

# Hosta Horizons

newsletter of the  
*Russ O'Harra Hosta Society*  
Celebrating 20 Years in 2013

October 2013+

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

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

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

Also, please consider giving a membership to a gardening friend or family member. As a new member, they will receive a Gift Card for \$12 that may be redeemed in 2014 at any of the nine businesses owned by ROHS members who support the New Member Program.

Send all renewals and new memberships to:

Reldon Ramsey  
130 Amsterdam Dr.  
Pella, IA 50219

*Thank You!*

## President's Message

*"Gardening Grows the Spirit"*



**Every time a seed is planted it's an act of faith.**

The ROHS board will meet at the end of September to iron out our calendar of events for 2014. Our Spring meeting will be April 13<sup>th</sup> and the Fall meeting will be set for October 12<sup>th</sup>. The summer tour will be June 22<sup>nd</sup> between the National and Midwest hosta conventions.

*What a roller coaster ride Mother Nature has taken us on in 2013. We had such a long winter with snow and cold in May yet, followed with a deluge of rains, then none at all. Our hostas have endured another discouraging, too hot and too dry summer. The middle of September is here and its 99 degrees yet today. I've been hoping and praying for rain, but it just hasn't happened. Rain will come, and fall will arrive, and garden clean-up will be done before the snow flies. We will not lose hope. Next spring hostas will emerge and joy will fill our "hosta hearts".*

The 2014 AHS National Convention will be held June 11 – 14, hosted by our friends, the Harshbarger Hosta Society, in Cedar Rapids. What a great opportunity for all of us to "Čzech It Out!" and attend a

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# Hosta Horizons

## ROHS Officers

### Marlys Anderson, President

104 Blue Gill Court, Pella, IA 50219

[Marlys1950@hotmail.com](mailto:Marlys1950@hotmail.com); 641-780-6487

### Barry Laws, Ex-officio

1895 E. Army Post Rd, Des Moines, IA 50320

[info@quiltedgardens.com](mailto:info@quiltedgardens.com); 515-720-3089

### Eve Vanden Broek, Vice-President

134 Holland Drive, Pella, IA 50219

[mrstheo@iowatelecom.net](mailto:mrstheo@iowatelecom.net); 641-627-5316

### David Dettmann, Treasurer

122 Blue Gill Court, Pella, IA 50219

[bdd5097@yahoo.com](mailto:bdd5097@yahoo.com); 641-627-5097

### Ellen Glasgow, Secretary

1104 N. Buxton, Indianola, IA 50125

[eglasgow08@q.com](mailto:eglasgow08@q.com); 515-961-5237

### Reldon Ramsey, Newsletter Editor

130 Amsterdam Drive, Pella, IA 50219

[rohseeditor@gmail.com](mailto:rohseeditor@gmail.com); 641-780-9031

### Linda Baer, Hospitality Chair

505 S. Water St., Madrid, IA 50156

[kdmkddaj@yahoo.com](mailto:kdmkddaj@yahoo.com); 515-230-8600

## 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.

*"The purpose of a garden is to give its owner the best and highest kind of earthly pleasure."*

Gertrude Jekyll

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

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## Dates to Remember

**Sunday, October 13 – Noon to 5 PM**

**ROHS Fall Meeting**

**Iowa Arboretum, rural Madrid**

**Speaker: Josh Spece**



**January 11 – 25**

**AHS Online Auction**

**January 18**

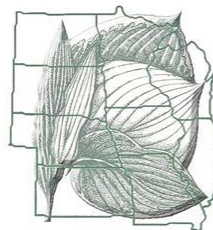
**Winter Scientific Meeting, Lisle, IL**

**February 8 – 22**

**First Look Online Auction**

**March 14 & 15**

**Hosta College, Piqua, OH**



## Midwest Regional Hosta Society

The Midwest Regional Hosta Society represents Region 5 of the American Hosta Society that includes 9 states. Our mission is to promote education, research, development and enjoyment of Hosta.

Membership in the society is \$20.00 for 2 years, which includes two issues per year of the newsletter. This publication reports on events and information on Hostas in general.

Please mail a check made payable to **MRHS** to:

Kristine James  
523 E Calhoun St.  
Woodstock, IL 60098

along with Name, Address, phone, and email (Most correspondence is by email). For questions email [MRHS.Hosta@gmail.com](mailto:MRHS.Hosta@gmail.com).

## President's Message:

### *"Gardening Grows the Spirit"*

Every time a seed is planted it's an act of faith.

