crown Circle, Springboro, OH. See her 23'x8' Christmas village and enjoy light refreshments.

Please RSVP to Karen by Nov 27

karjaws@sbcglobal.net or leave a message at (937) 748-2407.

Mouse Ears Collection
of Gene & Marcia Bashor



2017 Fall Meetings



Tom Hissong

MVHS OCTOBER MEETING “MAGIC IN THE AIR”

On October 10, we were treated to a fascinating presentation on the **Wonders of Bird Migration** by retired Education Manager at Aullwood Audubon Center & Farm, Tom Hissong. Tom has worked as an environmental educator for 40 years and many people in the room had been to his talks over the years. Tom shared beautiful bird photos and listed some of the lesser known parks in Ohio that are particularly good birding sites such as:

- Killdeer Plains Wildlife Area, OH (raptors)
- Lima Reservoir/Ottawa Metropark, OH (water fowls)
- Shawnee State Forest, OH
- Magee Marsh, OH (warblers)
- Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, OH
- Jasper-Pulaski Fish & Wildlife Area, IN (Sand Hill Cranes)



Yellow Warbler

TRI-CLUB OCTOBER LUNCHEON

On October 21, MVHS hosted the Tri-club Luncheon at the Presidential Banquet Center in Kettering. The highlight of the gathering was Rob Mortko's presentation on "Hot Hostas of Tomorrow" for an audience of over 50 people.

Rob, a former chemical engineer who retired in 2010, founded **Made in the Shade Gardens** in Olathe, Kansas with the help of his wife Sheri in 2000. The home-based business sells 400+ hostas on site and by mail order and also features a ¾ acre display garden. He has registered two hostas, 'Heart and Soul' and 'Stitch in Time.'

Rob began his presentation with a brief history of hosta propagation. Before 1980, he explained, new hostas were created by dividing existing plants. As a result, availability was limited and prices were high.

Then the age of tissue culture (TC) began, with Q&Z Nursery, Walters Gardens, Shady Oaks and Winterberry as "big names" in American TC labs. Advantages of TC included virus-free plants and numerous new hostas at lower cost than plants propagated by division. However, the closing of Shady Oaks in 2013 and Q&Z Nursery in 2014 adversely impacted hosta availability and prices.

Rob noted that the struggle to get new plants and vendors to market has created opportunities for other hybridizers and sellers, and he urged those in attendance to help fill the niche created by the loss of the major labs. The TC lab at Made in the Shade has doubled in response to demand, he explained. To a chorus of oohs and ahhs, Rob showed photos of numerous hostas that his lab is creating for various retailers and which should be available for sale in the next few years. **Made in the Shade Gardens** can be found at www.hostaguy.com and Facebook. Written by Susan Detert.



Rob Mortko, photo by Bette Rau

2018 MVHS Preliminary Calendar

Date	Event
Mar 16-17	Hosta College
Apr 10	Meeting
May 5	Auction
Jun 12	North Garden Tours
Jul 10	South Garden Tours
Aug 14	Meeting
Sep 11	Carry-in
Oct 9	Meeting
Oct 20	Tri-club Meeting hosted by Central Ohio Hosta Society

MVHS Dues Reminder

2018 dues are due December 31, 2017. Timely paid dues give you the benefit of being included in the printed Yearbook, preferential Bus Trip Registration, and early registration for Hosta College. Please mail your check to Treasurer, Joyce Thomas 6211 St. Rt. 123 Franklin, OH 45005. Questions? Contact Joyce at 937-789-8663 or joycethomas1499@gmail.com. Individual \$12/year. Family \$17/year (2 persons with the same address).

American Hosta Society Membership

Join AHS and receive *The Hosta Journal* mailed twice a year and have access to a third issue online in the *Members Only* section of the AHS website. This publication offers the latest information on care, feeding, and hybridizing; pictures of new cultivars; and news of upcoming meetings and conventions. Members have the privilege of visiting display gardens throughout the country, many of which are only open to AHS members. Also, members are invited to exhibit their favorite hostas and compete for recognition in various AHS national and regional cut-leaf shows. Visit americanhostasociety.org for more information.

