



Volume 21, Issue 4

May, 2020



President
Phyllis Weidman

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Here we go again. I know we are trying to flatten the curve, but I really miss our meetings and events.

The Missouri Botanical Garden has decided to remain closed until May 15th and the following weekend. That of course is the weekend we were to have our annual plant sale. So, stop digging and potting for the sale.

Hopefully, you can bring some of your special plants to the Auction in August. Only special plants are needed. If you bring every basic hostas, even if important in creating a great garden, the Auction will last forever.

Thankfully, plants do not get the virus and we can social distance easily in the garden. All our garden should look fantastic this year because we have the time to be in the garden more than ever. All we can really do is follow the directions of the health community.

Be careful and stay well.

Phyllis

This will be the last newsletter published until August 1 unless social distancing guidelines ease and an event such as a garden walk can be scheduled in June or July.

2020 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 26
CANCELLED

Vendor Day
1:30 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

May 2
CANCELLED

Work Day at the Missouri Botanical Garden
**8:00 AM, Missouri Botanical Garden,
AHS Display Garden beds**

May 15-17
CANCELLED

Plant Sale at the Missouri Botanical Garden
Setup May 15, 4:00 PM
Sale May 16-17, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Missouri Botanical Garden

May
CANCELLED

Garden Walk/Meeting/Demonstration
Time and location TBA

June 10-13
POSTPONED

AHS National Convention
Minneapolis, MN

June
CANCELLED

Garden Walk/Meeting
Time and location TBA

July 12
CANCELLED

Bus trip to Hornbaker Gardens Nursery
Pick-up time and point TBA

July 16-18
POSTPONED

Midwest Regional Hosta Convention
Lisle, IL

August 16

Members Plant Auction
1:30 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

September 20

Meeting with Speaker Gene Bush
‘Hosta Buddies’
1:30 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

October 18

Meeting with Speaker TBA
1:30 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center

November

Board Meeting
Time and location TBA

We Would Have Enjoyed ...

Sadly, like organizations around the world, our year is filled with cancellations and postponements. The Board of Directors and Officers of several gardening societies have reluctantly taken the following actions for the health and welfare of their members.

Missouri Botanical Garden Work Day – Cancelled.

At the moment, MOBot is operating with a skeletal staff who are doing their best to maintain the display beds. May 15, maybe, has been given for reopening. Perhaps this event can be rescheduled in the fall. Imagine how your garden would look with a spring and possibly a summer of minimal care.

Hosta Plant Sale at MOBot – Cancelled. Our annual hosta plant sale is held at the Missouri Botanical Garden which is now closed to visitors. Even if the space became available tomorrow, social distancing would make it difficult to conduct a sale.

AHS National Convention – Postponed until 2022. MRHS Regional Convention – Postponed until 2021.

We in St. Louis know how much time, work and money is involved in hosting a convention. Members of the hosting societies have been hard at work setting up these events for several years. Thankfully AHS and MRHS have been able to work with their convention sites, hotels, vendors, bus companies and tour gardens to postpone rather than cancel these popular events. If you had planned to attend, please see their web-sites for details about money refunds.

Bus trip to Hornbaker Gardens Nursery – Cancelled.

At the moment Hornbaker Gardens is closed and is not accepting reservations for this special event. Large gatherings might not be allowed or advisable even as far in the future as July. Due to all the uncertainty, the Board has decided to cancel this trip.



2019 MOBot Work Day



2019 MOBot Hosta Plant Sale



Hornbaker Gardens Nursery



Missouri Botanical Garden





With all the cancellations, postponements and last minute adjustments to schedules, you can follow our society doings on Facebook and Instagram. We have Mike Schmitt and Diane Mallow to thank for our presence on these media formats. Our web-site is in the process of being redesigned and updated with new software. Note that the web-site may not always be up to date. Bear with us, it will get better.



Because it is so important, I reprint this article each spring.

