



Volume 25, Issue 2

April, 2024



President

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Just like that, Spring is here!

It's that time of year when our gardens begin coming to life after the long Winter days of rest. With this time of year comes anticipation, planning and yearning to get ahead of the cold nights where Mother Nature says "not so fast". We start digging, organizing and thinking about what new plants we will bring to our gardens; especially those hostas our friends acquired that we missed out on last season.

As Hosta enthusiasts, we have many opportunities to find, buy, trade and divide to spread the wealth of those special ones we all want to have in our gardens. As the St. Louis Hosta Society plans each year, we've created many opportunities to help you with your search and to give forward the collection you have created in your garden spaces. You are encouraged to be involved in many of these opportunities which include Vendor Day at Hostas on the Bluff on April 21st, our Plant Sale held at the Missouri Botanical Garden on May 11th or our exciting trip to Hornbaker Nursery on June 29th and 30th.

There are garden tours and events throughout the year. So bring a friend into membership, invite them to meetings and help us all continue to be a vibrant, growing society for years to come.

This is your society and it's here for you. Thank you for your involvement in supporting all that we do to promote friendships and grow this amazing plant; the Hosta!

Gene

2024 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- April 21** **Vendor Day at Hostas on the Bluff Nursery**
2:00 PM, Hostas on the Bluff Nursery
1601 Pleasantview Dr., Fairview Heights, IL 62208
- April 27** **Work Day at the Missouri Botanical Garden**
8:00 AM, Missouri Botanical Garden Hosta Beds
- May 11** **Plant Sale**
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Missouri Botanical Garden
Set up May 10, time TBD
- May 19** **Garden Walk with Speaker Martha LaFata**
Home of Martha LaFata
433 Edgar Road, Webster Groves, MO 63119
- June 16** **Garden Walk with Speaker Bruce Buehrig**
2:00 PM, Home of Bruce and Chick Buehrig
31 Bellerive Acres, St. Louis, MO 63121
- June 18-22** **AHS National Convention**
Marlborough, MA
- June 29-30** **Bus trip to Hornbaker Nursery**
- July 11-13** **Midwest Regional Hosta Convention**
Fond de Lac, WI
- July 21** **Members Plant Auction**
2:00 PM, CBEC Building
4651 Shaw, St. Louis, MO 63110
- August 11** **Meeting with Speaker Ginny Johnson**
2:00 PM, CBEC Building
4651 Shaw, St. Louis, MO 63110
- September 15** **Meeting with Speaker**
2:00 PM, CBEC Building
- October 20** **Meeting with Speaker Bob Solberg**
2:00 PM, CBEC Building
- November** **Board Meeting**
Time and location TBD
- December** **Holiday Party**
Time and location TBD

Vendor Day – April 21, 2:00 PM

Hostas on the Bluff

1601 Pleasantview Dr, Fairview Heights IL 62208

On Sunday afternoon, April 21, our society will visit Hostas on the Bluff hosta farm and display gardens in Fairview Heights Illinois. Situated high on the bluffs, the beautifully landscaped gardens afford a fine view of the Arch and skyline of downtown St. Louis.

This small family-owned business is the brain child of Brian and Erica Kniffin. This is more than a retail nursery. It is a stunning hosta garden. An expanse of lawn is surrounded by beds populated with hundreds of well grown hostas and their companions.

The nursery has vast selection of hostas which will be available for sale. There's bound to be a plant that will fit in your garden.

Directions:

Using the Popular Street Bridge, cross into Illinois on I-55 N/I-64 E toward I-70 E Illinois. Continue on I-55 N/I-64 E for 2.3 miles. Use the right 2 lanes to take **EXIT 3** for **I-64 E** toward Louisville. Travel on I-64 E for 5.3 miles, then take **EXIT 9** for **IL-157** toward Caseyville. Travel on IL-157 for 0.7 miles, then turn **LEFT** onto **California Drive**. Turn **RIGHT** onto **N 89th St/Pleasantview Drive**. After 0.3 miles, turn **LEFT** onto **Magdalena Ave**. After 135 feet, turn **LEFT** onto **Pleasantview Drive**. The nursery is on the left near the top of the hill.



Sales area



Relax on top of the bluff

Membership perk!

