



Volume 22, Issue 3

April, 2021



President
Phyllis Weidman

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

My mulch is down and I am ready for the spring. Aconites and snow drops have bloomed, hellebores are doing their thing. Daffodils and spring bulbs are always a welcome site. April showers will bring those hostas out of the ground. Many of mine were up in March.

First thing I do is pull the mulch off the crown of the hosta. Then I spray the pips with Liquid Fence to deter the rabbits and deer. Then Sluggo. As Joan said in the last newsletter, you must start slug control early.

What about fertilizer? There are many answers and options. Some people use Osmocote, lawn fertilizer, Milorganite, or nothing at all. Some fertilize when the pips show other say the fertilizer will do nothing until the roots start to grow which is after the leaves unfurl. I put it down when I pull the mulch back. Easier for me.

Another year without a Vendor's Day. It is so sad. I miss seeing all the plants and especially the vendors themselves. It is nice to catch up with them about their gardens and lives. I am sure it has been an interesting year. If possible, try to order from the vendors to show your support. Maybe one can make arrangements to visit their garden/sales area. Of course, mail ordering hostas is safe and easy.

Safe and easy will be the May Meeting. Mark your calendar May 16th at 1:30 pm. Details to follow.

Phyllis

Welcome New Member

Judy LaMotte of St. Louis, MO

Welcome back Judy. We hope you are able to join us at the upcoming Garden Walk scheduled for May 16. Details and directions will be in the May newsletter.

2021 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May 16	Garden Walk/Meeting 1:30 PM, Home of Josh Jagger
June	Garden Walk/Meeting Time and location TBA
July 15-17	AHS National Hosta Convention (Virtual) Kalamazoo, MI
July	Garden Walk/Meeting TBA
September 19	Meeting with Speaker TBA 1:30 PM, TBA
October 17	Meeting with Speaker TBA 1:30 PM, TBA
November	Board Meeting Time and location TBA

Chester Wolkowitz 1925 – 2021

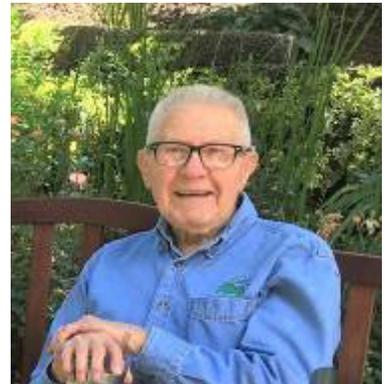
With a sad heart, I announce the passing on March 17 of long time St. Louis Hosta Society member Chester Wolkowitz, husband of Pam Wolkowitz.

In 1965 Chester formed Key-State Automotive Warehouse with his brothers Maury and Jerry. Each brother had his expertise - Chester was in charge of sales. That skill lent itself to our annual plant sales where he would stand in the lobby at the Missouri Botanical Garden and entice visitors in to our plant sale.

During World War II, Chester proudly served in the Navy. Two years ago his step-daughter arranged for him to take an Honor Flight to Washington DC, a highlight of his life.

In 1988 Chester met Pam on the dance floor and swept her off her feet. This duo created two beautiful gardens each featured as a tour garden for the AHS National Conventions of 2008 and 2016. A focal point of the 2008 garden was a 30 foot long and high stone waterfall built by Chester.

Chester should be remembered for his kindness, generosity and the twinkle in his blue eyes. The St. Louis Hosta Society extends our sympathy to Pam and their families.



Chester Wolkowitz



Support Our Vendors

Sadly, we must again cancel our immensely popular Vendor Day event. Although the spread of the Covid-19 virus seems to be abating, restrictions are still in place on indoor events. The Board deems it prudent to cancel rather than try to reschedule this activity.

While the drastic measures imposed on us this spring have put a damper on our lives, we must think about what these same measures are doing to our small businesses. The Board encourages our members and their friends to patronize our loyal vendors as best we can.

AVALON ACRES *Hostas and More*



Denny Ricketts - Avalon Acres

Avalon Acres is a 10 acre hilltop nestled among hundreds of large red and white oak trees in South Central Illinois near Effingham. The family owned and operated nursery's mission is to bring you the highest quality plants at the lowest possible prices.

