



Volume 25, Issue 3

May, 2024



President

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Friendship!

In an earlier message to our membership, I mentioned one of the greatest benefits of belonging to the St. Louis Hosta Society was the people and the bonds through a common love of gardening. Last weekend many of us gathered at the Missouri Botanical Garden for our annual workday and enjoyed the company and sharing of knowledge with other members and building friendships. These events and garden walks are planned throughout the year to create a space of

getting to know other members and sharing what we know. Thank you to everyone who participated in a part of who we are as the St. Louis Hosta Society.

As we move into the year, there's a lot going on with our Society and May is no exception. Our annual plant sale will be on Saturday, May 11th with setup planned for the evening before at the Missouri Botanical Garden Visitors Center. Find some of those plants you can split from your garden and be a part of the exchange with members and the many visitors who come through the garden that day. On May 19th, the President of the Missouri Botanical Garden Members Board and active Hosta Society member, Martha Lafata will host us at her garden in Webster Groves. If you want to see an amazing garden you won't want to miss this one!

My closing message this month is to inspire all of you to find what's important to you in the St. Louis Hosta Society and get involved. We are a working group but not to the point that we miss out on the fun. Bring your friends, get to know new members and make the best of your Society and of course enjoy growing the amazing Hosta!

Gene

2024 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- May 11** **Plant Sale**
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Missouri Botanical Garden
Set up May 10, time 5:00 pm
- 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 Bob Solberg**
2:00 PM, CBEC Building
- October 20** **Meeting with Speaker**
2:00 PM, CBEC Building
- November** **Board Meeting**
Time and location TBD
- December** **Holiday Party**
Time and location TBD
- June 5 – 7** **AHS National Convention and**
Midwest Regional Hosta Convention
(combined conventions)
Peoria, IL

**It's hard to believe, but May 11th is right around the corner!
What's happening on May 11th you ask.**



Hosta Plant Sale at the Missouri Botanical Garden

Missouri Botanical Garden, JCTVC room

Set up May 10, time: 5:00 – until done

Sale May 11, time: 9:00 – 5:00 PM

For a successful MoBot plant sale, the Society needs your donations and your help. Dig and pot now while the weather is mild and the hostas are just emerging from their winter sleep. Mini and large hostas are always in demand. Any kind of variegated hosta sells well. Please keep in mind that monies from this sale and the member auction in July pay the costs associated with meeting room rental, speakers, the website, the newsletter publication and many more events held throughout the year.

Plants can be dropped off at the Botanical Garden during set-up time. Set-up time is Friday May 10 at 5:00 pm unless it rains. The MOBot garden is having an event that will be moved inside to the room that our society will be using for the sale if it rains. In that case, set-up will be at 7:00 am on Saturday May 11 before the sale begins. Hope for no rain. There will be an area on the loading dock on the west end of the new building for plant drop-off. If you wish to drop off plants at a member's house ahead of time, please call plant sale chairwoman Barb Moreland to make arrangements.

Barb Moreland: 314-961-4191 or bmore433@aol.com

Workers are needed to help set up and price plants for sale. This occurs during set-up on Friday evening May 10 from 5:00 until done. Workers are also needed to man the sales tables, answer questions and promote our society throughout the day on May 11. Donate an hour or two of your time to spread the word about that great plant the hosta.

The Joys Of May



Peony 'Coral Charm'



Jap Iris 'Ships Are Sailing'



Lettuce and onions - just need the salad dressing

GARDEN WALK – A visit with MARTHA LAFATA

May 19, 2:00 PM.

433 Edgar, Webster Groves, MO 63119

314-961-7163 or mvelafata@gmail.com

Society member Martha LaFata has graciously invited us to spend an afternoon in her lovely Webster Groves garden. Martha's garden was on tour during the 2016 AHS National convention, was featured in the August 2019 issue of *St. Louis Homes and Lifestyles* and will be a display garden for the 2024 Missouri Botanical Garden Tour.



Wide heavily wooded garden beds encircle the yard. Standing on the patio or the lush lawn it's hard to believe that the house is located on a busy street. The lush vegetation buffers urban noise and screens the yard from view.