2018 Other Events of Interest

Hosta College March 16-17

If you've never attended a Great Lakes Region Hosta College, you're missing one of the area's most comprehensive weekend plant symposiums. For only \$42 (hosta society members) or \$55 (nonmembers) participants are able to attend 5 classes they have chosen from a program of over 60 classes on hostas, other plants, and gardening topics. The weekend includes a banquet, speaker, auction, and vendor sales as well as networking opportunities with some of the major hosta experts in the country. We are fortunate to have such a great spring conference held at the Upper Valley Career Center in Piqua, Ohio. Keep your eyes open for registration e-mail messages in February or go to <https://www.ihostohio.org/glhc/default.asp> for more information.

Phifty in Philly 2018

The 2018 national convention will be hosted by the Delaware Hosta Society in Philadelphia June 20-23. *Phifty in Philly* recognizes the 50th anniversary of the American Hosta Society. The convention will be held northwest of Philadelphia at the Double Tree by Hilton-Valley Forge and includes a trip to Longwood Gardens. For information on the gardens, speakers, hotel, etc. go to www.ahs2018philly.org. Earlybird registration will begin soon and ends February 28, 2018. Regular registration runs from March 1 to a date to be determined.



GLR Tailgate 2018

Great Lakes Region Tailgate 2018 will be hosted by the Central Ohio Hosta Society July 13-14 in Grove City Ohio near Columbus.

25th Anniversary Banquet



On September 12, at the Presidential Banquet Center in Kettering, Ohio, over 50 members of MVHS celebrated 25 years of club history. The evening included a delicious buffet, lovely decorations, specially decorated cake, funny stories, slide presentation, old memorabilia, and a heartfelt speech by founder Marcia Niswonger. Each member received a special edition newsletter with additional stories and photos prepared by Susan Detert and Karen Strider-Iames. Thank you to Karen Warner for coordinating the event. Here's to the next 25 great years!



History of the Founding of MVHS



Rita Cromes & Marcia Niswonger

The following speech was written and presented by Marcia Niswonger to the Miami Valley Hosta Society September 12, 2017 at the 25th Anniversary Banquet.

Since there are many of you who don't know the history of the MVHS, we're going to take a little trip down memory lane tonight. It was 1992 and my sister Rita Cromes (Re) and I saw this ad in *Fine Gardening Magazine* about the American Hosta Society's upcoming convention in May in Columbus. We had discovered this amazing plant a couple of years before and we had seen a few of the journals they'd put out. It was never going to be any easier to attend a convention because it was right in our own back yard, so to speak. We registered to go, bought a

new outfit for each day and one for each evening--cause ya know a girl's gotta dress well and we packed our bags.

As we walked into this beautiful hotel with a glass roof over the lobby with the light steaming down....holy mackerel... what greeted us took our breath away. An enormous section of the lobby had hostas on display. We later learned it was a cut leaf show. We photographed and photographed and photographed because we had never seen that many hostas. We didn't know that many hostas even existed!

Not only were there hundreds of hostas, there were hundreds of people who grew hundreds of hostas and come to find out you could grow them all in one garden. Who knew? We began to learn first-hand how you did that. We were treated to quite a few hosta gardens during the convention, including a trip to Van Wade's. I believe our eyes were as wide as saucers, because we had never imagined gardens of that size and beauty. We were in seventh heaven! Bus loads of people. We had never done anything like that before--to go on garden tours on a bus. I ask you, does life get any better than that? Rita and I were like two kids in a candy store. We met some of the neatest people and we saw many faces who had been featured in the *American Hosta Journal* and we thought we were in celebrity territory. We met Tony Avent who owned Plants Delight Nursery. We were so celebrity struck, that we asked him for his autograph.

And when Rita first walked in, she said "look, there is little Clare." She's been featured in *The Hosta Journal*. Clare Richards was this sweet, tiny, hunched over lady who had the most beautiful smile and countenance about herself. Rita and Clare connected immediately and they had lots of conversations with each other during the convention. Re will tell you that she remembers Clare fondly to this day.

We were being introduced daily to so many hosta people and we came to believe in a very short time that hosta people have to be some of the nicest people on the face of the earth! By the way, we still think that. One of the people that Rita and I met on the first day of the convention was Sandy Wilkins. It turned out that Sandy was going to be the one dynamic gal who was going to drastically change my life. She belonged to the Indianapolis Hosta Society at the time. She was very welcoming to us and by mid convention, she was encouraging us to go home and start our own hosta society. Oh heavens, Sandy, I can't do that I said (a few times over) cause she wasn't giving up easily. Even as we parted company at the end of the convention and she said again, go home and think about it. I told her I'd think about it....thinking I wouldn't think about it!