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national convention right in our backyard. I know it will be my summer vacation.

#### [2014 AHS Convention in Cedar Rapids](#)

The Midwest Regional Hosta Convention will be held June 26 – 28, 2014, in Green Bay, WI. It's not too far from home either.

I attended the AHS National Convention this summer with my girlfriends. We had a great time touring beautiful gardens, eating good food, relaxing, and enjoying fun entertainment. *Hosta conventions are fun!*

ROHS is continuing to work with Joe McNally at the Iowa Arboretum on an all O'Harra Hosta bed. Progress is slow, but we will persevere, and eventually, it will happen. With the heat and drought, there has been little reason to push the project.

*Building A Dream In The Country is nearing its first goal of \$150,000, so the house can be ordered. There is a push on to get the home built before the snow flies. The gauge is at \$137,000 and climbing. \$200,000 is needed to complete the entire project with a garage, breezeway, and a handicapped-accessible storm shelter. Many hosta organizations and hosta friends have supported BADITC, and more fund raisers are planned.*

#### [Building A Dream In The Country on Facebook](#)

#### [Building A Dream In The Country](#)

Our ROHS summer tour and auction was wonderful. It was a perfect day. I sent out a group email to thank everyone, but want it mentioned here, too. We all pulled together and had a great day. Thank you to everyone, and especially to Teresa Innis for hosting and helping to organize the event, and to the gardeners who so graciously opened their gardens to us, and Bruce Van Wyk, our auctioneer.

*I know members that attended our ROHS 20-year anniversary party in July enjoyed it. I laughed a lot, and learned a few things about ROHS, and I also learned that "Herman has hips". Commemorative flower pots were given to attendees along with a new hosta introduction by former ROHS member Greg Johnson named Hosta 'Unbridled Passion'. No extra plants remain, but the pots will be available to members at our fall meeting until the supply is gone. They were given as one pot per membership - not one pot per member. Reldon put together a booklet, "Memories of Russ", celebrating the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of ROHS. It is very well done. I've read mine cover to cover and will read it again more than once.*

Our ROHS fall meeting will be October 13<sup>th</sup> at the Iowa Arboretum with Deke and Marilyn Gliem hosting. ROHS member Josh Spece will talk to us about "What's New & Exciting" in the Hosta World.

This is the broken record (I bet no one says that anymore), but we need hosts for our Spring and Fall meetings in 2014. All you have to do is reserve a place and help with table décor. And if anyone wants to donate door prizes at any time, you're welcome to bring them to our meetings.

Next broken record, who will serve on the ROHS Executive Committee after 2014? Please feel free to nominate yourself if you would like to serve or please get suggestions to me.

*Our current board is quite proud of the enthusiasm in our group. We've had quite a bit of fun along the way and we've accomplished some good things. Thanks to Reldon, our Hosta Horizons newsletter is top notch. Please feel free to submit articles, fun quotes, photos, or poetry to Reldon for inclusion in our newsletter.*

(Continued on page 4)

## President's Message:

*"Gardening Grows the Spirit"*

Every time a seed is planted it's an act of faith.

(Continued from page 3)

Our "New Member" program has been quite successful. I'd like to extend a special "Thank You" to our nine vendor members who support that program. ROHS is vital and strong and ready to embark on a new journey under new leadership.

*We are very proud of the contributions ROHS has made to the AHS, supporting the HVX and Nematode Research Programs. Over three short years we've revamped and rededicated the downtown Des Moines "Pocket Garden" in Russ O'Harra's memory; we've set up the Ted E. Davidson scholarship through the Horticulture program at DMACC; and we did a great thing contributing to and promoting the "Building A Dream In The Country" project fund.*

Plans are in place for an all O'Harra bed at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Gardens. When the Iowa Arboretum O'Harra Hosta display garden is done, so will be the current board's work. So into the future we "grow" focusing on the Iowa Arboretum in 2014.

## Hosta is the Friendship Plant

*"Gardening Grows the Spirit"*



MM

Marvelous Marlys

*Whether the weather be cold  
or whether the weather be hot,  
whatever the weather,  
we'll weather the weather  
whether we like it or not.*

# ROHS Fall Meeting

## IOWA ARBORETUM

1875 Peach Street  
Madrid, Iowa 50156  
(515) 795-3216

## Noon – 5 PM

The building opens at Noon, and the potluck dinner will begin at 12:30 PM. Our speaker, Josh Spece, will begin his presentation at 1:30 PM followed by the business meeting. Josh's talk is "What's New & Exciting" in the Hosta World.



