



Volume 23, Issue 6

July, 2022



President
Phyllis Weidman

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

First I need to thank Kathie for having us in her garden. I think all will agree her garden was incredible – filled with hostas and so much more. The garden was a shelter from the St. Louis weather.

The heat and humidity are here, so it must be July. July is the time of year when it is hard to keep up with all the problems in the garden: insects, caterpillars, slugs, rabbits, deer, mold, fungus, watering, heat and sun damage. We all have our own problems.

Many will start to see Southern Blight/Petiole Rot. Remember to use a 10% bleach solution or a commercial mix containing tebuconazole to stop the fungus. Drench or spray the crown and the ground around the hosta. This should stop or slow down the spread of the fungus. The fungus is in the soil just waiting for heat and humidity to start. That's July. My garden so far has not had a Southern Blight attack but there are other problems. However, it still looks good from afar and a non-hosta person thinks my garden is marvelous.

This is the time I review in my mind all the ideas and information learned at the American Hosta Society (AHS) Convention. The AHS Convention in Minneapolis was as expected, lots of hostaholics (over 300) getting together to see beautiful gardens, listening to the experts talk hosta, attending a hosta auction, seeing who got the awards, viewing the leaf show and buying a new hosta for the garden. See the convention photos on our Facebook page. I can say I did a lot of looking at hostas but I stuck to my promise to myself of No New Hosta.

I find all conventions have their good things and things you wonder why. This was true in Minneapolis, but I go to see all the friends I have made over the years. I have been going to conventions since 1995 so I mean old friends. I know going to a convention is costly but you should try one sometime. Make it part of your vacation. Next year it is in Ames, Iowa so we can easily drive. Carpooling anyone?

Phyllis

2022 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- July 14-16** **Midwest Regional Hosta Convention**
Lisle, IL
- July 24** **Members Plant Auction**
1:30 PM, Garden of Dave and Joan Poos
9904 Crestwood Dr., Crestwood, MO 63126
- August 21** **Garden Walk with Speaker Bruce Buehrig**
1:30 PM, Home of Chick and Bruce Buehrig
31 Bellerive Acres, St. Louis, MO 63121
- September 18** **Garden Walk**
TBD
- October 16** **Meeting with Speaker Rob Mortko**
2:00 PM, The Des Peres Lodge
1050 Des Peres Rd., Des Peres, MO 63130
- November 11** **Board Meeting**
Time and location TBD
- December 11** **Holiday Party at a member's home**
Time and location TBD
- February, 2023** **Midwest Regional Hosta Winter Symposium**
First weekend in February, location TBA
- Dates TBA, 2023** **AHS National Convention**
Ames, Iowa
- July 13-15, 2023** **Midwest Regional Hosta Convention**
Rochester, MN
- July 11-13, 2024** **Midwest Regional Hosta Convention**
Fon du Lac, WI



July 24 - Garden Walk with Member Auction
1:30 pm at the home of Dave and Joan Poos
9904 Crestwood Dr., St. Louis, MO 63126

Continuing the theme of having as many activities outside as possible, members are cordially invited to visit the lovely Crestwood garden of Dave and Joan Poos. Starting its transition in 2001, the Poos garden has evolved from a typical suburban yard with a few perennial beds on the property's border to its present form. A series of paths weave around the many beds each containing its allotted share of the 780 hosta varieties. Conifers, Japanese Maples, redbuds and dogwoods add bones to the beds and complement the hundreds of azaleas that provide early spring color. In areas that escape the shade, you will find daylilies which burst into color in June and continue their show into July. There may be a late-blooming daylily or two still in flower at the time of our meeting.



Following a stroll through the garden, members will gather in the shade of a canopy (or if it is too hot, in the walkout basement) for our annual auction. There's usually quite a variety of donated plants – big and small, green, yellow and blue, old reliables plus some you may not know.



If you haven't done so, check out the plants in your garden. Do a bit of digging; pot and label a piece. Be a part of the action. Volunteers will be ready to accept your donations. Enjoy a fun afternoon outbidding your fellow hostaholics for that plant that will make your garden the talk of your neighborhood. The annual auction is one of two events that fund our society's yearly activities, make this newsletter possible and bring speakers to our meetings.