Well, I know I told Rita more than once I wasn't going to do that...I couldn't do that. But then I don't know how many sleepless nights I had battling that idea back and forth in my mind, but it was a few. I eventually thought, well if we start small and Sandy shows me some of the things you have to do to start a hosta society....wellllllllll maybe I could do it.

I picked up the phone and called Sandy and said, I think I can do this if you help guide me. She was so tickled at the thought of having another hosta society in the region, she promised to send me one of their yearbooks, so I could see

History of the Founding of MVHS continued

what they did. She also promised to help in any way possible and she did. She was incredibly encouraging and helpful on many levels and we became very good friends!

Re and I sat down and thought--who can we get to come to a hosta meeting. How many people in our area even know what a hosta is? That thought was a little scary. We enlisted our sister Mary and she asked a friend, Rita had two more friends, I called Anne Randall who we knew from the fair where she judged the flower show and she said she'd come. We invited Doris Schuster who wrote about gardens in the Dayton Daily News and she said yes, she'd come. Wow, we were off and running. We had our first meeting with a respectable amount of 8 people in attendance in my home on November 17th 1992. We elected officers that night and had engendered commitments from some of those in attendance for next year's garden walks. Our next formal meeting wasn't until March 20th of 1993.

I want to take a little side step here to talk about Hosta College. It is such an important part of each and every Hosta Society in the Region. It certainly helped shape our society as we went along, because I was on the Great Lakes Region Hosta Society (GLR) Board for 12 years. At the exact same time Rita and I were trying to put our society together, Hosta College was in the works. It was an enormous undertaking to start the planning. The name Hosta College was the brain child of Sandy Wilkins. She was the Director of GLR at the time. And her idea was that the GLR would sponsor an event where all the five states would come together to attend classes on hostas and various other subjects. She wanted a bookstore offering great books at reduced prices. She had vending in mind so people could see and purchase the latest hostas and plants you don't find at your typical garden center.

We established the idea of a "hosta auction" with the latest and best hostas offered from some of the best hybridizers. Last, Sandy's idea was that every teacher and member involved, would freely donate their time, expertise and abilities. There was never a fee offered to teachers or anyone else. The only fee involved was for registration of attendees that covered a lunch and a banquet dinner on Saturday.

It was in 1993 at Sandy's home that Rita and I had an invitation to come to the very first planning meeting to discuss the idea of Hosta College. Two members from each society in the region came together and it was an amazing meeting with incredible minds and talent coming together all in one room. The bottom line--it was through the genius mind of Sandy Wilkins that the Great Lakes Region Hosta College was made into a reality. Sandy is truly a neat gal, a great friend and she and her husband Dr. Jim Wilkins have worked tirelessly for the Genus Hosta. I believe the hosta world owns them a debt of gratitude for their commitment on the local level, the regional level and the national level. They are amazing people.

The very first Hosta College took place in Dayton but the location was not ideal, so after the second year they asked me to look for something in my area. I went first to Edison State College in Piqua and they told me there was a substantial charge for each room we would need to rent. They were talking up to a thousand dollars, which was not feasible.

But they suggested I go right next door to the Joint Vocational School (JVS). Can you imagine my elation when the JVS told me there was absolutely NO CHARGE to use the facility. I could barely take that in and I know I couldn't wipe the smile off my face. And as I walked away from that meeting, I knew we had found the place where the next Great Lakes Region Hosta College would take place. As it turned out, we have had a fantastic relationship with that school and it has put Piqua, Ohio on the map in the hosta world.

Any of you who have attended Hosta College in our own little city of Piqua have had first-hand knowledge of how unique it is. It heralds spring for us every year and people from many states and overseas come together to renew friendships and attend classes and see the latest offering of hostas. Mike Shadrack came from England regularly to attend and speak. He is more than a little well know in the hosta world and Rita and I both claim him as a great friend.

History of the Founding of MVHS continued

So here's a little plug for Hosta College. It is a literal shopping paradise--especially for the novice hosta grower. Rita's brother-in-law and sister-in-law Fred and Rhonda Williams, actually sell Earth Worm Castings for composting in the vending area. The sales area has garden art, unique plant material, pottery and a myriad of other offerings. In addition, the College can certainly boast on its great teachers and classes and it's a place where wonderful friendships are renewed and made. If you've not been there, come next March 16-17, and see what all the buzz is about.