## Directions to the Iowa Arboretum

Many GPS systems tend to take you on gravel road short cuts so we suggest the following directions.

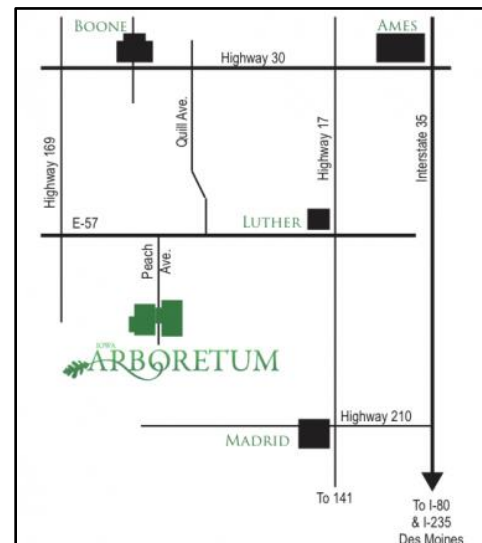
**From the South:**

**Option 1:** Take I-35 north to Highway 210 (Slater/Maxwell Exit). Go west on Hwy 210 to Madrid. Turn right and head north to Luther. Turn left and head west on E-57. Watch for Iowa Arboretum/4-H camp sign and turn left at Peach Avenue.

**Option 2:** Take 80/35 to Highway 141. Follow this north to Highway 17 and travel through Madrid to Luther. Turn left and head west on E-57. Watch for Iowa Arboretum/4-H camp sign and turn left at Peach Avenue.

**From the North and East:** Take I-35 south to Highway 30 (Ames). Go west on Hwy 30 to Highway 17 Exit. Turn left to go south to Luther. Turn right and head west on E-57. Watch for Iowa Arboretum/4-H camp sign and turn left at Peach Avenue.

**From the West:** Take Highway 30 through Boone. Turn right and go south on either Quill Road or Highway 17. Take a right on E-57 and head west. Watch for Iowa Arboretum/4-H camp sign and turn left at Peach Avenue.



# 2013 ROHS SUMMER TOUR

## Garden #1 Jim & Charlie Atcher

The morning of June 30<sup>th</sup> proved to be the perfect day for the ROHS Summer Garden Tour. The combination of overcast skies and the cooler temperature were welcomed by members and guests who began the day visiting the garden of Jim and Charlie Atcher in Laurel. Not much grass can be found there as most of their yard has been converted to gardens over the years with garden art throughout.



O'Harra hosta club members arriving at the Atcher garden are greeted by Jim on the front sidewalk.



A garden visitor chats with Charlie Atcher. (left)

A young lady is all smiles as she takes a "ride" on the pony. (below right)

An outstanding specimen of Olga Petrysyn's *Hosta* 'Brother Stefan' is prominently displayed. (below)



The distinctive foliage pattern of *H.* 'Lakeside Paisley Print'.



Beware: pink flamingoes fly in the Atcher garden!

Hostas are by no means the only collectible for the Atcher family – Jim and his brothers collect antique cars, too.



# 2013 ROHS SUMMER TOUR

## Garden #2 Jody Allen

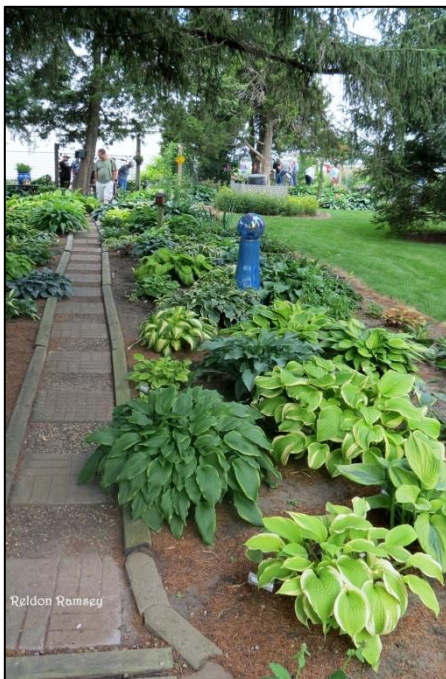
Jody Allen's gardens on the west edge of Grinnell offered plenty to see in her display gardens and even more in her growing gardens where hostas, lilies, and vegetables were in abundance.



Garden visitors are dwarfed by large trees sheltering Jody Allen's display garden.



No crossing guard was needed to bring visitors to a stop as they approached the Allen garden.



