



Volume 24, Issue 2

March, 2023



President
Phyllis Weidman

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Wow! What a great February meeting. Melinda Ligon organized the food and Dave Poos. arranged for Mark Glenshaw 'The Owl Man' to speak. Both food and speaker were outstanding. Outstanding also was the number of members who attended. Sorry if you didn't make it, but the March meeting is coming.

March is the time of year I find very hard. It is sping one day and winter the next. I want to get out in the

garden. Where do all those leaves come from? In February, I like seeing the winter aconites and snowdrops blooming and discovering other growth while a rake leaves. I know there is hope. But in March, everything is waking up. Nature is truly amazing.

March is the time for making sure I have everything that is needed for spring gardening. Do I have my equipment serviced or sharpened, do I have all the chemicals I need, and do I have my body ready for all the leaning over and stretching. Make plans for your garden. Are you going to remove a tree or scrub? Does that mean I need to move hostas? Moving or making a hosta smaller is a good spring job. Be ready! Those hosta eyes may pop up before you are ready.

The March meeting will be popping up too. We meet at Greenscape Garden Nursery. Gardening is learning and what better way to learn than to listen to someone who knows. Come join the group, meet new people, and learn about something you never thought you would be interested in.

I will be there and so should you.

Phyllis

2023 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- March 19** **Meeting with Speaker Jennifer Schamber**
2:00 PM, Greenscape Gardens Nursery
2832 Barrett Station Rd, Manchester, MO 63021
- April 23** **Vendor Day**
2:00 PM, Crestwood Recreation Center, Whitecliff Park
9245 Whitecliff Park Ln., Crestwood, MO 63126
- April 29** **Work Day at the Missouri Botanical Garden**
8:00 AM, Missouri Botanical Garden,
AHS Display Garden beds
- May 20-21** **Plant Sale**
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Missouri Botanical Garden
Set up May 19, time TBD
- June 4** **Garden Walk with program**
“Floral Bouquets using Hosta Foliage”
2:00 PM, Home of Janelle Criscione
- June 7-10** **AHS National Convention**
Ames, Iowa
- June 18** **Garden Walk with beekeeper Mike Wagner**
2:00 PM, Home of Martha LaFata
433 Edgar Road, Webster Groves, MO 63119
- July 13-15** **Midwest Regional Hosta Convention**
Rochester, MN
- July 16** **Members Plant Auction**
2:00 PM, MOBot CBEC, Room 125
4651 Shaw, St. Louis, MO 63110
- August 20** **Garden Walk**
2:00 PM, Hostas on the Bluff
1601 Pleasantview Dr., Fairview Heights, IL 62208
- September 17** **Garden Walk**
TBD
- October 15** **Meeting with Speaker**
TBD
- November** **Board Meeting**
Time and location TBD
- December** **Holiday Party**
Home of Melinda Ligon - Time and location TBD

March 19

**Greenscape Gardens Nursery, 2:00 pm.
2832 Barrett Station Road, St. Louis 63021**

‘Flowering Trees and Shrubs’ Jennifer Schamber

The first signs of spring are the welcoming appearance of purple crocus and yellow daffodils. All the sleeping bulbs are just waiting for warmer soils and temperatures. What a joyful sight! Right on their heels are the burst of color from spring flowering shrubs and understory trees. When I see our star magnolia awash in white flowers, I know the season is before me.

Jennifer Schamber, our March speaker, is the General Manager of Greenscape Gardens Nursery. Jennifer studied horticulture at Meramec Community College and holds a BA degree in Business Administration from St. Louis University. She is also a past president of the Landscape and Nursery Association of St. Louis. Many of her horticultural articles appear in *The Gateway Gardener* magazine.

These credentials make her the perfect person to introduce us to flowering trees and shrubs that grow well in the St. Louis area and are available for purchase at area nurseries. The tree and shrub selection at Greenscape seems to expand every year as newer varieties of old favorites, like the redbud and dogwood, hit the retail market. Jennifer has set up a meeting area inside the main building of the nursery out of March’s often inclement weather.

It is early in the gardening season, but cool weather ornamental plants and vegetables will be on display and available for purchase. Who can resist those colorful pansies? The nursery also has a large selection of house plants, garden goods and pottery. Come early and stay late to browse Greenscapes’ sales tables.

Directions to Greenscape Gardens Nursery:

- Traveling on I-270, take the Dougherty Ferry Road exit, Exit 8.
- Travel West on Dougherty Ferry Road for approximately 2 miles.
- Turn left (South) on Barrett Station Road. There are two entrances to the nursery which is on your immediate left at 2832 Barrett Station Road.



Jennifer Schamber



Perennial display at Greenscape Gardens



Shade plants on display

If it's February, It must be a potluck!

The day was gorgeous – that February thaw that warms our blood and gets us thinking about the gardening year ahead. What a perfect atmosphere for the first event on the 2023 hosta calendar. Melinda Ligon, hospitality chair, supplied the meat - delicious pulled pork and brisket from Smoking Barrels BBQ. Society members filled in around the meat trays with pots of baked beans, potatoes and their favorite salads and desserts. The choices were abundant and quite tasty. The noise level in the room soon climbed as members chatted with each other after the long winter hiatus.

As our food began to digest and the chatter died down, speaker Mark Glenshaw, aka The Owl Man, regaled us with stories of the owl population that resides in Forest Park. When Mark moved to St. Louis he lived near the park and fell in love with its resident creatures, especially the owls.

