



Volume 20, Issue 1

February, 2019



**President Diana  
Plahn**

## **A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT**

Dear Fellow Hosta Gardeners:

Wishing you all a happy and prosperous New Year with good fortune and great Hostas.

Hopefully, you have done your Hosta and other companion plant shopping and are waiting anxiously for spring to come with those deliveries. Our weather has been up and down again, as usual in St. Louis. I'm curious to see how the winter will affect the plants, trees and shrubs in the garden,

and of course, when we'll see the first Hosta eyes break through the soil. Spring is still quite a while away, but we can still make our plans.

The board would like to thank all the members who responded to our survey. Your responses created the calendar and meeting dates we have this year. Our first event is on Sunday, Feb. 10<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. That is our potluck, which will be different this year due to input from the Hospitality Chair and the Board, along with those other individuals that attended the board meeting.

Because of extremely variable and declining numbers of people who attend the potluck, it was decided to ask members who come to bring a meat dish, side dish or dessert. The Hospitality Committee will provide drinks, and paper goods but no additional meat. Each year the leftover meat has increased to the point that it's not economically feasible to order any. So, Hospitality is asking us all to put on our chef's hat and bring something like a meat casserole, sandwiches, or whatever is your specialty. I look forward to seeing everyone there!

*Diana*

## 2019 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| <b>February 10</b>  | <b>Annual Potluck Luncheon</b><br><b>1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center</b>  |
| <b>March 20</b>     | <b>Meeting with Speaker Bruce Buehrig</b><br><b>7:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center</b>   |
| <b>April 28</b>     | <b>Vendor Day</b><br><b>1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center</b>   |
| <b>May 4</b>        | <b>Work Day at the Missouri Botanical Garden</b><br><b>8:30 AM, Missouri Botanical Garden,</b><br><b>AHS Display Garden beds</b>   |
| <b>May 11</b>       | <b>Plant Sale at the Missouri Botanical Garden</b><br><b>Setup May 11 before sale, time TBA</b><br><b>Sale May 11, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM</b><br><b>Missouri Botanical Garden</b> |
| <b>May 31</b>       | <b>Garden Walk/Meeting/Demonstration</b><br><b>6:00 PM, Home of Dave and Joan Poos</b>   |
| <b>June 12-16</b>   | <b>AHS National Convention</b><br><b>Green Bay, WS</b>   |
| <b>June</b>         | <b>Garden Walk/Meeting</b><br><b>Time and location TBA</b>   |
| <b>July 21</b>      | <b>Members Plant Auction</b><br><b>1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center</b>  |
| <b>September 18</b> | <b>Meeting with Speaker TBA</b><br><b>7:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center</b>   |
| <b>October 16</b>   | <b>Meeting with Speaker TBA</b><br><b>7:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center</b>   |
| <b>November</b>     | <b>Board Meeting</b><br><b>Time and location TBA</b>   |
| <b>December</b>     | <b>Holiday Party</b>   |



## **FEBRUARY POTLUCK LUNCHEON**

**Sunday, February 10 at 1:00 PM  
Doors open at 12:30**

**Creve Coeur Government Center  
300 N. New Ballas, St Louis 63141**

After all the cold weather we have experienced since Christmas, it's heartening to think about an afternoon of delicious food, lively chatter and the warmth of friendships. Let the hosta season begin!

Traditionally the first Society meeting of the year is a Potluck Luncheon at Creve Coeur Government Center. This year our Hospitality Chair, Karen Frey will supply beverages, silverware and paper products. Members are asked to please bring a food item of their choice. Do you have a special casserole that your family adores? Do you think a potluck is incomplete without pigs in barbeque sauce? Are you in the mood to whip up ham or chicken salad sandwiches? Does your stomach rumble at the thought of potatoes of any type? Do you prefer a healthy salad? Don't forget about that dessert table – all sweets will be devoured. Let your creative juices run rampant.

Come early to socialize; doors open at 12:30. Stay for a short business meeting during which our president Diana Plahn will give a preview of all the exciting events scheduled for this year.