Another walkway in the display garden is bordered by cool shades of green and chartreuse.



Looking toward Jody's growing beds with colorful summer perennials in the foreground.



*Hosta 'Thunderbolt'* in full bloom.

Is Ellen Glasgow trying out for the Rockettes? No! She creatively uses her foot to point since both hands hold cookies. Reldon Ramsey lends a stabilizing hand when Ellen is overcome with laughter and begins to wobble. (below)



## 2013 ROHS SUMMER TOUR

### Garden #3 Echo Jansen

Echo Jansen's garden was nestled in the wooded part of Grinnell near the country club. She and her friends had conjured up delectable treats for her garden visitors and few of us resisted the temptation to try her sweet offerings and beverages.



In the Jansen garden (l to r): Eve Vanden Broek, Lois & Tim Cahill, Nancy McWherter, Marlys Anderson & Ron Humeston with Betsy Dettmann and Janan Abels in the rear.



Hostas line the gravel path leading to the back garden.

ROHS visitors sample the tasty and creative culinary delights offered by Echo and her friends on the deck. (below)



### ROHS on Facebook

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

As of September 25<sup>th</sup>, the ROHS Facebook page has 158 'Likes' from those who follow the posts on the page. Marlys Anderson has kept interest high this spring and summer by posting many pictures of hostas, gardens, and lovely flowers from her personal collection of photos taken over the years. Typically now, a photo will be seen by 35 to 60 people. As always, a risqué hosta name instantly attracts more attention. 123 viewers took a peek at *Hosta* 'Hanky Panky'!

The ROHS page has a national and international following. About a month ago, a gentleman from Turkey joined our page. Earlier this week, a man from Poland began following us, as well. Gardening is truly international. More ROHS members have joined the Facebook page this year, too.

Marlys recently emailed ROHS members asking for photos that members would like to have posted to the page. Let's continue to keep the interest level high!

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

[Facebook](#) or [Russ O'Harra Hosta Society](#)  
[ROHS on Facebook](#)

## 2013 ROHS SUMMER TOUR

Our thanks to the gardeners who graciously allowed us to spend time in the gardens they've created for the ROHS Summer Tour. Each of the gardens was unique and wonderful!

**Jim and Charlie Atcher, Laurel**

**Jodie Allen, Grinnell**

**Echo Jansen, Grinnell**

**Pat Rutherford, Grinnell**

**Rick & Teresa Innis, Newburg**

Special thanks to Teresa Innis for hosting the lunch and auction, and to Teresa's sister, Vicki, and her family for the delicious lunch.

Thanks to everyone who helped make the day and the auction such a **HUGE** success!

# 2013 ROHS SUMMER TOUR

## Garden #4 Pat Rutherford

Pat Rutherford's country garden southeast of Grinnell had great visual appeal with its backdrop of rolling countryside. Her gardens around the house and farmstead were filled with well-grown hostas and perennials.



The Rutherford home has a strong presence in the landscape. (above)

Hostas flank the front porch.



A beautiful specimen of *H. 'Liberty'*.

A neat rectangular bed of hostas and perennials border a shed on the left side of the driveway. (below)



The rustic windmill and the attractive garden bed at its base with rusty reds and gold drew visitors in for a closer look.



An attractive and unique pergola shelters a grouping of hostas behind the house. (below)





## 2013 ROHS SUMMER TOUR

### Garden #5 Rick & Teresa Innis

Many thanks go to Teresa Innis and her family for hosting the ROHS Summer Tour, Lunch, and Auction. The gardens that Rick and Teresa created were charming, as always, and the backyard provided a wonderful setting for our lunch and auction.



The Innis garage wall draws attention with its display of antiques and colorful floral accents.



Also garnering attention was this dramatic "Garden Quilt".

A terra cotta bowl of succulents is elevated near the back porch for easier access and viewing.



An attractive combination of hostas, succulents, and conifers flank the front porch.



"Die-cut" fencing borders the north side of the Innis gardens with each section having a different pattern.

The shaded garden at the rear of the Innis garden offered a nicely shaded setting for the delicious lunch prepared by Teresa's sister, Vicky, and the afternoon auction. (below)





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

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

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

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

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

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

For more information contact:

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

or

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

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

[Hostas on the Bay](#)

## January On-line Auction 2014: But That is a Long Time From Now!

October may seem an odd time to be thinking about sub-zero temps and cabin fever activities coming up in January of 2014 ... WRONG! There is no better time than now to take inventory, make note, and plan donations for the AHS On-line Auction. 2013 Online Auction showed us all that there exists a great degree of interest in seed, especially seed from good quality seedlings, rare collector plants, and streaked breeders. Do not have any of those; hey, there is also interest in seed from classics. Our participants have widely varying degrees of interest and experience with growing seed. The same holds true of plants, if you like it ... someone else will. This event is the second largest fundraiser for the society each year. Donors provide a description of plant material, seed, or garden related items and a digital photo. Each item is posted in an easy-to-use auction format.