Denny and Alicia Ricketts have had a sales table at our Vendor Day event for many years, offering quality plants, both new cultivars and old standards. They welcome visitors, but **please call ahead** so they can dedicate quality time to you. They are available most evenings and Sundays

Avalon Acres is open April 30 through August 25. For more information about their products access their web-site at <http://avalonacreshostas.com/> or call 217-536-9443. Their address is 11092 N 965th St. Effingham, IL 62401

Hostas on the Bluff



Hostas on the Bluff at 2019 Vendor Day

Hostas on the Bluff is a specialty hosta farm and display garden. This small family owned business, the brain child of Brian and Erica Kniffin, is situated on the French Village bluffs overlooking the St. Louis skyline and river valley near Fairview Heights, Illinois.

Their nursery continues to expand. In addition to over 170 hosta cultivars, their web-site lists 24 different hellebores and 10 different heucheras and heucherella. When last visited three years ago, their display garden was beautiful. Now that it has matured it must be stunning.

They are now accepting orders for 2021. Anyone can contact them through Facebook, phone 618-830-5929 or use their website - <https://hostasonthebluff.com/>. Put in an online order for shipping or select local pickup if you want to meet the Kniffins and view their beautiful nursery.

Homestead Farms Nursery



**Ron and Brett Vitoux at
2019 Vendor Day**

Homestead Farms Nursery is a family owned perennial flower nursery located near Owensville, Mo, which specializes in field-grown daylilies, hostas, peonies and Siberian iris. The nursery, run by Ron Vitoux and his family for more than 25 years, offers over 1000 varieties of daylilies, 200 varieties of hosta, 100 different peony cultivars and many varieties of Siberian iris.

For a number of years, Ron and his sons Kurt and Brett have brought hostas and companion plants to our Vendor Day event.

Homestead Farms Nursery has an outstanding web site, www.homesteadfarms.com/, which is easy to navigate. Besides a picture inventory, the web site has hosta growing tips as well as information about the other perennials they offer for sale. If you plan to visit the nursery, **please call ahead to set up an appointment.** (phone number (573) 437-4277).

OVERLAND HARDWARE



Gregg Wesche at 2019 Vendor Day

Overland Hardware owners, Gregg Wesche and Don Burkhardt, continue the long tradition of excellent customer service established by their father and father-in-law. They state that they are an “old-fashioned” hardware store. In their minds that means “you can get in and out without having to walk a quarter mile, that someone offers to help you when you walk in the door and the person who helped you find what you needed also checks you out and helps carry it out to your car”. They stock everything from Italian granite paint for countertops to numerous blends of birdseed and rabbit chow.

Overland Hardware is located at 2520 Woodson Road, Overland MO 63114. If you want to avoid coming into the store, simply call ahead with your order. They will assemble your purchases and call you back with a total so that you can pay with a credit card over the phone. Then just pull up to their rear parking lot for pick up. This is the place to go for those hard to find services. Summer is approaching. Now is the time to repair screens and broken windows, sharpen chainsaw chains and lawn mower blades

Visit their web site, www.overlandhardware.net , visit their Facebook page or call Gregg at 314-427-1404 for more information, hours of operation, directions to their store or to place an order.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR LOYAL VENDORS

Landscaping Tips for Backyard Gardeners: Part III

Spring at last! The temperatures have slowly climbed into the 60s. The itch to get my hands dirty has struck. Time to populate those new or expanded beds. The first consideration is the amount of sun and water the area gets. Will it be all day, steamy hot in August or is it mostly deep shade? Is it dry shade or more boggy? Or are you lucky and have a nice high canopy with morning sun and dappled shade?

How much work do you want or are able to do? Planting mostly perennials saves time and money in the long run, but annuals are usually more colorful and bloom for longer periods of time. Annuals may require constant deadheading and pruning to remain fresh and colorful, but they can easily be changed with the seasons.

Make it easier on yourself by picking plants that will be happy in the environment that you have. It is possible to grow hostas in full sun, but you probably won't be happy with the resulting sun scorch or fading colors. It is possible to grow daylilies in heavy shade, but you won't see many blooms and the vitality of the plant will wane as time passes. Check plant tags for light conditions, water requirements and recommended planting zone. St. Louis is now rated zone 6a. Some gardeners like to push the boundaries. It can be exciting to successfully grow specimens that no one else can. However, be prepared to expend lots of extra TLC and be braced for the possible loss of that delicate fern or fabulous rare specimen.