Purchase a first-time introduction at a discount price



H. 'Blueberry Parfait'

Hosta 'Blueberry Parfait' is a new, first-time introduction from the hybridizing program of Rod Kuenster. There is something about the icy stare of a really blue hosta with a creamy white margin. This large seedling has the look of fancy dessert plates with its cupped and ruffled rounded leaves that are nicely displayed so that their white backs are clearly visible.

Rod Kuenster says that "hosta seed growing is a hobby close to his heart." He has been at it for more than 20 years. He will be organizing a Hosta Seed Growing competition at the 2024 MRHS convention in Fond du Lac this summer.

Retailing for \$35, this beauty can be yours for the membership price of \$20. Only 30 plants were ordered so it is on a first come, first serve basis. Place your order now, with pick up being at the May meeting. Phyllis Weidman is chairing this special event. If interested in a plant:

call Phyllis at (34-630-9036)
email her at (pow1031@gmail.com)
or text at (314-630-9036)



Barb Moreland weeding - 2023



Jeanne Yochum cutting suckers



The crew - 2023

April 27, 2024

Work Day at MO Botanical Garden 8:00 am until about 11:00 am

Saturday April 27, rain or shine, will be our next work day in the AHS Display Garden located at the Missouri Botanical Garden. The hosta beds have come a long way since 2009 when our Society, under the direction of Phyllis Weidman, became involved in their rejuvenation.

It started with the planting of two crabapple trees. Since then, each year members volunteer their time to dig, divide, move, hoe, prune, spray, mulch and do the myriad of little jobs necessary for a well-kept garden.

There's never a shortage of tasks. Can't dig – how about hoeing, raking or pulling weeds; can't get down on your knees – how about pruning some of the shrubs or spreading fertilizer and slug bait. This is a great time to get to know other members. The work isn't that hard and the time goes really fast when talking and laughing with other volunteers.

The Garden permits us to bring our own gear. Have a favorite shovel, hoe, trowel, or pruner, bring it with you. Don't forget the gloves unless you like the feel of dirt on your hands and under your fingernails.

We will meet at 8:00 AM in the hosta beds located in the northeast section of the Garden. If this is your first time, notify Phyllis so that she can fill out a MoBot volunteer form.

pow1031@gmail.com or 314-965-7027.

WELCOME NEW MEMBER!

Michael Marchwinski of St. Louis, MO

It is exciting to have you as a new member in our society. You had a chance to chat with some of us while nibbling fried chicken at the potluck. Please mark your calendar for all the other exciting events occurring this gardening season. There are plenty of opportunities to meet more of your fellow members.

Potluck Lunch 2024

What better way to begin a new gardening year than with an old-fashioned fried chicken dinner. Complimenting dishes included deviled eggs, a delicious potato and green bean casserole, deviled eggs, mashed potatoes, slaw, deviled eggs, shrimp, dips and did I mention deviled eggs. For the sweet tooth in our midst, there were cookies and cake.



Members enjoyed delicious food and the chance to be out with people who share their passions. It was a time to reminisce about the long mild winter and recent hail storm, catch up on current doings and dream about those hostas prematurely waking from their winter sleep.

As our food began to digest and the chatter died down, President Gene Pulliam outlined the events planned for the upcoming year. There will be our normal events, plus several garden walks, interesting speakers and the long-anticipated over-night bus trip.



Lynn Teller and Melinda Ligon chat as do Michael Marchwinski and David Birenbaum

Member Kathie Soehngen was to have given a presentation on the Jewel Box, one of Forest Park's hidden gems. However, a nasty virus put her in sick bay. Hopefully this interesting talk will be rescheduled at a later date. Get well Kathie, we missed you.

In lieu of a look at the beautiful Jewel Box, members discussed work – what should we be doing in our gardens now. Of course, it's not really work if you truly enjoy what you are doing. Among other topics, Phyllis Weidman talked about the importance of applying slug bait now as the hosta pips are breaking ground. Dave Poos mentioned that before applying fertilizer to your flower beds it is to your benefit to get a soil test. You may be able to skip this spring chore.



Members stayed around to chat. It was good to see each other again.