Each year the AHS On-line Auction is held in mid-January. News is distributed via email notices and upon the AHS website. Enter the AHS website and send a message to the chair, Don Dean, requesting that your address be added to the mailing group. Changed your service provider or have a new email address? Be sure to send this news to Don as well.

Much more information will be coming to the membership later. Take a moment now with this message to have your email included in future messages. Planning for possible donations is even more time critical while we can see what we have. Give it a thought and consider joining in on the fun and entertainment when the plant world can seem to have stopped!

On-line Auction Chair,  
Don Dean

# Čzech it Out!

## Vitáme Vás

*(We welcome you)*

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

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

### The Amana Colonies

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

### The National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library

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

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

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

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

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

### **Come to the convention to...**

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



Visitors in the Novak Garden located near Coralville Lake north of the Iowa City area.

Photo courtesy of Jay McWherter

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



# Russ O'Harra Hosta Society

## ROHS 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

**Sunday, July 21 at the Iowa Arboretum**

The 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration was held on a beautiful sunny afternoon. ROHS members and guests enjoyed a social time as people arrived. We were honored by the presence of several members who hadn't been able to be with us in recent years.

ROHS President Marlys Anderson welcomed everyone to the celebration. Bruce Van Wyk offered a prayer of thanks for the Society, its members, and the twenty-year milestone. A delicious catered meal followed.



Russ O'Harra Hosta Society 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary pots and *H. 'Unbridled Passion'* (above) were used as table decorations. Audra Wilson visits with the O'Harra daughters.

After dinner, a short program was presented by Reldon Ramsey who chaired the 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Planning Committee.

Special guests were four of the five "O'Harra Girls": Katie O'Harra, Houston, TX; Ellen O'Harra Hill and husband, A.J., Buffalo Grove, IL; Joan O'Harra Burke, Des Moines, IA; and Mary O'Harra, Minneapolis, MN. Youngest daughter, Maggie "Bobbin" O'Harra Boulding, Los Angeles, CA, was unable to attend.

Rosanne O'Harra had planned to share the day with us as well, but she had fallen in her home, breaking her hip, at the beginning of July and had then suffered a major stroke a few days later while in the hospital. Joan reported that their mother was improving daily and had been moved to a rehab facility six blocks from the O'Harra/Burke home a few days earlier. A prayer of healing was given for Rosanne.

Charter members in attendance: Skip Hitchcock, Muscatine; Deanna & Tom Jones, Sheldahl; Kris Jurik, Ames (rejoined in 2012); Marilyn Kenney, Ames; Herman & Helen Kopitzke, Boone; Isabelle Lemke, Des Moines; Donald & Dorothy Lewis, Ames; Audra & Fred Wilson, Ackworth.

Past and present ROHS officers in attendance were acknowledged. ROHS Trivia: there have been six presidents, eight vice-presidents, seven secretaries, five treasurers, six librarian/historians, five newsletter editors, and five couples and six individuals who have been involved with hospitality.

There was a moment of silence in memory of Russ O'Harra and all Society members who have passed away.

Reldon presented highlights from the first 20 years of the ROHS. He then thanked the members of the Planning Committee for their contributions to the success of the day, and they distributed the commemorative "Memories of Russ" booklet. The other gifts – yellow 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary pots with dark green lettering and Greg Johnson's *Hosta 'Unbridled Passion'* – served as centerpieces.

The afternoon concluded with a hysterically memorable musical comedy performance by Des Moines area favorites, "Joey Libido and his ex-wife, Sugar". The tunes covered many hits from the 1970s with a dash of Elvis thrown in for good measure. Highlights included the Disco Dance competition with Randy Craft the clear winner.



**Planning Committee: Frank & Ellen Glasgow, Reldon Ramsey, Bruce & Trudy Van Wyk, Carl & Robin Vos**

**September 26 - Update on Rosanne O'Harra:**  
"Mom is getting stronger each day, but there's still a long road to recovery ahead. We have great news that we'll be moving Mom back home in the mid-November time frame. We will hire in-home services and therapy so she can continue her recovery efforts. It will be so nice for Mom to be back home again."  
**Mary O'Harra**



Recently new announcements have been made daily on the BADITC Facebook page about progress for the new home for the Spece family.

