



# WE GO GARDENING

Newsletter of the West Chicago Garden Club

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

Volume 12 Issue 6 June 2009

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## June 25th Meeting : “What’s New from Ball Seed?”



As she has in the past, Kristan McGuigan brings samples of the best new perennials and annuals from Ball Seed. Last year she not only brought information, but also plants for us to take home—what will she bring this year? Don’t miss out!

**Faith Community Church at 910 Main Street in West Chicago.  
7:15 - brief business meeting, 7:30 - speaker**

**Next Meeting: Thursday, July 25th:**

**“PRESIDENT’S DINNER AND GARDEN CONTEST WINNERS ”**

**Come (at our normal meeting place) for food, fellowship, and to find out who the winners are!**

**Babysitting**—The Club provides babysitting during its regular monthly meetings when held at Faith Community Church. There is no fee to you for the service, but if you plan to use it, please call **Linda Harlson** at 377-5750, so we can plan for the right number of children.

**Rides**— Need a ride to the meeting? Call **Billie Childress** at 231-1791 the Wednesday before the meeting.

**New Members - Welcome!**

**Pat & Rosemary Coker**

## Dazzling, Delightful, Delicious Daylilies - May Meeting

Those in attendance at the May meeting learned a lot about daylilies and hybridizing in general. Greg Bartoshuk captivated us with how he creates new types of daylilies, including fabulous photos of his award-winning productions. Finally, several lucky attendees received prizes from gift certificates to never-been-seen daylily hybrids, courtesy of Dave. Find more information about daylilies at [www.chicagolanddaylilyociety.org](http://www.chicagolanddaylilyociety.org).



### **Upcoming events (outside the club)**

**Chicago Botanic Garden:** Carillon concerts, every Monday at 7 p.m., through September 7th. Carillon tours at 5:30 before the concert.

**Forest Preserve District of DuPage County :** Get a subscription to the district's quarterly newsletter (free for DuPage residents and \$5 per year for nonresidents) by calling (630) 933-7085, or e-mail [forest@dupageforest.com](mailto:forest@dupageforest.com). See it online at <http://www.dupageforest.com/page.aspx?id=1592>.

**Heinz Brothers Greenhouse:** Annual One Day Only 4th of July Sale, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 630-377-6288 for information.

**The Growing Place:** Make a fountain! July 11, 10 a.m. Aurora, 2 p.m., Naperville. Learn how to use natural materials to make a fountain. No fee to watch, cost of materials to create one. More information at <http://www.thegrowingplace.com/classes.htm>

**Cantigny:** Gardens on Location: Weekly 1st Tuesday tour (through October) at 9:30 a.m. of a specific part of Cantigny. Meet at the Visitor's Center. On July 7th—The Idea Garden will be visited. No fee or advanced registration required. Call 630-260-8162.

### **From the City of West Chicago**

**May 26, 2009**

Dear Carole and West Chicago Garden Club members:

Blooming Fest had a humble beginning in a parking lot, with a handful of vendors and the annual WCGC plant sale. Today, it has blossomed into a community event, bringing exposure to local businesses and offering family-friendly activities to West Chicago residents and beyond.

The success of our event is due to the continued efforts of the committee members, local businesses and volunteers who dedicate countless hours to an event that extends an invitation for people far and wide to connect with our historic "garden" in downtown West Chicago.

Thank you for supporting our community by working to make Blooming Fest what it is today. The City of West Chicago appreciates our relationship with you and your future input will continue to enrich the soil upon which Blooming Fest was planted.

Very truly yours,  
Krista Coltrin



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## June News From Kruse by Angie & Billie: Kruse Garden Coordinators

The garden has an exceptional pink rose in the back bed. It came from Angie's house.....one of the Explorer series ....tough Canadian rose. It sports loads of semi-double deep pink upright blossoms on a healthy 5x5 bush. The raspberry pink peony that came from Irene Nicholson's garden joins the rose in bloom time and both are flattered by the pale pink clouds of the Pink Parasols spiarea and the purple pops from the malva spikes. Yes Carole Bates that is your malva.

It isn't hard to figure out that the Kruse Garden is comprised of mostly pass-along plants. We are fortunate to know the story that goes with some of the plants but many came before our time. If you can enlighten us please share the plant history as you know it . We do know that the garden is richer with each donation so don't be shy about sharing your plants with us. We just added some bergenia donated by Billie's sister. Gertrude Jekyll(1848-1932), creator of over 400 influential gardens in England and America, frequently used the huge dark glossy foliage of bergenia in long flowing masses to accent a border. GJ's mastery of plant culture and aesthetic observation in the garden remain unsurpassed so using one of 'her plants' is a safe bet. It's likely that the avid gardeners living in the Kruse House used her books and advice in their endeavors as well. By the way, the common name for *Bergenia* is pigsqueak on account of the sound produced when two leaves are rubbed together.

We did get some self sown red poppies that came from last year's planting on the west hill. Their color is a beacon from afar but they can't outdo the rich royal purple of the smoke bushes. Oh boy, are they pretty! The pansies in the 'pots' have thrived and are still going strong. Lovely show!

We have an 'open house' in the Secret Garden at the Kruse house planned for Sunday August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please put that date on your calendars. We will appreciate finger food donations for refreshments but most of all we look forward to your company! For special interest this year we will have stations set up for 'show & tell' how to DIY garden accoutrements. If any of you have a craft you would like to feature please contact us to make arrangements. We would love to have you share your talents with us!

Of course we urge you to visit the garden regularly. Pull a weed or two while you wander and enjoy the beauty. Also, be sure and take notes since there will be a pop quiz on what you saw at an upcoming garden club meeting. Awards for best scores of course.

See you in the garden!