Martha spent countless hours removing invasive vines, ivy and over-grown shrubs to create areas thick with hostas and their shade loving companions.



Wander up a slope to the sunnier portion of Martha's yard. Here the border features daylilies, grasses and conifers that prefer a bit more sun. Two raised beds contain flowers that can be cut for display in the house.

Bring a lawn chair, a snack to share with others and your drink of choice. Water will be available. Martha will give us tips on how to landscape with hostas and other shade plants. Spend the afternoon strolling through this beautiful area, relaxing on their charming patio and chatting with your hosta friends.



Photos were taken during our 2021 Garden Walk at Martha's. Let's see what has changed.

Directions:

- From I-44, take the S Elm Avenue exit.
- Go north on S Elm Ave about 0.2 miles to E Glendale Rd (1st traffic light after Big Bend Blvd).
- Turn right onto E Glendale Rd. and go 0.6 miles to Edgar Rd.
- Turn left onto Edgar Rd. and go 0.5 miles. 433 Edgar Rd. is on the left across from the park. Parking is available in the driveway and on the east side of Edgar Rd.

April - Work Day at the Missouri Botanical Garden



First order of business was to divide misshapen or overgrown plants. Roger McFarland and Gene Pulliam ponder how to attack a large specimen.



Sue Erb and David Birenbaum teamed up to prepare a large plant for division. They plan to tie up the leaves so the diggers can see where to insert their spades.



Divisions that were removed from the various plants were potted for our sale at the Botanical Garden in May. Barb Moreland is potter par excellent.



Lots of other tasks needed to be done. Like our own gardens these beds had weeds to be pulled, yellow foliage from spring bulbs that had finished blooming and companion plants that needed thinning. Kathy Belleville tackled this task.



Melissa Byrd removes excess mulch from around the crowns of each hosta. In hot steamy St. Louis mulch on crowns is a recipe for crown rot.



Debbie Hadley gives each plant a sprinkling of fertilizer. A soil test indicated that only nitrogen was needed, so Phyllis opted to use Morganite



Phyllis Weidman, Roger McFarland and Gene Pulliam prepare soil in a large terra cotta pot.



H. 'Old Faithful' now has a new home. Visitors to the Garden see how hostas can thrive in pots.



Day is done. Barb Morland cleans up the potting area.



Each year, The Garden's hosta beds get better and better thanks to all our members who gave their time on an April Saturday morning.

Special thanks to Phyllis Weidman for her leadership in this very worthwhile project.



The Crew

Joan Poos, Sue Erb, Kathy Belleville, Dave Birenbaum, Melissa Byrd, Roger Mc Farland, Barb Moreland, Gene Pulliam, Debbie Hadley and Phyllis Weidman

**Mother Nature smiled on us!
No Rain!**

Keep the Society in Mind

Missouri Botanical Garden Plant Sale in May

Member Auction coming in July

Our member auction, which is known for having nice, harder to find hostas, is fast approaching. Now is a good time to divide those big clumps in your yards. As you do so, set aside a plant or division for our auction in July and also for our plant sale at MOBot in May. In the spring it's easy to see clumps that are no longer symmetrical or have formed a ring due to center dying out. Besides, it's much more pleasant to be digging and potting now when the air is mild, the lawn is newly green and plants are just poking their heads above the ground, then in hot, humid St. Louis July.

Not sure how to begin. Here are a few hints about dividing hostas.

To get the most divisions from a clump or if the hosta isn't too large, dig out the entire plant. Dig around the clump in a circle at least six inches from the crown, then use your shovel like a lever to lift the clump out of the ground. Many gardeners prefer to use a garden fork to dig and lift as this causes less damage to those important long roots.

Once the clump is out of the ground, wash the roots in a bucket of water or spray with a hose. You can then see that the clump is made up of many individual plants. Next pull any easily removable eyes from the crown. Then try to pull the clump apart. To separate single plants from the crown, use a back and forth pulling motion, working the stems back and forth until they come loose. It might be easier if the plant is in a bucket because the water keeps washing the soil away and makes the roots slick so they can be pulled out of the tangled clump.