**September 23:**

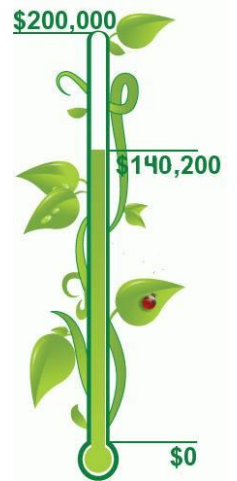
How about some extremely exciting news to start this week? The house plan has been finalized, deposit check written, and the building will start soon!

So many people have stepped up to help with this amazing project for the Spece family, with many of them helping time and time again. One of those people who has been a huge supporter is Jeff Miller from Land of the Giants Hosta Farm in Wisconsin. Jeff called last week and offered to loan us \$10,000, interest free, to make sure the Spece family is in their new home before Christmas!!! Thank you, Jeff, from the bottom of our hearts! Fundraising will continue full speed during the building process because this is only the first step of many that will allow Sue to continue caring for her kids at home. First, and most important, the home with the lift system. As soon as the family has moved in, we will continue working hard until we complete the voice activated features, breezeway with protection from severe weather and a garage to keep them out of the rain and snow. Watch Building a Dream's page closely in the coming weeks for more exciting announcements.

A few changes to the floor plan. Flipped with bedrooms farther from the road and the garage will be added on the right, just off the current drive to the shop.

**September 24:**

Thanks to \$200 from Marvelous Marlys Anderson's sales in Pella, along with \$1000 from Linda Port, Linda Cunningham, and friends snowman sales in Illinois, we have a new total! So many wonderfully generous friends helping! Thank you all!



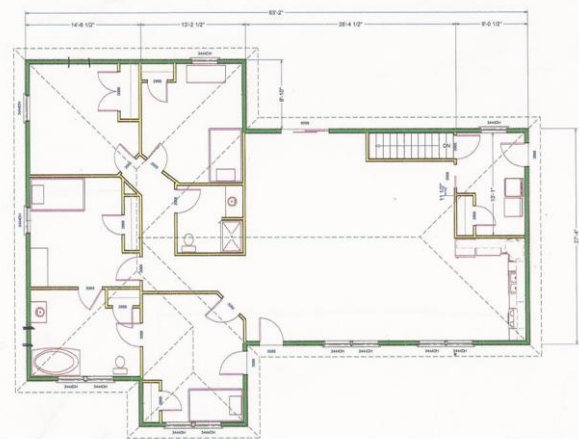
More amazing news! Plumb Supply from Waterloo Iowa will be donating the furnace and air conditioner and Independence Plumbing and Heating will donate the labor to put it in!!!! Huge thanks to Sheldon at Plumb Supply and Dick at Independence Plumbing Heating and Cooling. Also to Mindy Cochran for contacting Plumb Supply!

**September 25:**

Ready for more?!?! Webb Concrete will donate the equipment and their employee Chris Hallett will donate his time to dig the basement!!

**September 26:**

Jason from JVA Mobility contacted us and they will donate all labor to install the Waverly Glen ceiling lift! Thank you Jason and JVA Mobility!



To follow updates to the BADITC Facebook page, go to:

[Building A Dream In The Country on Facebook](#)

# More than 10,000 Days without a Vacation

**Editor's Note:** This article first appeared on the BADITC Facebook page.

For over 30 years, Sue Spece has been starting every day early, and ending each night late. She's been the primary (and usually the only) caregiver for her three children, all of whom have a form of muscular dystrophy that keeps them in motorized wheelchairs.

So what has Sue Spece accomplished in all that time without so much as a single day to take care of only herself? All three kids have college degrees and run their own businesses - Josh is a hosta expert, Jacob works with dairy cattle and Jackie runs, of all things, a dance studio. As the kids got older, Sue's days got longer. Digging hostas, hauling plants for trade shows, waiting on customers, and watering plants daily for the garden business she co-owns with Josh. Replacing floors, painting walls, registering dancers, and coordinating dance shows for Jackie's dance studio. Hauling feed, cleaning the barn, wrangling dairy calves, and cleaning Jacob's wheelchair at the end of the day.

Sue rarely sits down and has sacrificed every day off she might have had to make sure her kids can follow their dreams.

