



Volume 23, Issue 7

August, 2022

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



President  
Phyllis Weidman

Heat! I'm sure it has been this hot and dry before, but I'm old and forgetful. My hostas look terrible. Hostas that have never burned before have this year. I know the answer is water and lower temperatures. I can to some extent control the water, but the temperature, no.

No matter the temperature, the Society turned out for the auction. Thanks to Dave and Joan for letting us visit their garden and having space in an air-conditioned room for us. The auction was fun and we made money for the Society. We use the money to help pay for programs and other cost of the society as well as giving to the Missouri Botanical Garden.

We are very lucky to have members who support the society by their work and money or both.

This year I attended the AHS National and the Midwest Regional Conventions. No, I'm not pushing for us to host a convention. At both conventions, seeing the gardens of members is one highlight, but getting a convention plant is another. At the AHS, the plant was *H.* 'Phoenix Feathers' and the Midwest we could choose between *H.* 'Chicago Blues' or *H.* 'Windy City'.

The Midwest convention ended with some very sobering information. The plants for attendees possibly contained Asian Jumping Worms. The convention chairman sent detailed information about what to do with the plants we received. The bottom line is that the worm is spreading about the country and you should be aware. We do know that these worms eat organic debris and in large numbers can decimate an area leaving nothing for plants to live on. They lay eggs or microscopic cocoons twice a year so they can multiply rapidly and overwinter successfully. Right now, there are more questions than answers, but be careful about plants you buy in soil from anywhere other than your garden. Like lots of invasive things we don't know how to control, you have to learn to live with them. For example, we know all about invasive honeysuckle.

You can find more information on line or Joan has an article about them in this newsletter.

*Phyllis*

## 2022 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- August 21**                      **Garden Walk with Speaker Bruce Buehrig**  
**1:30 PM, Garden of Chick and Bruce Buehrig**  
**31 Bellerive Acres, St. Louis, MO 63121**
- September 18**                      **2 Garden Walks**  
**1:30 PM, Garden of Debbie Hadley**  
**2:30 PM, Garden of Phyllis Weidman**
- 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**
- June 7-10, 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**

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

**Steve and Sue Garnett of St. Charles, MO**  
**Mac MacChesney of Ballwin, MO**

**Come join us at Bruce's and Chick's garden. This is an opportunity for you to visit a beautiful, award-winning garden. We have a number of new members this year. This is a wonderful time for all of us to get to know each other.**

**August 21 1:30 PM Garden Walk**  
**31 Bellerive Acres, St. Louis, MO 63121**

**'Conifers for the St. Louis Garden'**  
**Presented by Bruce Buehrig**

Bruce and his wife Chick have transformed their shaded two-acre hillside into an exquisite garden. Large trees, Japanese maples and unusual conifers form a canopy over a vast collection of hosta, rhodea, ferns, bulbs and other woodland specimens. Many of these are unusual, rare or difficult to grow in the St. Louis area. In the sunnier locations of the yard, Chick's beloved daylilies beckon summer visitors with their colorful displays.

Bruce maintains that "conifers are the bones of the garden, providing aesthetic appeal with shapes, colors and sizes." But conifers can be tricky to grow in the heat and humidity of St. Louis summers and the cold of its winters. Bruce's garden shows that it can be done quite successfully. His talk will focus on species that will thrive in our particular environmental conditions.

Bruce Buehrig, a co-founder and current member of our St. Louis Hosta Society, has taught classes in hosta culture at the Missouri Botanical Garden and regularly speaks at local nurseries and garden clubs about shade gardening. He and Chick recently had an article published in CONIFER, the journal of the American Conifer Society. (Volume 38, Number 3/Summer 2021).

Their award winning yard has served as a tour destination for national daffodil, Japanese iris, daylily, hosta and conifer conventions.

**Directions:**

- From the intersection of I-64E/US-40E and I-170N, merge onto I-170N.
- Travel 7.11 miles and take the Natural Bridge Rd/MO-115 exit, **EXIT 6**.
- Turn **RIGHT** (east) onto **Natural Bridge**.
- After 1.08 miles, turn **LEFT** onto **Bellerive Acres**. Bellerive Acres is between Nordic Dr and ClearView Dr.
- Keep **RIGHT** at the fork and continue on Bellerive Acres.
- Stay **RIGHT** to 33 Bellerive Acres which is on the right.



**Bruce Buehrig**  
*photo by Kelly Hall*



**Koi pond and waterfall in the Buehrig garden**



**Image by the Wisconsin  
Department of Natural  
Resources**

## **In 2013 they were coming! It's 2022 – they are here!**

Having lots of earthworms in our compost piles and garden beds is a good thing. They devour all our kitchen scraps and decaying plant debris to make rich compost. Their tunnels help aerate and loosen our soil. They make great bait for erstwhile fishermen. What's the problem? Well there's a new worm in town that leaves parched earth in its path. First detected in Wisconsin in 2013, this invasive worm has now spread across the country even appearing in parts of California.