A&B

Pass-Along of garden stake, photographed in the Kruse Garden.

Billie is passing along a pass-along garden stake with plaque "It takes a long time to grow an old friend". Billie received the pass-along stake from Dorothy O'Connor last year and thoroughly enjoyed its sojourn in her garden. It now resides in Angie's garden. It's a mystery where it will travel in the future.



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### Hosta Virus X: What You Need to Know

By Lou Horton



Anyone who grows hostas in a serious way has almost surely heard of Hosta Virus X. This article is designed to inform the casual hosta gardener of the facts that they need to avoid bringing plants in that are affected by the virus if at all possible and to know what to do if it present in their gardens.

#### What is Hosta Virus X?

It is a pathogen which disfigures the leaves of infected plants. It is not the first virus to be detected in hostas but it is of concern for two primary reasons: it is more easily transmitted from plant to plant than others and it greatly affects the looks and health of the infected plants.

Experts generally agree that the Virus entered the U.S. in infected plants that came from Europe. How long the Virus has been in the country and whether other foreign sources could have introduced it are matters still under some debate. The fact is, like the Emerald Ash Borer and Gypsy Moth, it is here now and we need to learn how to best deal with it.

#### How Does It Spread?

Hosta Virus X spreads from plant to plant when pruning tools move plant sap from one plant to the next. It does not spread through insects and it does not spread through the soil, overhead watering, etc. That means that it is not going to spread from a single infected plant to others unless the gardener uses pruning tools without disinfecting them between plants. A 20% bleach/water solution will kill the Virus. It will only survive for any length of time in living tissue so infected plants may simply be disposed of in the garbage or burned. To be on the safe side, do not compost infected plants.

#### How Does One Identify Infected Plants at a Nursery?

First, learn to ID the ways it disfigures hosta leaves so you will know if when you do see it. Be aware that some types of hostas seem to be much more prone to the Virus than others. The two most often infected are *H. Sum & Substance* and *H. Gold Standard* and cultivars derived from them. For example, *H. Striptease* (a sport of *Gold Standard*) is often a victim of the virus. One should follow two guidelines when confronted by plants that are suspicious. First, assume that if a group of plants of the same cultivar contains even one suspect plant, that all plants in the group may be infected. There are two reasons for this. The primary method of commercial reproduction today in hostas is tissue culture. If an infected mother plant was used to create the batch of plants (which easily might number a thousand or more all told) all plants from that group may eventually show signs of infection. In other words, the tissue culture process itself does not kill a virus. A separate process is needed to do that and many TC labs simply do not go through the additional time and expense. That is especially true of TC labs operating overseas. Within a few years, hopefully all legitimate TC labs will be testing all of the mother plants they use. There is now a reliable way to test a plant in the field to know if it is infected. Any nursery that sells hostas should possess a test kit (see below) and be willing to test suspect plants.

Secondly, symptoms do not show up in different plants at the same time. Some may take as long as two years to first show symptoms. If a plant shows some mottling or discoloration which is not normal for the cultivar, it is best to pass it by.

Please be aware, however, that just because a cultivar may not be related to *S&S* or *Gold Standard* does not mean it can't be infected. I do not believe that any hosta is immune if properly exposed to the virus. An infected hosta will never recover from the virus. Also be aware that a few cultivars possess color patterns that suggest that they are virused but in fact are not. Three cultivars in that category include *H. Xanadu Paisley*, *H. Cynthia*, and *H. Filigree*. Likewise, there are some hostas being sold which are infected. Those would include *H. Kiwi Watercolours* and *H. Leopard Frog*.

#### Some Common Hosta Virus X Myths

Virus X leads to the quick death of the plant. While the virus may cause some damage to the plants cells, the plant may live for a number of years with the virus. If the symptoms disappear the following year, the plant could not have had the virus. A plant with Virus X may seem to have recovered but it will be infected it's entire life. One can eliminate the division of a plant that shows the virus and eliminate the virus. The entire plant is infected.

#### Conclusions

Is it fairly easy to find infected hostas of some cultivars in some nurseries? Yes- particularly those big box stores that purchase from suppliers that get their stocks from European growers. Will Hosta Virus X spread throughout our gardens anytime soon? No, not at all. The virus does not spread especially easily and if the basic precaution is practiced by those working with the plants of disinfecting the pruners between working with each and every plant, spread can be controlled even if there are infected plants in the garden. Disposing of infected plants as they show up will eventually eliminate the virus from the garden assuming that more infected plants are not being introduced. With the introduction of a reliable kit that allows one to test a suspected plant on the spot, control will be much easier in the future. From the grower's end, I expect that most if not all labs who value their reputations will be testing TC mother plants routinely soon, eliminating that source of infected plants.

\* Immununo Strip for Hosta Virus X- Test Kit available from Agdia Corp. [agdia.com](http://agdia.com) or 1 800 622 4342



## **The Wonderful Gardens of West Chicago Contest**

*The West Chicago Garden Club is sponsoring the first Wonderful Gardens of West Chicago contest. Gardens with a West Chicago postal address were eligible to enter. Judging was on June 19, with thirteen entrants! Winners will be announced at the July club meeting, with all entrants invited to attend.*

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9. You have pride in how bad your hands look.
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6. Soil test results actually mean something.
5. Integrated Pest Management rules!
4. You'd rather go to a nursery to shop than a clothes store.
3. You look for gardens open to the public when on vacation.
2. Your non-gardening spouse is actually getting involved with your garden endeavors.. digging ponds, building bird houses, watering, pruning, turning compost piles, planting....

### **And you definitely know you're a gardener when..**

- 1 You are surrounded by terrific people who share your passion!

(created by Audrey, Emmitsburg, Md.)



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