Be Alert for Southern Blight

Southern Blight is caused by a fungus, *Sclerotium rolfsii*, which attacks hostas at their leaf bases. The fungus overwinters as mustard-seed-sized sclerotia. In warm, humid conditions (that's St. Louis) these round mustard seed looking objects germinate into spreading webs of white mycelia. They look like spider webs around the base of the petioles. This mycelia release oxalic acid that destroy cell walls, causing the leaf to collapse. The mycelia can also produce new sclerotia which remain dormant on leaf debris or in the soil. Thus the cycle can continue if left unchecked.

What to do. Some members drench the plant and surrounding soil with a 10% bleach solution. Some remove and soak the plant. I have used this remedy in the past with some success.

However, I have had excellent results with a fungicide: **Bayer Advanced Disease Control for Roses, Flowers and Shrubs** or **Bayer Advanced All-In-One Rose and Flower Care**. This is a systemic product that controls insects and diseases, while fertilizing the plant. Read the label to make sure one of the active ingredients is **Tebuconazole**. There is no need to lift the plant, just saturate the crown and surrounding soil. I usually wait a couple of weeks, then repeat. I also retreat the plants the following spring regardless of whether or not they display symptoms

2020 AHGA Hosta of the Year H. 'Dancing Queen'

Each year the American Hosta Growers Association selects 'the best of the best', and honors one variety as "Hosta of the Year". These special selections are acknowledged for being unique, easy to grow and loved by many, making them a good choice for beginning collectors and gardeners alike. Most retail for around \$15 or less.

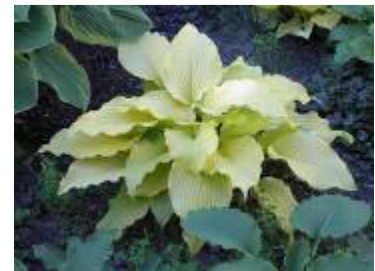


Photo from the Hosta Growers Association web-site

Registered by K. Terpening in 2005, *H. 'Dancing Queen'* is a medium sized (18" x 30") hosta with bright yellow leaves that are broad and wedge-shaped with a rippled edge. Deep veins and some nice corrugation add to its beauty. The foliage turns pale yellow later in the season and produces pale lavender flowers in mid-summer.

Member Auction coming in August

Hopefully our member auction, which is known for having nice, harder to find hostas, can be held as scheduled. In anticipation, now is a good time to divide those big clumps in your yards. In the spring it's easy to see clumps that are no longer symmetrical or have formed a ring due to their center dying out. Divisions potted now will have months to recover and grow into good sized plants. 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 August.

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.

All photos copied from <http://hostalibrary.org/misc/div/>



Hosta newly dug showing numerous eyes and good roots



If you can't pull the divisions apart, use a knife to cut the crown. Be careful not to cut too many roots.



Result is two nice divisions each with plenty of roots – ready to replant.

The Icing on the Cake

The current stay-at-home orders have come with mixed feelings. On the down side, we all deeply miss the comradery of social gatherings be it in the work place, a school, a restaurant or a garden meeting. But we are grateful to be gardeners and have a beautiful space all our own to which we can retreat.

Now is the perfect time to take stock of your garden. Grab a cup of coffee or tea and walk through your private space. It's spring! The hostas are emerging, fern fiddleheads are unfurling, and the azaleas, crabs and cherries are in full bloom. Perfect! But is it? Step back and take an overview. Do the edges of your beds need definition – the icing on your cake.



Pat Payton and Jean Hudson use crisp lines to delineate their beds. This is time consuming work but adds elegance and flow.



David Birenbaum's hostas are nestled in the woods which edge his property. He has used logs to enhance the woodland feel.



Jolly Ann Whitener uses a commercial concrete block edging to keep her hostas corralled.



Karen Frey uses bricks to outline many of her walkways and beds.



JoAnn Rawson edges her beds with an assortment of similar colored rocks set vertically.



Marian Murphy's border consists of rocks of the same size as well as color. It's a different look and feel than JoAnn's

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St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

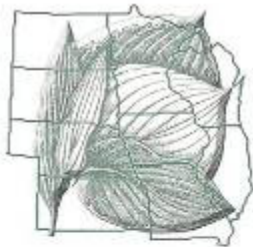
Contact: Dave Poos
9904 Crestwood Drive
Crestwood, MO 63126
david.poos@att.net

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/>