Directions:

From Sunset Plaza (S Lindbergh & Watson Road)

Take Watson Road (old Route 66) east 0.6 mile to Sturdy

Turn right on Sturdy and travel 1 block to Crestwood Drive

Turn left on Crestwood Drive and travel 4 blocks to the end of the street.

OR

From the site of the old Crestwood Shopping Mall (Watson and Sappington)

Take Watson Road west 0.6 mile to Sturdy

Turn left on Sturdy and travel 1 block to Crestwood Drive

Turn left on Crestwood Drive and travel 4 blocks to the end of the street.

June Meeting - Garden Walk with Kathie Soehngen



The entrance to Kathie's home is beautifully designed. A sweeping bed extends from her driveway across the front and around the corner. The undulating curve is edged with pavers. Flat stones and larger rocks separate plantings of grass, many varieties of heuchera, hostas and other shade lovers. Annuals add a dash of color. A red Japanese maple adds balance.



A plaque proclaims "You are now entering a stress free zone." Definitely true! In the shady backyard hostas abound. A climbing hydrangea meanders up the trunk of a large shade tree. A plant stand ladder was constructed of gutters fixed to rails and leaned against another trunk. The gutters were filled with various annuals. Very attractive.



Asiatic lilies, daylilies, lace-cap and mop-head hydrangeas filled a sunnier bed with vibrant color. Mounds of heuchera in hues from lime green and amber to shades of purple dotted Kathie's borders. All were beautifully grown. Along the edge of the patio is a fish pond complete with a waterfall and many colorful koi. Even the tool shed is delightful with its white picket fence and window boxes.

June Meeting – Imitation Hosta Leaf Show



Members listen to instructions on how to prepare their leaf for exhibition.



Wendy DeCaro, Pam Wolkowitz and Dave Birenbaum clean their leaves thoroughly.



Lynn Teller and Barb Moreland fill out the paperwork, including an entry form with registration info.



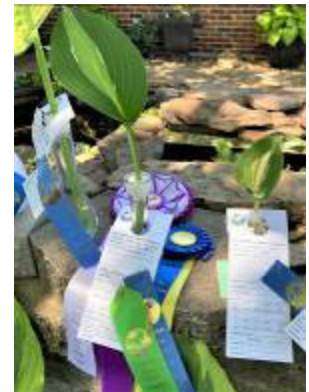
The leaves were positioned in display bottles and arranged by division, section and class.



Judge Phyllis Weidman asks members which ribbon, if any, this leaf should receive. Most leaves would have been rejected because they were too small.



Greg and Marcia Plummer staple ribbons - blue, red or green - to the entry forms.



The winner of 'Best of Show' went to Wendy DeCaro for her leaf of *H. 'Striptease'*.

Even though almost all of our leaves would have been rejected or received no ribbon in a real Hosta Show, we learned a lot and it was fun critiquing each other's entries. In hot, humid St. Louis it is sometimes difficult to grow hostas large enough to meet registration size requirements. Then there is the problem of finding one that has not been chewed on by slugs or cutworms. Finally, most of us were too busy talking to do a very good job of cleaning. We came away with a new appreciation for those who exhibit in regional and national hosta shows. It's not as easy as it looks. Many thanks to Phyllis Weidman and Kathie Soehngen for a fun and educational afternoon.

Goodness gracious, it's back!

Phyllis mentioned in her President's Message that we should be on the lookout for Southern Blight, also called Petiole Rot. She stated that she has not seen it in her garden. Alas, I am not so fortunate. Every year a few of my hostas seem to fall prey to this scourge. Sometimes it is the same plant, but usually not. Last year a large clump of *H. 'Devil's Advocate'* was affected, this year, so far, that plant is fine but two small ones in a different bed have succumbed.

That special beauty exhibited by hostas in May and early June has passed. Now the reality of gardening in hot, dry humid St. Louis hits. Did I say HOT! HUMID!