Although large, 18 plus inches tall, two to five pounds in weight with a wing span of four to five feet, owls are hard to find. They are patient birds who spend hours waiting, looking and listening for their prey. Their coloring blends perfectly with their surroundings. They become active in late afternoon and evening, just as most of us are enjoying dinner. They also fly swiftly and silently. When Mark views his owls, which he does six or seven nights per week, he starts about an hour before sunset, wears dark muted colors and moves very slowly.

Mark has been observing a pair of owls, which he named Sarah and Charles, since 2006. Mark showed videos chronicling their behavior from hooting duets, stretching and grooming, showering in the rain, ejecting pellets of undigested food to hunting and courting. Owl diets are quite varied – insects and worms, fish, small rodents, skunks, raccoons, ducks, even cats and dogs.

Mark conducts “owl prowls” in Forest Park for individuals or groups of people. Read his blog at forestparkowls.blogspot.com for more information about his love affair with owls.

Thank you, Melinda, for organizing this enjoyable and educational afternoon.



Delicious salads, just part of the spread



Lunch is served!



After lunch, the presentation began



Mark Glenshaw talks about his owls

2023 Membership Dues Are Payable Now Last Notice

If you receive the newsletter by e-mail, check the second attachment for a list of all members who owe dues this year. If your name appears in the attachment your dues are now payable for 2023. If your name does not appear in the attachment, you do not owe dues. If dues are not paid by the end of March, your name will be removed from our roster.

Dues are \$7 annually (individual or household) or \$18 for three years. Make checks payable to SLHS (St. Louis Hosta Society) and bring to the March meeting or send to:

**David Birenbaum
209 Brook Lane
O'Fallon, MO 63368**

WELCOME NEW MEMBER!

Lea Ann James of Farmington, MO

It is exciting to have you as a new member in our society. Please join us at the March meeting held at Greenscape Gardens Nursery. For all members, new or old timers, the events scheduled for this year are the perfect time to sit and chat and get to know one another.

2023 Hosta of the Year

H. 'Neptune'
is

The American Hosta Growers Association (AHGA) has selected *H. 'Neptune'* as the 2023 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. 'Neptune'* certainly meets these criteria. Started in 1996, the AHGA Hosta of the Year list is a good resource for finding cultivars that will be outstanding in your garden.



photo from Walters Gardens

Developed by Hans Hansen of Walters Gardens and registered in 2006, *H. 'Neptune'* is appropriately named for the mythological god of the sea. It is a medium-large hosta, 24 inches tall by 47 inches wide, with cascading waves of rippled, narrow, wedge-shaped pointed leaves. As the season progresses the leaves turn more blue-green. The backs of the leaves are white. Lavender flowers appear on tall arching scapes, approaching 32 inches, in late summer. The leaves are of heavy substance which offers some resistance to slugs. Moderately fast growing, *H. 'Neptune'* is easily recognized from afar. It makes a beautiful specimen in the home garden.

The slugs are coming!

Time to Be Pro-active!

In the next month and a half, we avid gardeners will be taking frequent strolls through our gardens. What will be the first hosta pip poking up through the soil? We've been waiting all winter for this moment. But don't sit back and just marvel how nature continuously renews itself. Sometimes Mother Nature needs a helping hand. All those holes that appear in our hosta leaves during the growing season can be eliminated. But now is the time for action.

Garden slugs are brown or gray in color, slimy and soft-bodied, without any legs. In St. Louis they are generally small – one-fourth to one inch in length. Each slug is capable of laying hundreds of eggs in its lifetime. The eggs are laid in moist soil, under mulch, rocks or garden detritus. Now, as winter weather abates, all those overwintering slug eggs begin to hatch and any slugs that have survived the winter begin to feed regularly.

There are some non-chemical controls that can be tried and may work if you are tenacious and persistent. Slugs crawl everywhere. Their soft bodies do not like to crawl over anything that irritates their skin. Things like coffee grounds, wood ashes, sand, crushed eggshells and diatomaceous earth can be used as barriers around a plant. Slugs like to live and lay eggs in garden debris. Destroy their homes by removing old decayed foliage and leaf litter from your beds. Pull mulch away from the crowns of your hostas. Slugs are a favorite food of snakes, toads, frogs, beetles and other beneficial insects. Encourage these predators to stay in your garden.

There are two primary types of chemical slug baits, those with metaldehyde as the primary ingredient and those with iron phosphate. Brand names include Sluggo, Slug Magic, and Garden Safe Slug and Snail Bait. Both types also contain additives such as yeast to lure the slugs and snails to the bait.

For metaldehyde and iron phosphate baits, all that is necessary is to evenly apply the bait over the infested area at the rate recommended on the product label. More is not better. In about two or three weeks, apply the bait again. This will take out many of the slugs hatched from eggs after the first application. Applied properly, more treatments will probably not be necessary until late fall when a final application should be applied to knock down the slug population prior to onset of winter.

Environmentalists are fiercely debating whether these baits constitute a significant danger to pets and wildlife. Chemical slug baits have been banned in some parts of Europe and may soon be in the US also. Stay tuned for more information on this discussion.

Whether you use slug baits or non-chemical controls such as spun wool, hair, beer, garlic spray or ammonia and water, **the key is to get started early**, just as the pips are emerging from the soil. Waiting until holes appear is much too late – many generations of slugs are already thriving in your garden.



photo from Missouri Botanical Garden



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St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

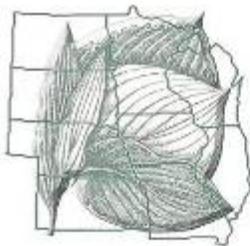
Contact: David Birenbaum
209 Brook Lane
O'Fallon, MO 63368
d.birenbaum@sbcglobal.net

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.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/>