## **2019 Membership Dues Are Payable Now**

If you receive the newsletter by postal mail, check the two-digit number appearing after your name on the address label of this newsletter. Your membership dues are paid through the end of the year appearing after your name. For example, if '18' appears after your name, your dues are paid through the 2018 year and are now payable for 2019.

If you receive the newsletter by e-mail, check the attachment for a list of all members and the year through which their dues are paid. For example, if '18' appears after your name in the attachment list, your dues are paid through the 2018 year and are now payable for 2019.

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

**Melissa Byrd  
117 Gunston Hall Drive  
St. Charles, MO 63304**

## Let's Go Green - Give E-mail a Try

If you currently receive the SLHS newsletter by mail, please consider switching to email. Each year either printing prices or postal rates increase. The price of stamps just increased another five cents, now up to 55 cents apiece. The cost of producing and mailing a newsletter already exceeds the amount of your dues. Your address will only be used for St. Louis Hosta Society mailings. The use of e-mail saves paper and will significantly reduce our club's printing and mailing costs. Plus you will receive the newsletter sooner with all those pictures in color.

If you would now prefer an e-mail copy instead of a postal copy send an e-mail to SLHS Newsletter Editor Joan Poos at [david.poos@att.net](mailto:david.poos@att.net). I will add your address to my email lists. If at any time, you change your e-mail address or wish to change your e-mail status, just send a message requesting the change to Joan at [david.poos@att.net](mailto:david.poos@att.net).

## Member Plant Sale

This activity was created many, many years ago with the purpose of offering hostas not readily available at local nurseries to St. Louis Society members at wholesale prices. This was not considered a fund raising event, rather a perk for belonging to the society.

Each fall the chairman of the event would select a nursery, obtain their wholesale catalogue, and pick about 10 to 13 desirable hostas to offer to our society's members. The chairman would collect member order forms and then order the appropriate number of plants. Plants were received, either bare-root or in pots, and then assembled in packages for each member. The individual order were available for pickup in April at the Vendor Day event.

Over the years this activity has garnered less and less interest. The Board is not sure of the reason. Perhaps more interesting hostas are available in local nurseries at reasonable prices now than have been in the past. Our nursery of choice for the past few years was *Made in the Shade Nursery* which is no longer in business. So time to find another outlet. There are other fine nurseries available. Ted Piekutowski has spearheaded this project for several years and has decided it's time to try something else. The Board thanks him for his years of service overseeing this event.

For these reasons, the Board has decided to discontinue the member plant sale for this year. If our members are interested in reviving it next year please let your Board members know. If you are interested in chairing this event, please let Diana know. There are plenty of seasoned members who will give you guidance and help.

## Goodbye 2018

December's Christmas party marked the end of our season. It was a fine party! A crackling fire, comfortable sofas and chairs, soft music in the background, lots of delicious food and drink, cheery talk with gardening friends – what more could someone want. Thank you Martha and Paul LaFata for hosting our year-ending party.



Some members retired to a cozy sunroom not too far from the food table. Sharon and Mike Schmitt, Phyllis Weidman, Jolly Ann Whitener, Milessa Byrd and Melinda Ligon were heard swapping dog stories. Sharon is busy petting the LaFata's trusty dog.



Susan and Tom Hanratty definitely get the Award for traveling the farthest. They currently reside in the countryside near Old Monroe. Now that's quite a hike. It was fun catching up on their doings.



In the living room, Pam Belloli and Barb Moreland are deep in conversation – maybe more dog stories or more likely chickens.



Dave Poos, Paul LaFata, Martha and Diana Plahn join in Pam's and Barb's conversation.

## Welcome New Member

### Judy Graman of Webster Groves, MO

What a fun time to join our society. The potluck is the perfect time to get to know your fellow members. Just bring a dish to share, then sit back and relax. We encourage all our members to introduce themselves to Judy and embrace a new gardening season.

## Survey Results

Although our Society's membership numbers remain strong, the Board has seen a steady decline in the number of members attending meetings. This seems to be true of garden clubs in general, not just in St. Louis but nation-wide. The Board would like to take steps to reverse this trend. In mid-December, the Board sent a five question survey to each household requesting their input. Mailings were sent to 105 addresses. Thirty-six replied, approximately 33%. We thank each person who took the time to respond.