So, let's talk about our Yearbook. When you're considering a cover for a yearbook that is going to endure for a long time, it's a big deal. Well, I had just the right person in mind to make that happen. A lot of you might know that Re is the artistic one in the family and the logo you have on your yearbook came from her hand. It's really amazing and heartwarming for me to look at that and realize it has endured for 25 years and counting. Some of our covers have been in color, some cream, some in white, but no matter what color it's printed in, that logo is beautiful. Thanks Re, for a great job!

Our first year was underway, and for a small society, we had some big plans. We visited the Fitzwater and Bosworth gardens and went on a buying trip to the famous Soules Garden Center in Indianapolis. We visited Don and Gillia Hawk's garden in Cincinnati that featured a large collection of hostas plus Gillia had an extensive collection of ivy that was amazing. As a matter of fact, she was a trial garden for the National Ivy Society. When Rita lived in England, she loved to read *Victoria Magazine* and much to her surprise, Gillia Hawk's garden was actually featured in that magazine. Gillia's notoriety as a gardener made it all the way across the pond. In our first year we also toured Mike and Anne Randall's garden in Greenville, Ohio and let me tell you, their garden was convention-worthy way back then! It was and is gorgeous. We also had a little plant auction among ourselves and we just had a blast our first year.

And here's a little side note. In that very first yearbook, April was the month we toured Rita's garden. At the end of the description of her garden walk there was a note that said Rita will be moving to England by June. I can't tell you how devastated I was to let go of her to such a faraway place.

We were both broken hearted because we are as close as most twins and the pain of separation was intense! I tell you this with all sincerity. God knew I would need the hosta society and good friends like Sandy Wilkins and Anne Randall to get me through the pain of missing my sister so desperately. Being busy in the hosta world was a saving grace for me at that time. Re was actually gone for 5 years and when she returned, it was the most wonderful feeling to get her back in the states where she was closer. I seriously gotta tell ya--we racked up a few dollars in phone bills over that period of time because back then it cost a lot of money to call overseas, but we both always said it was, and still is, cheaper than a therapist! We still think of our daily phone calls as therapy sessions. And our husbands will tell you that they have heard that many times from the both of us.

The next year in 1994, Mary Jo Apple and Diane Brennan both of Dayton, joined our society. By the year of 1997, I felt that if we were going to grow, we would have to move from Piqua and go to a larger community like Dayton. Mary Jo was very active at Cox Arboretum at that time and she said she would check to see if we could have meetings there and so with great anticipation, we moved our society meetings to that facility. It was the best thing we ever did. Mary Jo took over as President and the MVHS started to explode with memberships.

We began to have a huge diversity of speakers in the hosta world, more diverse gardens in close proximity for us to tour. We had plant exchanges, potluck dinners and garden centers that would host us after hours for tours. We had meetings on winter gardening, trees, spring wildflowers, one and three day overnight bus trips. It was a great move to say the least.

Now.... if you'll indulge me just a little longer...I would like to read my very first President's letter I wrote in 93.

We are in the process of making our own little bit of history here. The MVHS was started on November 17, 1992 and this is the beginning of a very exciting and hopefully dynamic future. By strong commitment to our goals we can increase membership, educate and encourage both novice and seasoned growers and finally the bottom line, enjoy the Genus

History of the Founding of MVHS continued

dedicated to this purpose and our club will become exceptional. In this first year of our existence, I would especially like to thank all of our charter members who helped make this a CLUB and welcome any prospective members who would like to join us in our quest and knowledge of hostas. I wish all of you a very delightful growing season with warm, balmy days, sufficient rainfall and an absence of slugs! Think Spring! (1993 President's Letter)

As I was reading this the other day, several things really struck me as poignant. At the time I didn't know how profound some of those thoughts were when I wrote them. I wanted a dynamic future and we certainly have attained that. We have increased membership ten-fold. We have encouraged the novice, and I believe that we have strengthened the seasoned growers through programs and bus trips that we've offered. We have had many educational programs on diverse subjects. Our newsletters have been second to none through the tenacious efforts of those who took on the challenge of publishing them. Because there are so many hard working, committed individuals in this society, I believe the MVHS has become exceptional.

And it's because of those of who have held any kind of an office over the years
 those who have worked on the committees that planned programs for the last 25 years
 yearbook and newsletters editors, webmasters of social media
 those who have worked diligently on the hosta auction every year
 those of you who provide refreshments and support hospitality for the meetings
 managers of the e-mail correspondence that keep the society informed of events
 those of you who have planned bus trips for the enjoyment of our society
 and those who attend meetings so faithfully.