If you cannot break the clump apart, you may have to use a sharp knife. Make your cuts through the crown, but not into the roots. Once you have your divisions, plant them as soon as possible. Do not let the roots dry out. If you cannot plant them right away, place some moist soil or peat moss on the roots and put them in the shade. If the roots dry a little bit before you get a chance to replant, soak them in a bucket of water for a while. Do not leave the plants in water for more than a day because the roots will begin to rot.

The above is the preferred method as it results in less damage to the crown, emerging leaves and tender roots. However, if your hostas are too large to lift out of the ground or you want a simpler and less time-consuming method, use your shovel to cut through the crown of the clump as it remains in the ground. Carefully dig out the sections you want and replant or pot them. You will lose some of the fans and roots, but the process is much faster. This is a good way to attack those clumps that no longer have a pleasing shape. Just nip off that bulge on the side or back. My husband uses two garden forks placed back-to-back to pry the divisions apart. The forks cause much less damage to those tender roots than a shovel does. <http://www.bhg.com/gardening>



Remove entire plant. *Photo from www.bhg.com/gardening.*



Use shovel to cut crown while clump remains in the ground. *Photo from <http://hostalibrary.org/misc/div/>*



Use knife to cut the crown being careful not to cut too many roots. *Photo from <http://hostalibrary.org/misc/div/>*

Do you have your earplugs ready?

In May, two different groups of cicadas, called broods, will emerge at the same time from their underground habitat. One brood, labeled Brood XIII tunnels to the surface every 13 years, while Brood XIX does so every 17 years. St. Louis is home to Brood XIII. For both broods to appear at the same time is a very rare event that last occurred in 1803 when Thomas Jefferson was president. After 2024, these two specific groups of cicadas won't sync up their emergences for another 221 years. The territories of these two broods are adjacent with overlap around Springfield and Peoria Illinois.

Cicadas are in the same family as stink bugs and bed bugs. Periodical cicadas are fairly large, about 1 – 1.5 inches long with a wingspan about double that length. They are easily recognized by their orange-colored veins and large red eyes. While fierce looking, these insects are harmless to humans or pets. They don't sting or bite, do not carry diseases and are not poisonous. Just leave them alone.

Cicadas spend most of their lives underground feeding on tree roots. After 13 years or 17 years, depending on their brood, the immature cicadas construct a tunnel through which they emerge from the ground. They do not emerge until soil temperatures at a depth of 7-8 inches are about 64 degrees Fahrenheit. They then molt into adults leaving their exoskeleton behind. These are frequently seen attached to trees. Typically, it takes several days for their adult skin to harden. The adults then climb into trees and shrubs to mate. The females deposit their eggs onto small twigs. Six weeks later, nymphs will hatch from these eggs, fall to the ground, burrow into the soil and begin feeding on the roots of trees. Thus, the cicada lifecycle restarts.

Expect billions of insects to emerge. Each will have just a few weeks to find a mate and lay their eggs before they die. It is noisy chaos. The insects emit a high-pitched buzz or mating song that can reach up to 100 decibels, roughly equivalent to a jackhammer or chainsaw. They achieve this with "sound-producing structures" called tymbals on either side of their abdomens. The good news – it is all over in four to six weeks.

We in the Midwest had special glasses to view the eclipse. Now maybe we should invest in earplugs to survive the coming of the broods. Enjoy the experience, it'll be another 221 years before you hear it again.



Photo: cicadasafari.org



Exoskeletons clinging to a tree branch.
www.uwlax.edu/currents/cicadas-2024/



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

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St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

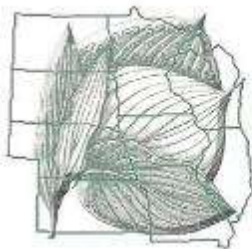
Contact: Lynn Teller
185 Chatwood Terrace
Crestwood, MO 63126
Lynn.teller@gmail.com

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/>