She lifts the kids into their wheelchairs at the beginning of each day and struggles to lift them back into bed at night. She bathes, dresses and feeds the boys and helps Jackie get ready for her day. Her home has no lift system, the halls are too narrow for the wheelchairs and there's not even a garage to keep the kids out of the rain and snow. She's done more than her share of carrying in 30 years, and her back and knees are paying the price.

And yet who is the first to offer help if a friend or neighbor needs it? Sue, of course.

Knowing how hard Sue works and how she struggles financially, friends nominated her for Extreme Makeover: Home Edition. When another deserving Iowa family was chosen, friends and neighbors stepped up again to form Building a Dream in the Country, a project dedicated to raising funds for a home to fit the Spece family's needs. Plans include wide doorways, open spaces, a ceiling-mounted lift system, a breezeway with a tornado room and wheelchair tire washing area, and a garage to keep them out of the rain and snow.

With the help of many individuals, groups and organizations Building a Dream has raised

\$139,000 towards their \$200,000 goal. The home won't be as extravagant as Extreme Makeover's. Low maintenance and easy to care for is the main goal as Sue's days are busy enough. Building a Dream is working hard to hit that \$200,000 mark so Sue and her kids can be in a comfortable, warm, accessible home before another Iowa winter hits.



Sue Spece sits in front of her three children, Josh, Jackie, and Jacob.

Photo courtesy of Building A Dream In The Country

To donate to help Sue be able to continue caring for her children at home, go to:

[Donate to BADITC](#)

To visit the BADITC Facebook page, go to:

[Building A Dream In The Country on Facebook](#)



## AHS Artistic Design Award

Each year at the American Hosta Society's Hosta Show, an award is given for "Best Artistic Design". The award was begun by Theresa Schutt, an early Iowa hosta pioneer, who was given an Honorary Lifetime Membership by ROHS in 1993. In 1995, ROHS took over sponsorship of the award. After Russ O'Harra's death in 1997, the award was given for several years "In Memory of Russ O'Harra". For the last two years, Bob Anderson aka "Potter Bob" of Pella has created a one-of-a-kind vase with hosta leaf accents for the award. Above is the lovely vase he created for 2013 along with the recipient of the award, Debbie Hurlbert, Howard, OH. Her entry, "Irish Fest", was judged to be this year's winner.

Photo of Debbie Hurlbert courtesy of Debbie Hurlbert.

## ROHS Spring Meeting Minutes

 Newton Arboretum April 14, 2013 

### Speaker

Our Spring meeting started off with Rob Mortko from Olathe, Kansas, and Made In The Shade Nursery speaking about "Tissue Culture for Dummies...Like Me".

As a long time hosta lover, but not so botanically versed, Rob showed our group how to tissue culture hostas and discussed all the painstaking steps toward the wonderful goal of multiplying, quadrupling, millionpling (trillion) them so we can all buy a virus free plant. After learning what it takes to tissue culture them, I marvel at those who are willing to cross pollinate, collect the seeds and then create a new Hosta that will someday go through the tissue culture. And to think, we can usually buy them for about \$15 - \$30. Rob is not that far away, so if you feel a need for a road trip, I'm sure he would have a plant or two for you to buy and answer any questions you may have.

### Welcome/Announcements/Thank You's

Marlys Anderson, President, called the meeting to order. She welcomed everyone attending and thanked Rob Mortko, Linda Baer for her hospitality, and gave a thank you to the Newton Arboretum for a lovely meeting venue.

### New Members/Guests

New members, Jim and Charlie Atcher, were present and reported they will have plenty for everyone to see on the first stop of our Summer Tour. Our eyes can gaze upon over 400 hostas, hot rods, rocks and more surrounding their property.

Another new member, Sylvia Hiland, says she loves gardening and all plants. Other visitors included Sally Cradleman and Reneè Kestler.

### Correspondence

A Thank You card was received from the Building A Dream In The Country committee; ROHS has been listed on their website and Facebook Thank You pages. Also received was a Thank You from the Harshbarger Hosta Society for all our help with their upcoming 2014 AHS Convention.

### Executive Committee Reports

**Secretary:** Minutes of the Fall meeting were published in the Spring newsletter. Motion to approve minutes as published was made by Herman Kopitzke; Marilyn Gleim gave the second. All Ayes.

