



# DELAWARE VALLEY HOSTA SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

**INSIDE** My Tiny Hosta Garden  
Ugh! Tree Roots!  
2017-18 Calendar

Volume 26, No. 4

[www.delvalhosta.org](http://www.delvalhosta.org)

Fall, 2017

Saturday, October 14, 2017

## Scott Arboretum

## Wister Education Center & Greenhouse

500 E. College Avenue  
Swarthmore, PA 19081

Jeff Jabco, Speaker

"Competing With Tree Roots In The Shade Garden."

12:30 p.m. Set-Up

1:00 p.m. Hostality and Business Meeting

Election of DVHS board members

2:00 p.m. Presentation by Jeff Jabco

3:00 p.m. Chat and Clean-Up

3:30 p.m. Convention Planning Update

**Hosta-tality for October 14. Please bring some treats for our meeting.  
Beverages will be provided. Come early if you can help set up.**

### Directions for October 14

Swarthmore is best accessed from I-476. From I-476 take exit 3 for Media/Swarthmore and follow signs to Swarthmore on Baltimore Pike. In about 0.3 miles, turn right on Rte. 320 South (South Chester Road). Then follow Rte. 320 as it turns right at the first light. Turn right at the next light onto College Ave. Follow the Scott Arboretum Event signs to parking and the Wister Center.

Drivers from the west take Rte. 1 North, but stay on Baltimore Pike after you pass the remains of Granite Run Mall. Do not take the Rte. 1 by-pass. Come through Media and under I-476 to Rte. 320. If you mistakenly take the Rte. 1 by-pass, proceed about 3.5 miles and exit to I-476 South. Then take the next exit for Rte. 320.

### The American Hosta Society

[www.americanhostasociety.org](http://www.americanhostasociety.org)

Check out the benefits of membership.  
Join other hosta lovers from around the world.



## DVHS Officers

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#### Plant Sales & Auctions

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#### Hostatality

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#### Raffles/Special Events

Position open

### Advisory Board

Conny Parsons, past president Glen Mills,  
PA

Michael Flagg, Schwenksville, PA  
Ed MacFarland, Glenside, PA  
Warren Pollock, Glen Mills, PA

Barbara Tiffany, Point Pleasant, PA

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As I write this there are an unprecedented three hurricanes in the Atlantic, with Irma quite likely the largest, strongest storm on record for the Atlantic. Wildfires are raging in the West due to years of drought. And yet in a time of global warming due to man's effect on the climate, our summer was unusually cool and wet. The hostas are making strong root systems for next year, yet some of their leaves have suffered from fungal or bacterial diseases worse than any year in recent memory.

I glean this based not only on evidence in our own garden, but also on the time I spend on the Facebook group for the American Hosta Society. Facebook has become a go-to resource for many people on many subjects, including hosta gardening. Tied to our own DVHS website is a post I prepared (generally "pinned" to the top of the group feed), providing instructions on how to seek an identification for an unnamed hosta. It helps keep down the stream of people requesting access to the group and simply posting a picture of a hosta accompanied by the text "Name?" I understand this feature will be written up for the AHS's Online Journal.

This year, perhaps more than in other years, people on Facebook have posted many pictures accompanied by the text "Is this diseased?" The group has done a good job alarming gardeners to the scourge of Hosta Virus X, but the flip side of that is that new gardeners are paranoid when something doesn't look quite right. In addition to truly virus-infected hostas, slug-riddled leaves, and some effects of nematodes, it seems we have seen more crown rot and melt-out of white-variegated hostas than usual, even on white-edged cultivars. Not to worry: hostas with affected leaves should come back fine next year, although I might be reaching for Daconil® for treatment.

In the back of my mind (and in the depths of my computer) I had been compiling a list of Frequently Asked Questions based on real-life and on-line experience. So, while I continued to add to the website for next year's convention ([www.ahs2018philly.org](http://www.ahs2018philly.org)), I added a section of FAQs to [www.delvalhosta.org](http://www.delvalhosta.org) (in the About Hostas section). I quickly recognized that it was too much for a single web page, so broke it into three parts, one of which is two pages itself (giving a full page to HVX).

Reception of the information has been good by the folks in the AHS Facebook group. I'll continue to tinker with it. I want this to bolster DVHS's reputation, and break down barriers for newer, less experienced gardeners. Let me know what you think.

By the way, by the time you read this there should be a Facebook group for the 2018 convention. This will be linked to the main convention website. I'm still not sure how to best use it for marketing the event; let me know if you have ideas.