Southern Blight affecting hosta

First I noticed the leaves of two hostas were turning yellow. This is to be expected when temperatures are in the upper nineties and rain is a bit scarce. But these were different. The leaves were lying on the ground. On closer inspection my fears were confirmed. Southern Blight had returned! The leaves easily pulled free, were mushy at the base and covered with what looked like tan mustard seeds and white spider webs. Each year I hope to escape its appearance, but this year is to be no exception.

Southern Blight is caused by a fungus, *Sclerotium rolfsii*, which attacks hostas at their leaf bases. The fungus overwinters as mustard-seed-sized sclerotia. In warm, humid conditions (that's St. Louis) these round mustard seed looking objects germinate into spreading webs of white mycelia. They look like spider webs around the base of the petioles. This mycelia release oxalic acid that destroy cell walls, causing the leaf to collapse. The mycelia can also produce new sclerotia which remain dormant on leaf debris or in the soil. Thus the cycle can continue if left unchecked.

The fungus is in the soil, not the plant. Begin by removing all affected leaves, the mulch around the plant and any visible sclerotia. Place all this debris in the garbage can, not the recycling can. Some articles I've read recommend throwing the entire plant and several inches of soil away. Unless the plant is severely damaged or can be easily replaced I think this is too severe without first trying a bit of TLC.

Other articles recommend drenching the plant and surrounding soil with a 10% bleach solution (that's one part bleach and nine parts water.) Some remove and soak the plant. I have used this remedy in the past with some success.

However, I have had excellent results with a fungicide: **Bayer Advanced All-In-One Rose and Flower Care** or **Bayer Advanced Disease Control for Roses, Flowers and Shrubs**. This is a systemic product that controls insects and diseases, while fertilizing the plant. Read the label to make sure one of the active ingredients is **Tebuconazole**. There is no need to lift the plant, just saturate the crown and surrounding soil. I usually wait a couple of weeks, then repeat. I also retreat the plants the following spring regardless of whether or not they display symptoms.

If the plant is heavily infected it may lose all its leaves. As hot as the temperatures are and now heading into July, the really hot part of summer in St. Louis, my small plants may go dormant. Next year the plant will be smaller, but I have yet to completely lose a hosta that I have treated in this manner. Let's hope this year doesn't see the first.

Lilies as an accent

Those members who attended the Garden Walk at Kathie Soehngen's beautiful garden will remember the many colorful lilies that populated her backyard beds. See picture on page 4. How appropriate that the following article, written by Glenn Herold, just appeared in the June issue of the Central Illinois Hosta Society newsletter.

Lilies Belong in Every Garden By Glenn Herold

Lilies are important accents in the summer perennial garden. Growing to a height of 2 to 6 feet, they often rise above other perennials without taking up a lot of garden space. Their flowers are large and sometimes fragrant. They are borne either in a raceme (flowers attached to the stem by short stalks) or umbel (flower stalks arise from one point at the tip of the stem). In some North American species, the base of the bulb develops into rhizomes, allowing the plant to form colonies.

Many of the plants that we refer to as lilies, including Calla Lily (*Zantedeschia*), Torch Lily (*Knifofia*), Magic Lily (*Lycoris*), Daylily (*Hemerocallis*), Lilyturf (*Lilium*), and Lily-of-the-Valley (*Convallaria*) are not true lilies. Only members of the genus *Lilium* are true lilies. What distinguishes plants of this genus is the structure of the bulb. True lilies have an imbricate, or scaly bulb. The fleshy scales are separate from each other and united at the basal plate. Because of the fleshy nature of the scales and the fact that the bulb is never truly dormant, it must be kept moist at all times.

The most important cultural factor for lilies is to maintain good drainage. Plant the bulbs in very well drained soil or on a slight slope in full sun or part shade. Most bulbs should be planted with 4 to 6 inches of soil over the top of the bulb. A winter mulch, for example wood chips or evergreen boughs, applied just after the ground freezes, is helpful in preventing early emergence of the shoots. For maximum growth, a balanced fertilizer, such as 10-10-10, is recommended just after the bulbs emerge in the spring and throughout the growing season. Water the fertilizer in immediately and keep it from direct contact with the stems and leaves. Some tall lilies may need staking to prevent them from nodding over. Other than these few simple tasks, lilies are easy to grow and care for. Perfect drainage and good air circulation are keys to disease prevention and prize-winning flowers.