**Treasurer's Report:** David Dettmann reported the balance of our account at the end of 2012 and at the time of the Spring meeting. He noted that we have annual recurring expenses that include, but are not limited to: website hosting fee, website domain name

registration, AHS Artistic Award gift, \$250 Ted Davidson Scholarship for a DMACC horticultural student, printing fees, memberships to Iowa Arboretum, speaker fees, meeting expenses, bank fees, stamps and mileage. Kathy Witkovski motioned to approve the Treasurer's Report; Reldon Ramsey gave the second. All Ayes

**Newsletter Editor's Report:** Reldon Ramsey reported a few people had received chewed up newsletters and wondered if others had as well. If you receive a damaged newsletter in the mail, please contact us or wait a couple of days when it will be out on our website and then you can either read or print it from there. He's done all he can to help the postal service out, but can't guarantee safe delivery.

**Vice President's Report:** Eve Vanden Broek reported the Summer Tour is coming together nicely. She and Marlys drove the route Saturday afternoon trying to come up with ideas for her "I Spy Game" she turned us onto a few years back. The date of our summer tour is June 30. The gardens in Laurel, Grinnell and Newburg belong to Jim and Charlie Atcher, Jody Allen, Echo Jansen, Pat Rutherford, and Rick & Teresa Innis. There will be door prizes, games, and a catered lunch. RSVPs are required by the deadline to help streamline our costs and provide common courtesy to the caterer. If you do not RSVP by the deadline, you can still come, but may need to bring a sack lunch as we cannot guarantee extra food.

**Fall Meeting:** Deke & Marilyn Gleim will host the meeting and provide centerpieces. At this time, Marlys is still looking for a speaker. If anyone knows of someone who would like to speak at our meeting, please let Marlys know.

**20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Report:** Reldon reported the date of the Celebration will be Sunday, the 21<sup>st</sup> of July from Noon to 5 PM. We will have a catered meal, entertainment, and commemorative gifts for members in attendance. RSVPs are required.

**New Member Program:** This is our third year, and we have nine vendors supporting our program. Last year we had 22 new members. New brochures have been distributed to arboretums and each vendor. If you know of other areas we can place our brochures, please let Reldon know.

**2014 AHS Convention, Cedar Rapids:** Judi Pohorsky reported that the theme is "Czech It Out!" and the hosta with the same name is a sport of a seedling of Trudy Van Wyk's that had been tissue cultured. They have been busy with all the planning and will need more help come the first of next year. Reldon will post something in our newsletter when he hears more.

### Unfinished Business

**Russ O’Harra Garden at the Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden:** Mel Visser has reported he has all of Russ’s plants except one. The GDMBG project may extend over two years, so David Dettmann will act as our liaison between Mel and the Botanical Center.

Herman Kopitzke requested that we withdraw interest in helping the Iowa Arboretum with video equipment as the request didn’t come from the arboretum but from another club. Herman made the motion to drop the request; Deke Gliem made the Second. All Ayes.

### New Business

**Nematode Research Donation:** Rob Mortko is involved with this research and said Ohio State University helped write a grant for \$50,000 and that the University would match that if they could get the majority of the funding. They have over 60% raised at this time. The Nematode Research consists of studying how the nematodes are migrating to other foliage, how they do it and will test chemicals success rates for treatment. Herman Kopitzke made the motion to donate \$2000 to the research; Ken Outzen gave the Second. All Ayes.

**AHS President’s Wall Award:** Each year clubs can nominate two people to be on the President’s Wall at the AHS National Convention. The Executive Committee has sent in their nominations and the nominees will be announced in June at the AHS National Convention.

### Other Business

**AHS Artistic Design Award:** Executive Committee has contacted “Potter Bob” of Pella to create another vase for the 2013 award.

**Hosta Finders:** We had a few more requests at this meeting, but we are out. If you still want to purchase one, contact a member of the Harshbarger group as they had extras.

**BADITC Fundraising Auction:** Reldon is gathering hosta donations for an Online Auction for BADITC on the Hosta Library’s website. The auction dates are May 18 – June 1. He stated that BADITC’s current balance is \$107,000 raised of the \$200,000 project. They have to have at least \$150,000 before work can start on building the home.

**Reminder:** 16 members still need to renew their memberships.

The Meeting was adjourned at 4:30 PM. Plants that were purchased from Rob Mortko found their way to the owner’s cars, the arboretum was cleaned up and everything put back in its place, and we were on the road by 5:30 PM. Not bad for a windy Sunday afternoon.

Respectfully submitted by  
Ellen Glasgow, ROHS Secretary



Joey Libido’s signature penguin pants (left). Sugar thoroughly enjoys her moment in the spotlight (right). ROHS members and guests socialize as others arrive (below left and right).