Your watch words should be balance and accent. This applies to height, width, mass, form, shape and texture as well as color. Visualize your space. When mapping out your plant placement, plan ahead for each plant's mature size. All of us are guilty of this omission. Leave enough room for the large ones; you don't want to constantly move those just because they are crowding their neighbors. You can always temporarily fill in empty spaces with annuals or smaller plants that can readily be transplanted.

An attractive scheme needs dimension. Consider a plant's ultimate height as well as its width. If everything is the same height, it becomes boring. There is nothing to catch and hold your eye or draw it forward to another part of the border or bed. It is not necessary to always place small plants in front followed by medium and finally tall in the back. Mix it up. A taller plant at the bend in a path can make you want to move forward to see what is on the other side.

Mass planting of the same cultivar can be quite striking. For me this is more important in sunny areas than in shady ones. Consider the two photos at right. On the top is a sunny border visited during the MRHS Regional Convention held in Peoria. The McConnell's had massed swaths of coneflowers intermixed with daylilies. The colors of the daylilies, either the petals or the blossoms' throats, echoed the colors of the coneflowers. The photo on the bottom is of Toni Boschert's sunny bed. She has massed plantings of Siberian iris and blue salvia in balance with masses of lower growing pink big root geranium and candytuft. The color scheme is soothing – cool blues, purples and pinks. A fuchsia spiderwort adds a pop of color while the clematis climbing an obelisk gives height.



I prefer to garden in the shade. Not just because it is cooler, but because hostas have it all. What other plant family exhibits such a range of size, form, color, leaf shape and texture. However, there is such a variety that it is easy to end up with a bed containing a hodge-podge of plants that becomes just as chaotic as a wild native or cottage garden. But there are ways to bring it into harmony.

A plain unassuming green hosta can look stunning when placed among the right plants, while that expensive, showy, had-to-have one can look disappointing when it clashes with its neighbors. Remember our watch words – balance and accent. Here are some tips.

Like many of us, I am attracted by bright yellow and bold variegated hostas. But avoid trying to create dramatic interest by the heavy use of these showy specimens. Too many placed together seem chaotic as each pops out at us vying for attention. The eye skips around unable to focus on one for very long. They distract from one another and the resulting design is no longer harmonious. Start by using a lot of solid green and blue hostas then mixing in variegated ones that repeat the green or blue colors.

Yellows can be tricky. There are many different shades of yellow and gold and not all of them complement each other. Yellow hostas also tend to change color depending on the amount of sun light and the time of season. It is better to plant golds in clusters using size, form and leaf textures to differentiate them. Group a few together while they are still in their pots and see if you like the effect.

Variegated hostas can be kept distinct by varying the width of their leaf margins. Make each stand out by changing leaf shapes and texture. Just think about all the different characteristics a leaf might have – smooth, rippling, waving or pie-crust-ed edges, twisting tips, different degrees of gloss, narrow lance-like or fat heart-shaped. That's just the leaves.

Then there is form. Cascading leaves draw the eye down a slope or wall and look fabulous near a water feature. Upright, vase-shaped hostas add vertical elements that link smaller ground-hugging plants with taller shrubs or structures. Hostas with unusual growing habits can add a touch of the dramatic or the whimsical.



A mass planting of a single hosta delineates the walk at this AHS tour garden in Green Bay.



Specimen *H.* 'Bressingham Blue' stands out when flanked by golden *H.* 'August Moon' and gold variegated *H.* 'Earth Angel' in the yard of Mike and Sharon Schmitt.



Yellow hosta pops when paired with a gold margined blue hosta and a purple leaved heuchera in the side yard of Martha LaFata's garden. A Japanese maple supplies the vertical element.

Plant fragrant hostas along your paths or near a patio. Plant small hostas in places where a visitor might linger, such as near a bench or along the sides of steps. Place cultivars with heavier substance in wet areas as they usually have more slug resistance.