I could go on and on about what it takes to makes a society like ours vibrant and fun-loving, but suffice it to say. it takes a lot of hard work.

Since I have had to back away so much from all of this, I want to give a very heartfelt thank you to each and every one of you in the MVHS for your willingness to give of yourselves, so that this society continues to thrive. I believe it has become more than I think Re or I thought it could be, simply because of your dedication and caring. We are so pleased that it is in such good hands. And we hope there are many more years yet to come that hosta friends have a place to come together.

In closing, Re and I want to say thank you dear friends. We thank you for all the years of incredible friendships. We thank you for all the laughter and fun times we've shared. We thank you for the support and encouragement all along the way. We thank you for carrying the good name and the well being of the Miami Valley Hosta Society into the future. And we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for continuing our dream!

The preceding speech was written and presented by Marcia Niswonger to the Miami Valley Hosta Society September 12, 2017 at the 25th Anniversary Banquet.

Editor's Corner

We had an early spring and a late fall this year, but we've finally seen some beautiful autumn colors. I love the plants that we don't buy for fall color, but surprise us with their beauty like Oakleaf Hydrangeas, Crepe Myrtles, and Dogwoods. I even admire some yellowing hostas. How are you feeling about the end of the gardening season? After starting garden work in February this year, I'm a little exhausted and ready to put the plants to bed for the season. How do you spend your winter? Are you eager to catch up on those new gardening books? Plant catalogs? Dreaming of new projects? If you come across something interesting or a topic you'd like to see covered, please contact me at rmann1993@yahoo.com. *Robin Mann, Editor*

Thank You Vendors!

The following vendors donated plants or other goods to the 2017 MVHS Auction. A successful auction would not have been possible without their generous support. Thank you.

Andy's Garden andysgarden.com
2310 West State Route 55, Troy, OH 45373
(937)335-5550

Berns Garden Center bernsgardencenter.com
825 Greentree Rd, Middletown, OH 45044
(513)423-5306
3776 Indian Ripple Rd, Beavercreek, OH 45440
(937)912-0422

Dannaher Landscaping & Nursery
dannaherlandscaping.com
12200 Vans Valley Rd, Galena, OH 43021
(740)965-3789

Glenda's Garden
Email: gwogoman@infinet.com
7620 Halderman Rd, West Alexandria, OH 45381
(937)839-4044

Grandma's Gardens grandmasgardencenter.com
8107 North State Route 48, Waynesville, OH 45068
(937)885-2740

Greenleaf Gardens charliebunton@gmail.com
4726 U.S. Route 68 North, Yellow Springs, OH 45387
(937)767-1997

Groovy Plants Ranch groovyplantsranch.com
4140 Co. Rd 15, Marengo, OH 43334
(740)675-2681

Joan's Backyard Treasures
6215 Cavalcade Dr, Hamilton, OH 45011
(513)868-3512

Knollwood Garden Center & Landscaping
Knollwoodgardens.com
3766 Dayton Xenia Rd, Beavercreek, OH 45432
(937)426-0861

Lisa's Perennials & Flowers
4625 W State Route 41, Covington, OH 45318
(937) 473-3873

Meadow View Growers meadowview.com
755 North Dayton-Lakeview Rd (St Rte 235 North)
New Carlisle, OH 45344
(937) 845-0093

The Secret Garden secretgardenwaynesville.com
4107 East State Route 73, Waynesville, OH 45068
(513)897-5505

Seely's Landscape Nursery seelyslandscape.com
3265 Walcutt Rd, Hillard, OH 43026
(614)7710011

Stockslagers Greenhouse & Garden Center
Stockslagers.com
14037 Dayton Eaton Pike, New Lebanon, OH 45345
(937)687-2722

Wade & Gatton Nurseries
wadeandgattonnurseries.com
1288 Gatton Rocks Rd, Bellville, OH 44813
(419)883-3191

Wengerlawn Nursery Co. wengerlawnnursery.com
6450 Wengerlawn Rd, Brookville, OH 45309
(937)884-7692

Robin Mann, News Scapes Editor
rmann1993@yahoo.com

Miami Valley Hosta Society
Celebrating 25 Years
November 2017



“Stimulating the knowledge and love of hostas”

Dayton Ohio and Miami Valley Region



H. 'Goodness Gracious'

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Administrator
Email staff@miamivalleyhosta.com

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Yearbook:	Bob liames, Karen Strider-liames and Glenda Wogoman

Great Lakes Region Delegates: Glenda Wogoman
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