Finally, as this issue was going to press, we received the sad news that DVHS member and former president Bruce Banyai passed away on September 6. See the brief memorial in this issue.

*David Teager*

Fall Hostas at Longwood Gardens.  
Clockwise from upper left: 'H. longipes' var 'latifolia', 'Redneck Heaven', 'Honeybells', 'Lancifolia' naturalized in the Hillside Garden, 'H. pachysepala'.  
Photos, Kathy Miller.

# Competing With Tree Roots In The Shade Garden

Jeff Jabco, Speaker



Photo, Scott Arboretum

(ed. note) When the well know hybridizer Olga Petryszyn ('Niagara Falls', 'Brother Stefan', and many popular hostas) moved into her new house, she prepared to move her extensive hosta collection along with her. The large, forested front yard was first covered with Tex-R root-inhibiting fabric. Then, eight inches of soil were spread on top. After her hostas were moved into their new home, it all looked great... At least at first.

Within three years all the trees were dead! The fabric, the extra soil and the weight of the construction equipment all contributed to their demise. See "Killing with Kindness: Trials and Tribulations of Moving a Mature Garden", *The Hosta Journal*. 2014. 54(1):34-39.

Our speaker, Jeff Jabco will discuss our love-hate relationship with trees. Can we get our hostas and our trees to co-exist peacefully?

Jeff is the Director of Grounds and Coordinator of Horticulture at Scott Arboretum. Before coming to Swarthmore in 1990, he worked for Penn State University Cooperative Extension as a horticulture agent in southeastern Pennsylvania. He also owned and operated a garden design and vegetable production business. A graduate of Penn State University, he holds a Master's degree from North Carolina State University in Horticulture/Plant Breeding and Plant Pathology.



Original Photo (uncropped), Gordon M. Robertson

## Big Leaf Results

July marked another annual tug-of-war between 'Empress Wu' and 'Sum and Substance'. But wait, what is that truly beautiful contender entering the fray?. The 13 entries also included: 'Sagae', 'Frances Williams', 'Guacamole', 'Victory' and something suspiciously looking like rhubarb.

We won't keep you in suspense. First, second and third places went to leaves of 'Sum and Substance', grown by Missy Kashey. The winner measured 18" by 18", essentially 324 square inches. Fourth place went to

'Empress Wu' (18" by 13"), grown by Marilyn Romenesko. Fifth went to (Ta-dah!!) 'Victory' (13.5" by 17.5"), grown by Sherry and Jim Tatro - a leaf so beautiful it was a shame to cut it. Our highly suspicious leaf actually *was* rhubarb, grown by Debby Bryan. At 29" by 28", it gave us pause; hostas have a long way to go!

A big thanks to all who entered and also to Bruce Gangawer for hosting us at Paxson Hill Farm.

## My Very Tiny Garden

Barbara Nace

*editor's note: Barbara served as DVHS Secretary from 2009 to 2013*

**The long story:** Eight years ago, I was ready to move after more than 40 years in my house. However, my hostas were resisting. While most of the hostas in my large collection were in containers and thus portable, there was no place for them at my new house. (In fact, there wasn't even place for me, but that's another story.) The house was new construction and not-yet completed, and landscaping was yet to be. Even worse, the garden would be located in sun.

Fortunately, my friend Mike Flagg showed up at my now-sold house with a flatbed truck that we covered completely with potted hostas to be transported to overwinter at his house in the woods. They would remain with Mike until I figured this all out. The following spring, foundation landscaping was completed at my new house: shamrock hollies, dwarf winterberries, a dwarf Colorado blue spruce, a dwarf witch hazel, and oakleaf hydrangeas. I gave half of the hostas in my collection to Mike and brought the rest to their new home.

**The short story:** I've found somewhat secluded, shady spots for many hostas, mostly behind the shamrock hollies. That means that these hostas can easily be seen only from inside the house and the porch, not from the sunny front of the house. Three large hostas are visible from the front, and they're tolerating way too much sun. I took the accompanying photos in mid-July, not the season of greatest hosta beauty. In fact, the large 'Krossa Regal' is now only bluish (it's the oldest hosta here, at least 20 years old).