No matter how careful you are, a bed with only hostas could look like a nursery shelf. Balance them out with some of those fabulous companion plants. Most hostas form a more or less solid looking mass. To lighten this effect, mix in fine textured plants such as ferns, astilbe, goatsbeard, sedges, meadow rues and bugbanes. Astilbes are fantastic because they not only provide a different texture but also add a pop of color. Visualize gold hostas paired with pink astilbe or caladiums. Heavier appearing medium-textured plants such as epimedium, heuchera, brunnera and Solomon seal help tie together fine-textured plants and smaller hostas with larger hostas and shrubs. Imagine a burgundy heuchera next to a blue or gold hosta.

The stars of spring are the many varieties of bulbs, mainly daffodils and tulips. Their showy blooms raise our spirits after the long drab winter. But after those blooms have faded, their ugly dying foliage remains. Many gardeners mix spring bulbs with their hostas. The thinking is that emerging hosta foliage will cover that of the fading bulbs. Sounds good on paper. I've found that in St. Louis it is often the end of June before daffodil foliage dies back enough to be pulled off. If this foliage is thick the hostas have a hard time growing up through their weight. If you do this, watch and give your hostas a helping hand. There are many bulbs with finer foliage that are also colorful and welcoming.

Hostas don't just have to live in the ground. They do quite well in pots. In the next newsletter I'll show you examples of how pots can enhance your yard.

Garden design is subjective. What I find pleasing may be totally different than what appeals to you. Ultimately it's your garden. Plant what makes you happy. The best laid plan goes out the window when you come home from a nursery or a vendor table at a convention with twice as many plants as will fit in your prepared space. Oh well, guess it's time to expand that bed.



Basil Honaker uses the repetition of a single hosta cultivar *H. 'Frances Williams'* to draw the eye along the path.



A pot spills Chinese ginger along a walk in the garden of Pat Payton and Jean Hudson. Hostas in elevated pots and understory trees add height and dimension.



Pam Wolkowitz combines a light green hosta with a burgundy ajuga. The blue birdbath cries "Look at me".

American Hosta Society National Convention

July 15 – 17, 2021

Kalamazoo, Michigan

It is with great excitement and pleasure that the Southwest Michigan Hosta Society and the West Michigan Hosta Society are partnering to bring you the first ever **Virtual 2021 American Hosta Society National Convention**.



H. 'Silly String' from Hans Hansen of Walters Gardens

For a nominal fee of \$49 per household “attendees” will have access to:

- One convention gift plant, *H. 'Silly String'* that will be mailed to you
- Speakers, workshops, Q&A, hosta shows and judges clinics via Zoom
- On-demand professionally recorded virtual tours of 10 amazing gardens
- Participating vendors
- An unsanctioned hosta leaf show photo contest
- A host seedling photo competition
- And more

The date, July 15-17, 2021, is one month later than usual, which will allow the Kalamazoo Convention Team ample time to record and produce videos of the tour gardens. Details and registration information can be found on the Hosta Society web-site, www.wmhostasociety.org.

2021 Hosta of the Year

H. 'Rainbow's End'

The American Hosta Growers Association (AHGA) has selected *H. 'Rainbow's End'* as the 2021 Hosta of the Year. To be selected, the cultivar must be a proven good garden plant in all regions of the country and must be readily available to the public at a reasonable price. *H. 'Rainbow's End'* certainly meets these criteria.



H. 'Rainbow's End' - grown in Phyllis Weidman's garden.

Discovered as a sport in a tissue culture run of *H. 'Obsession'*, *H. 'Rainbow's End'* was registered in 2005 by Hans Hanson of Walters Gardens. Its listed clump size is 11” high and 21” wide. Elliptical-shaped leaves are a clear dark green with very streaky bright cream-to-yellow centers. No two leaves are exactly alike due to the wildly variable streaking. In summer it has 16” – 19” showy burgundy scapes sporting lavender flowers. A bit slow growing, *H. 'Rainbow's End'* makes a beautiful small specimen plant whether in a trough or in the ground.

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St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

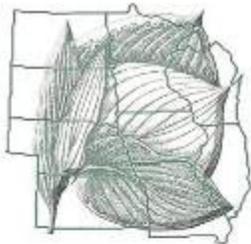
Contact: Dave Poos
9904 Crestwood Drive
Crestwood, MO 63126
david.poos@att.net

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

Meetings held at the **Creve Coeur Government Center, 300 N. New Ballas, 63141** (between Ladue Road and Olive), 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:

Sandie Markland, AHS Membership Secretary
P O Box 7539
Kill Devil Hills, NC 27948

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/>