Many thanks to Hospitality Chair Melinda Ligon for organizing the afternoon meal. A good time was had by all. No one left hungry.

It happens on April 8 – have your glasses ready.

For the second time in less than ten years, St. Louisans will have the rare opportunity to experience a near total solar eclipse. At about 2:00 pm, the Moon will line up directly between the Earth and the Sun. Viewers in the space station will see the Moon cast its shadow on the surface of the Earth creating a dark spot that slowly travels across the U.S. from Texas northeast toward Maine and Canada. Those of us on Earth will see for three or four minutes the Sun completely blocked by the bulk of the Moon. On April 8 the Moon's shadow will pass less than 100 miles from St. Louis, obscuring 99% of the Sun's surface.

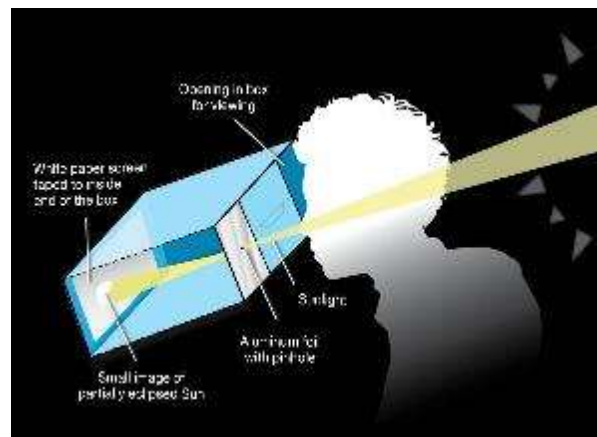
Be forewarned! In St. Louis, which is just shy of a total eclipse, it is still not safe to look directly at the Sun without specialized eye protection for solar viewing. Viewing any part of the bright Sun through a camera lens, binoculars or telescope without a special solar filter will instantly cause severe eye injury. Obtain "eclipse glasses" which are cheap or make a "pinhole projector". With the Sun behind you, let sunlight pass through a small opening, like a hole punched in a sheet of white paper, and project the solar image onto a nearby surface such as another sheet of paper or the ground.

While you are oohing and aahing about the sight in the sky, take a moment to observe what is happening around you. How are the plants, birds and insects in your yard reacting? I remember back in the summer of 2017 that as the total eclipse began the temperature started to drop and stars appeared. I was surprised by the silence, then the chirping of crickets and the croaking of frogs in our pond filled the air. There were no birds fighting over seeds in the feeder or bees buzzing around the abundant flowers. Some flower even began to close. The darkening sky and cooler temperatures signaled that it was nighttime even though it was the middle of the day.

While partial eclipses occur with some regularity, total eclipses are quite rare. The St. Louis area will not experience another for at least 100 years. Let's hope that Mother Nature cooperates and give us a beautiful day without a cloud in sight.



Map of the path of the April 8 total eclipse.
Photo from www.science.nasa.gov created by
NASA Scientific Visualization Studio



Sample pinhole projector
Photo from www.science.nasa.gov

Membership Roster Now Available

Need a member's address or phone number? Now it is at your fingertips. A new section has been added to our website for a membership roster. The last item on the bar at the top of the home page of our website is labeled 'Roster'. Just click. A screen asking for a password will appear. A few weeks ago, our media chair Lynn Teller sent out the current password. Enter this password and you will have access to each member's home address, phone number, email address and the date dues are payable. The roster is for member usage only.

If any of your information is incorrect or has changed, please contact Lynn. If you have forgotten or mislaid the password, please contact our media chair:

Lynn Teller

Lynn.teller@gmail.com or 314-306-1478

Need to get away from hot, steamy St. Louis? Consider attending a national or regional hosta convention

June 18 - 22, 2024 --- AHS Convention – Marlborough, MA

“A Whale of a Time” - The American Hosta Society and a group of New England hosta enthusiasts invite you to come to Marlborough, Massachusetts, June 18th through 22nd, 2024, for a Whale of a Time at the AHS 2024 National Convention. Optional tours include whale watching, or for those who would prefer a more placid experience, a Boston duck-boat tour, with a clambake picnic to top off the “classic” New England hosta-tality.