Questions one and two concerned meeting day and time. We have heard that Sunday is a bad day. Weekends are family time. Ten members specified Sunday only, five more included Sunday with other days of the week. Twenty members preferred a non-Sunday day of the week with Wednesday and Thursday being most popular. The Board has decided to try some week day evening meetings. Thus our March, September and October meetings will be held on Wednesday evening at 7:00. The other events will remain on Sunday at 1:00.

Question three concerned meeting location. Our current location, Creve Coeur Government Center, received the most votes with 27. The Missouri Botanical Garden was second with 14 and member gardens received 10. The Government Center is the most expensive option but has the advantage of being centrally located. As a Missouri Botanical Garden sanctioned member, that facility is free. However, some members expressed concerns about parking, security and additional travel time. As a result our meetings and events will remain at Creve Coeur. Garden Walks will be scheduled in May and June in member gardens.

Question four asked about your interests. Members were to rate six different activities in order of 1 to 6 with 1 being their favorite. The six options were 1. Programs having a speaker on hostas, 2. Programs having a speaker on some other garden topic, 3. Programs involving a hands-on or demonstration activity, 4. A garden walk in a member's garden, 5. Pot luck luncheons, 6. A field trip. Not every member rated all six options. Some members just replied 'yes' to one or more option. Replies were weighted. Every '1' was given a weighted value of 6, every '2' a value of 5, etc.

Using this system, members preferred to attend a meeting featuring a speaker on hostas. This is not surprising as we are a hosta club. This was closely followed by meetings with speakers on non-hosta topics. Activities featuring garden walks in member gardens was the third choice, followed by hands-on activities, field trips and pot lucks. This was a bit surprising as the Pot Luck Luncheon used to be our most popular and best attended event.

Vice-president Martha LaFata is setting up programs with these results in mind. There will be speakers at the March, September and October evening meetings. Phyllis Weidman is organizing a 'Hosta 101' program. The May Garden Walk in the Poos garden will include a demonstration/hands-on activity centered on digging and dividing hostas. The Board is open to any and all suggestions that you might have.

## **Survey Results – continued**

The last question concerned the annual end-of-year party. When I first joined the Society, a Christmas Party was held at a member's home. In an effort to be more inclusive and more centrally located, the event became a catered luncheon held at Creve Coeur Government Center. At first this was quite popular. However, after a few years attendance declined and catering cost increased so that it was not economically feasible. It also required a time commitment from the chair person. No one volunteered to take over this event. Instead of discontinuing this activity it was again moved to a member's home.

The survey showed an equal number of respondents interested in a party at a member's home and a banquet at a restaurant with the Society subsidizing part of the cost. Several members stated that an end of season party is not necessary. At this point the Board has not made a decision. Having a dinner at a restaurant requires a member to step forward to organize the outing. Having a party at a member's home requires a member to volunteer to open their home to us in the early December time frame. If you would like to volunteer, please talk with Diana or any Board member.

### **Member Comments:**

Several members included comments with their returned survey. Some comments centered on ways to attract more people to attend our events by reaching out to other garden clubs and to the Master Gardener group. This is a good suggestion. Maybe we need to make better use of Facebook. I confess to being a dinosaur and not well versed in social media. Mike Schmitt set up our Facebook page and does an excellent job of posting information about our goings-on. He encourages other members to add their comments. Perhaps it's possible to post our information on other garden club's Facebook pages.

Several members asked questions about our finances. How much money does the Society have? How much does it take to run our events? Is there a need for fund raising or do dues cover all costs? Does the Society donate to other causes? At the November Board meeting a budget is created. This budget is presented to membership at the February meeting for their approval. Income and expenditures are itemized. The biggest expenses are room rental, speakers and newsletter publication. Dues do not cover all of these costs. We have two fund raisers, the Hosta Sale at the Missouri Botanical Garden in May and the Member Auction in July. The amount of funds raised from these two events fluctuates depending on the quality and quantity of plants donated. The Society donates money to the Missouri Botanical Garden for the upkeep and enhancement of the AHS Hosta Display Garden. The amount varies depending on need. If you are interested in our current funds, the treasurer places a copy of her report on the registration table at each meeting.