Meet the jumping worm (*Amyntas* spp.), also called crazy worms, Alabama jumpers and snake worms. At first glance, jumping worms look like other earthworms except they are larger, four to eight inches in length. Their skin is grayish or brownish, glossy, sometimes iridescent. Their body is generally slender, dry, smooth and firm while our common species of earthworm is pink or salmon-colored, slimy and thick. The prominent band around their bodies, called a clitellum, is flat, milky white or light grey in color, smooth and completely encircles the worm. Their most distinguishing characteristic is erratic movement. When disturbed they jump, thrash wildly with snake-like movement and can even shed their tails in an effort to get away. Thus their common name.

These worms have voracious appetites. They lurk in leaves, mulch and the top layer of organic matter – eating, eating and eating, robbing the soil of all its nutrients. The worms' castings are grainy-looking, hard little pellets. After jumping worms arrive, soil doesn't hold together and instead looks more like coffee grounds. It no longer has the same moisture-retention qualities as before, so the water plants need passes through too quickly. The altered soil is also lacking in nutrients and can very easily erode.

Jumping worms are asexual, not needing a mate to reproduce. If you have one, you will soon have hundreds. They are relatively short-lived, 40 to 60 days, and cannot survive our winter temperatures. However they lay eggs in hard, dark cases called cocoons that resemble crumbs of soil that are extremely difficult to detect. These overwinter and hatch in the spring.

If you find one in your garden, one expert suggests securing it in a plastic zip bag and placing the bag in the sun for an hour or so. They will die quickly and you can then safely throw them away. Studies have shown that heat exposure above 104 degrees Fahrenheit kills the egg cases. Most commercial compost producers heat their products beyond that point, so these products should be safe to use.

We must do our part. Don't buy jumping worms, crazy worms, snake worms or Alabama jumpers for bait. They are most likely spread through potting soil or mulch. Check any soil, compost or potted plants purchased to be sure they are free of the worms. Consider shaking off the dirt from all plants obtained from an affected area, washing the roots and then planting the bare roots in your own garden. Throw the soil in a landfill and the water down the toilet.

The convention gift plants that my husband and I received contained worms, but they were common earthworms and not the jumping variety. This is just another invasive species that we must learn to live with like Asian carp, invasive snails, and kudzu. Research has commenced at the University of Wisconsin and probably other places. Just be aware!

## July - Garden Walk with Dave and Joan Poos



Dave Poos, in green shirt, greets visitors in the backyard. They stand in the dappled shade of a large birch.



Members check out the Poos vegetable garden. Green beans were now ready for picking and tomatoes were starting to turn red.



Members check out the hostas that border the sunny interior of the yard which contains hundreds of daylilies just finishing their bloom period.



Members relax in the shade on the patio which surrounds the goldfish pond. This is the perfect spot for a 5 o'clock cocktail.



A waterfall spills from the top of a four-foot retaining wall into a pond filled with numerous hardy and tropical water lilies.



The shade of the maple is welcome but not its shallow roots. Dave built a wooden box, playfully referred to as the coffin, which holds several pots of large hostas.

Thank you Dave and Joan for opening your garden on this the hottest day of the year. Dave and Joan thank each of you for braving 104 degree temperatures to join them. We hope you enjoyed your afternoon at the auction and were able to obtain a new specimen or two for your own garden.

## July - Member Auction



Hostas on the bidding block were displayed outside under the deck for pre-auction viewing.



Treasurer Dave Birenbaum gets ready to record bids. Dave Poos was the first of 3 auctioneers. Phyllis Weidman and Barb Moreland provided plant descriptions.



Because of the extreme heat the auction was moved to the air-conditioned basement.



What a great turnout on such a sweltering day. It was standing room only when the auction began.



Phyllis walked the hostas about the room so that those in the back had an opportunity to see the plant up close.



Bidding was spirited. Bidder number 21, Rhoda Parker, now has several new plants for her garden.

What a fun afternoon! Thirty-eight bidders including one on the phone! Just like Sotheby's. On behalf of the society, I thank our amateur auctioneers, Dave Poos, Jolly Ann Whitener and Janelle Criscione. I thank each of you for digging, dividing and donating plants from your gardens. I thank you for coming and for your generous bids. The proceeds from this auction, which amounted to \$1,748, help pay for room rentals, speakers, support for the Missouri Botanical Garden, the publication of this newsletter and other activities.

## St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

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## St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

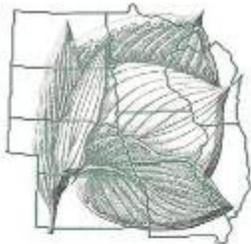
**Contact:** David Birenbaum  
209 Brook Lane  
O'Fallon, MO 63368  
[d.birenbaum@sbcglobal.net](mailto:d.birenbaum@sbcglobal.net)

**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.stlhosta.org](http://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](mailto: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/>