There are multiples of others. 'Stiletto' is the most vigorous grower. It wants to be everywhere in the garden! 'Whirlwind' has lost most of its whirl, but is otherwise a nice plant. 'Fire Island' is very happy here. 'Francee' thrives. 'Feather Boa' would like to be moved. 'Minuteman' is reliably handsome, and a blue/green plant whose label has been removed by evil squirrels emerges every year looking like a lush, tightly massed bridal bouquet. One of the large variegated hostas has been nibbled on by deer, and rabbits are eating the blossoms. Must be a tasty plant. Squirrels also swiped these labels, so I don't know the hosta's name.

**The even shorter story:** I've kept some hostas in pots on the patio on the back side of the house. It gets enough shade there to please some blues. It also pleases me to see these plants from the adjacent sunroom.

*All in all, the stories have been happy ones for both me and the hostas.*



Photos from Barbara



**Hosta Flowers of Fall**  
**Longwood Gardens**  
**How many can you name?**



# Southern Blight

Excerpts from the web pages of the Missouri Botanical Garden. [www.missouribotanicalgarden.org](http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org)

## Symptoms and Diagnosis

Crown rot, sometimes called southern blight or southern stem rot, is caused by several soil-borne fungi. It affects many herbaceous plants and some woody plants.....It is commonly found on hostas. The problem generally requires removal of the diseased plant.[(ed. note) or the diseased divisions.]

Crown rot causes deterioration and rotting of the tissues at the crown of the plant causing the leaves to turn yellow, collapse, and die. When the temperature exceeds 70 degrees F, infected plants develop discolored, water-soaked stem lesions near the soil line. During periods of high humidity, coarse cottony webbing (mycelium) develops and fans out over the stem base and surrounding soil. Sclerotia, which resemble mustard seeds and vary from white to reddish tan to light brown in color, develop at the base of the plant. Enough sclerotia may form to create a crust on the soil."

## Pest Management Strategies

**1. Remove diseased plants as soon as they are noticed.** Plants can be burned, but do NOT place them in your compost pile. [(ed. note) For hostas, usually only the affected divisions are removed and the remainder of the plant treated.]

**2. Excavate surrounding soil.** Dig out and replace the soil to a depth of 8 inches and 6 inches beyond the diseased area. [(ed. note) I have not done this for crown rot.]

**3. Solarize the soil.** If you do not remove the soil and the area receives at least two to three hours of direct sun, solarize it. Cover the area with clear plastic and leave it for two to three months in the heat of the summer. [(ed. note) Probably not a good idea for hostas, unless the entire plant has been removed.]

**4. Provide better drainage.** Increasing the organic content of the soil and improving drainage will make the environment less desirable to the fungus.

**5. Sterilize all tools.** Clean all tools used in digging with a solution of 1 part bleach to 9 parts water to disinfect the tools and reduce spreading the disease to other locations in your garden.

**6. Try Fungicides.** Pesticides registered for control of crown rot include mancozeb and thiophanate methyl (Cleary 3336F®). [(ed. note) After thoroughly removing any affected divisions, I have had good luck drenching the plant two or three times with the 1:10 bleach solution mentioned above. Like David, I also have used Daconil.]

## Where Are You, 'My Child Insook'? A Developing Story

...a correction for the Summer issue of the *Newsletter* from Roberta Chopko.

Just thought you would like to know that there is some misinformation in your recent article on expensive hostas. H. 'My Child Insook' did sell for about \$4,200 at an AHS auction, but the buyer was Wagner Thielens of Wilton, CT, not Van Wade. Wagner passed away this year, but the plant was alive the last time we visited his garden a few years ago. It is indeed a difficult plant to grow, but if the one in Van Wade's display garden died, it wasn't the one purchased for this exorbitant amount of money.

## National Hosta Display Gardens at Barnes Arboretum.

On Thursday Aug. 31, our workday was scheduled to include DVHS members and the regular Barnes volunteers and gardeners. Next year we will advertise potential workdays on our calendar, so watch for additional opportunities to help with our impressive display garden.

A big thanks to all who were there.

Pictured, among other members:  
Director Jacob Thomas, Marilyn Romenesko, Rebecca Boylan,  
Middy Dorrance, Conny Parsons, and Carol Dutil.



## Bruce Banyai, 1952-2017

We have just received the very sad news of the sudden passing of Bruce Banyai on Wednesday, September 6, a few days shy of his 65th birthday. Bruce was deeply devoted to hostas and the AHS, a love passed on by his mother, Pauline (originator of 'Gold Standard' and many other hostas). Bruce was a hybridizer himself and maintained a small nursery of hostas for sale, first at his home in Delaware and later after a move to Virginia.