All the expected activities will occur: garden tours, speakers, workshops, accredited hosta show, vendors, and a judges' bootcamp. In addition, they will host the first ever New England Seedling & Sport Competition (modeled after the beloved First Look competition).

Accommodations are at the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel in Marlborough for \$139 a night, which includes a full buffet breakfast each day. Additional details and registration are available through the following website: www.hostaconvention.org

July 11 – 13, 2024 --- Midwest Regional Convention in Fond de Lac, WI

“Winnebago HaHo”. The lineup of activities for the three days includes tours of five outstanding private gardens, a hosta leaf show, an auction of hostas, seminars by local gardening experts and a gift plant. If you don't score at the auction, there will be vendors available throughout the convention to offer a wide selection of new and old favorite hosta plants, companion plants and yard art. In addition, Rod Kuenster of the Hosta Seed Growers Association will stage a seedling competition.

More information and a registration form are available at [Midwest Regional Hosta Society - WINNEBAGO HAHO' Home Page \(midwesthostasociety.org\)](http://MidwestRegionalHostaSociety-WINNEBAGOHAHO/HomePage/midwesthostasociety.org)



BUS TRIP

to Beautiful
HORNBAKER
GARDENS, Inc.

JUNE 29 – 30 PRINCETON, IL (3.5 HOUR DRIVE)

SATURDAY, JUNE 29

Leave St Louis early AM
Arrive at gardens around noon
Eat box lunch
Attend presentation
Tour the gardens & shop
Take bus to hotel
Have group dinner nearby

SUNDAY, JUNE 30

Leave after hotel breakfast
Arrive in St Louis mid-day

\$75

RESERVATION
FEE PER
PERSON

Fee includes box lunch on
Saturday, bus driver fees,
& gift certificate to
Hornbaker

Refundable until 5/15/24

★★★
AmericInn
BY WYNDHAM

(815) 872-5000

Members must
reserve own rooms

Mention the St Louis
Hosta Society for the
special \$121 rate

TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT, SEND \$75 CHECK
MADE OUT TO ST LOUIS HOSTA SOCIETY TO

Lynn Teller
185 Chatwood Terrace
Crestwood, MO 63126

Spaces will be reserved first come, first served for
members & spouses If space permits, we will
open trip to friends after 5/15/24

The Society is providing
the bus Members must
pay for hotel room &
evening meal

**YES! There will be room
on the bus for plants!**

St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

Gene Pulliam – President

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Genesgardencasa1@outlook.com

David Birenbaum – Secretary

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Melinda Ligon – Hospitality

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Janelle Criscione – Vice-President

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Lynn Teller – Treasurer and Webmaster

314-306-1478

lynn.teller@gmail.com

Joan Poos – Newsletter Editor

314-821-1622

david.poos@att.net

St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

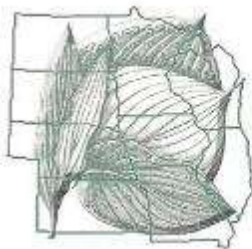
Contact: Lynn Teller
185 Chatwood Terrace
Crestwood, MO 63126
Lynn.teller@gmail.com

Dues: \$10 per year, \$20 for three years
Individual or Household

Meetings held at Commerce Bank Center for Science Education (CBEC), 4651 Shaw Blvd, St. Louis, MO 63110 unless otherwise noted.

Visit our Web site: www.stlhosta.org

Visit us on Facebook, St. Louis Hosta Society



Midwest Regional Hosta Society

The Midwest Regional Hosta Society represents Region 5 of the American Hosta Society that includes 9 states.

Membership in the society is \$20.00 for 2 years, which includes two issues per year of the newsletter.

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

Barbara Schroeder,
Treasurer
1819 Coventry Dr.
Champaign, IL 61822

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



AMERICAN HOSTA SOCIETY

Members receive three issues per year of The Hosta Journal, which includes color photographs of hostas, reports on national conventions, scientific information concerning current research pertaining to hostas, and advertisements of interest to hosta families.

Membership checks should be made out to "AHS," and mailed to:

Barry Ankney, AHS Membership Secretary
1104 Oxford Ct
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

Dues for one year are \$30 for an individual and \$34 for a family. For more information, visit the AHS website:

<http://www.americanhostasociety.org/>