Dave Birenbaum penned a comment that summarizes how most of us feel. "I joined to do garden tours, learn about hostas, and have fun. Garden tours, occasional talks about hostas, and mingling with members does that for me. And garden tours are a lot of fun. The opportunity to swap plants is great. Did I say I enjoy garden tours?"

The Board wishes you a prosperous new year and a FUN gardening season.

## AHS eNewsletter – check it out

In 2018, a publication of the American Hosta Society entitled the AHS eNewsletter received a facelift. Before 2018, the magazine contained mostly news about AHS meetings and activities. Its new look is more interesting and appealing to hosta lovers at the local level. In addition to articles on hosta topics and upcoming AHS activities, each issue spotlights a hosta nursery and a local hosta society.

The January edition features Silvers Elbert Nursery as the AHGA vendor. The local highlighted hosta society is the Midland Hosta Society in Akron, Ohio. Hosta guru Warren Pollock has a very educational column on Foliar Nematode Abatement, and he also fills us in on the current hit movie “The Mule” and its connection to the AHS. Glenn Herold increases our knowledge by highlighting another Japanese species hosta, *longipes* (Iwa Giboshi). The “Profiles” column featuring members of the Board of Directors continues - this month has a little bit about the Online Hosta Journal Editor Danny Larson. Lastly a new column makes its debut: “Book Notice” by Clyde Crockett. Clyde will review a hosta and/or shade gardening related book in each upcoming issue that we might want to add to our library.

The best part of this publication is that it is FREE – you do not need to be a member of AHS to receive a copy. To subscribe to the American Hosta Society eNewsletter, go to: <http://www.americanhostasociety.org>, click on the Publications tab, then on the E-Newsletter tab. Enter your name and email address in the spaces provided. You will be sent an email confirmation. You must respond to that email to be placed on the email distribution list. You will then automatically receive all future AHS eNewsletters. You may unsubscribe at any time by going to the same above link.

To view the AHS eNewsletter archive, open hyperlink:

[http://www.americanhostasociety.org/Publications/enews\\_archive.htm](http://www.americanhostasociety.org/Publications/enews_archive.htm)

## Educational Opportunity

Society secretary Jolly Ann Whitener belongs to the Farm Trails Garden Club which is participating in an Environmental Studies School (ESS) program on Water. She wanted members of the St. Louis Hosta Society to know that this program is open to anyone, not just members of St. Louis garden clubs.

Last year the course focused on Air issues, this year the emphasis is on Water. Changes in the water cycle result in too much rain and flooding, drought and fire and in some cases increased desertification. There is increasing plastic in our oceans and lead in water pipes. These are two topics that might be of interest to you.

The Environmental Studies School (ESS) will be held on **Tuesday March 26 and Wednesday, March 27, 2019** at Missouri Botanical Garden (MOBOT), Ridgeway Center, 4344 Shaw Blvd, St. Louis, MO 63110. Registration is at 8:00 am on March 26. The course is 5 hours each day plus lunch and breaks (8:30 am – 4:00 pm) and a field trip. The cost is \$75 which includes lunch. Please join fellow gardeners for an exciting informative two days of learning and discussion.

For additional information, contact:

Gloria Whyte, Chairman, 314-993-6534, [gloriacm@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gloriacm@sbcglobal.net) or  
Jan Conant, Co-Chairman and Registrar, 314-576-7590, [djconant@msn.com](mailto:djconant@msn.com)



## St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

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**Karen Frey** – Hospitality

**Martha LaFata** – Vice-President  
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## St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

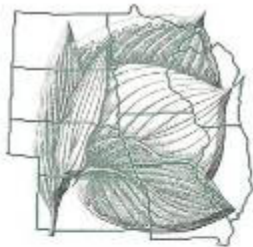
**Contact:** Melissa Byrd  
117 Gunston Hall Drive  
St. Charles, MO 63304  
[mabyrd68@gmail.com](mailto:mabyrd68@gmail.com)

**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](http://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](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:

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/>