A former president of the Delaware Valley Hosta Society, he kept his membership current long after his family's move to Virginia. Bruce is survived by his wife Lois, his brothers, two sons and their wives, and eight grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be made to Project Amazon, P. O. Box 3253, Peoria, IL 61612.



*H. 'Twist of Lime'*

Banyai/Solberg

Photo, [www.plantdelights.com](http://www.plantdelights.com)

### A personal remembrance by David Teager

Bruce was, not surprisingly, one of the first people we met through the DVHS. A scientist like myself and like Warren Pollock, the three of us represented three generations of scientist-gardeners whose passion for hostas went deeper than an appreciation of the plant's beauty and garden potential.

We visited his home in Hockessin, Delaware. He was always generous, not only with the hostas he sold (and gifted) to us, but with the information behind them. He couldn't sell us a 'Frances Williams' without making us scrutinize his clump of the very similar 'Samurai'. In the days when tissue culture propagation was just starting in hostas, he showed us the bed where he would toss the tiniest pieces of roots and crowns sacrificed when he divided hostas for sale. These neglected fragments would sometimes re-sprout as clones of their parents. He continued to look for new plants, even sending us a trial of a new sport that he wanted us to evaluate before registration (and to have it on display at next year's convention).

He and his wife Lois had already volunteered their services as bus captains for 2018. He will be sorely missed.

### Bruce Banyai Registrations

'Crystal Fountain'  
'Crystal Glaze'  
'Gold Springs'  
'Green Nymph'

'Regal Skies'  
'Smoothie'  
'Sun Drop'  
'Twist of Lime'

**IT'S DUES TIME.** Please check your mailing label. If you see a number less than 17, you owe DVHS dues for 2017. Current members' renewal fees are due by the April meeting; any back dues also need to be paid in order to remain current. **You must be a current member to purchase hostas at the special sales, and to receive the Newsletter by mail.** The dues pay for the publication of this newsletter and maintenance of the website, as well as for other activities.

Cut off and mail in, or bring to the meeting.

### Delaware Valley Hosta Society Membership and Renewal Form

Dues (household membership) are \$10 per year.  
Mail to: Rebecca Boylan, DVHS Membership  
1200 Farmington Ave.  
Pottstown, PA 19464

Please use this form also to update your records for address and e-mail, or to offer your garden for a potential meeting or tour. Thanks!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Would you consider opening your garden for a members'tour? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you in the nursery trade? \_\_\_\_\_

# Calendar of Events 2018 [www.delvalhosta.org](http://www.delvalhosta.org)

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Saturday, October 14, 2017. Fall Meeting.

Speaker: Jeff Jabco. "Competing With Tree Roots."  
Wister Education Center of the Scott Arboretum.  
Swarthmore, PA.

Saturday, February 3, 2018. Winter Meeting

Hosta Soup. Speaker: David Teager.  
Wister Education Center of the Scott Arboretum.  
Swarthmore, PA.

Saturday, April 14, 2018. Spring Meeting.

Speaker: Jenny Rose Carey, "The Gardens  
of Northview." DoubleTree Hotel,  
Valley Forge, PA.

Wednesday thru Saturday, June 20-23, 2018.

*Phifty in Philly*. The American Hosta Society  
National Convention. DoubleTree Hotel, Valley  
Forge, PA.

Saturday, July, TBA. 2018. Summer Meeting. Garden walk  
and potluck. Northview Gardens, Ambler, PA.

Saturday, October 6, 2018. Fall Meeting.

Speaker: Mary Tipping, "Hostas and Their  
Companions in the Scott Arboretum." Wister  
Education Center of the Scott Arboretum.  
Swarthmore, PA.

June, 2019. AHS National Convention. Green Bay, WI.

June, 2020. AHS National Convention. Minneapolis, MN.

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The Delaware Valley Hosta Society has been growing and would like to welcome the following  
new members who have recently joined our group:

Theodore Alber, Huntingdon Valley, PA      Sam & Rena Barnett, Media, PA

Priscilla DiGalbo, Phoenix, MD      Brigitte Gottlieb, Levittown, PA      Dennis Hurst, Womelsdorf, PA

Jeff Lapp, Hatfield, PA      Mary Ellen May, Hatboro, PA      Michelle Pudder, Newark, DE

Ashley Rosser, Douglassville, PA      Sandra Whipple, Merion Station, PA

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