One of the easiest groups of lilies to grow are the Asiatic lilies, derived from central and east Asian species. They are medium sized and mostly unscented. Blooming in June and July, they are among the earliest lilies to bloom. Asiatic lilies have the widest color range of any lily group. Many of the lilies available from garden centers are of this group. Among the Asiatic lilies that are growing well in my yard are 'Mount Duckling,' 'Enchantment,' 'Butter Pixie' (bottom left) and 'Orange Pixie.'

The Martagon lilies are thought to be the most shade tolerant of the lilies. I have seen many clumps of martagons growing well in shaded gardens. Blooming about the same time as the Asiatics, they are distinguished by whorled leaves growing in tiers along the stems and turkscap blooms. They do not like hot humid weather, and thus are best suited to the northern garden. *Lilium martagon*, and *Lilium tsingtauense* are two of the species from which the martagon hybrids are derived. 'Claude Shrive' is a popular variety with burgundy flowers.

The LA Hybrids are becoming more readily available. They are the result of crossing *Lilium longiflorum* (Easter Lily) with Asiatic varieties. They are hardy plants with large, slightly fragrant

flowers. This spring I planted a striking cultivar of this group called 'Eyeliner.' Closely related are the OT Hybrids, derived from crossing the difficult to grow Oriental lilies with the more garden worthy Trumpet/Aurelian lilies. They are very robust and durable. Cultivars in this group include 'Leslie Woodriff,' 'Scheherazade,' and 'Starburst Sensation.'

Species lilies are found growing wild in North America, Europe, and Asia. Some are easy to grow while others are more challenging. One that I have found easy to grow is the Wisconsin native Michigan lily, *Lilium michiganense* (upper left). It grows 2-4' tall and boasts beautiful orange turkscap flowers. In Wisconsin it can be found on the edges of woods and on prairies. The last lily to bloom in my garden is *Lilium speciosum* 'Album' (upper right). The bright white flowers are a beacon in the fall perennial border.

Lilies come in every color of the rainbow and heights from dwarf to tall. They can be planted among other perennials, in the front of the border or in the back. No garden should be without them.



'Mount Duckling'



'Starburst Sensation'



Michigan Lily species



'Eyeliner'

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Gary and Lauren Lake of Webster Groves, MO

Nancy and James Nahlik of Chesterfield, MO

Denise and Robert Wagner of St. Louis, MO

Come join us at Dave's and Joan's garden. This fun event is a wonderful opportunity for you to visit a beautiful garden and for us to get to know you. You might even be the high bidder for a hosta that you always wanted.

2022 AHGA Hosta of the Year

H. 'Island Breeze' – PP27151

Each year the American Hosta Growers Association (AHGA) selects 'the best of the best' and honors one variety as "Hosta of the Year". These special selections are acknowledged as being unique, easy to grow and loved by many in all regions of the country. They must retail for around \$15 at time of registration. These traits make them a good choice for beginning gardeners and collectors alike.



photo from Walters Gardens site

H. 'Island Breeze', registered by Walters Gardens in 2014, creates a 12" by 18" mound of brilliant color. Its leaves emerge bright yellow with wide, dark green margins in early spring. The yellow centers become more chartreuse when grown in heavier shade or lighter yellow when grown in more sun. Showy red speckled petioles bleed up into the leaves. In midsummer, dark lavender flowers appear on reddish green scapes.

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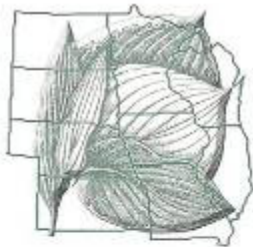
Contact: David Birenbaum
209 Brook Lane
O'Fallon, MO 63368
d.birenbaum@sbcglobal.net

Dues: \$7 per year, \$18 for three years
Family or Individual

Meetings held at **The Des Peres Lodge, 1050 Des Peres Road, Des Peres, MO 63130** (near I270 and Manchester Rd) unless otherwise noted.

Visit our Web site: www.stlouishosta.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/>