



Volume 19, Issue 5

June, 2018



President Diana Plahn

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Hello Hostaholics:

We have gone straight into summer weather wise, and we personally, have not been getting the rain in the forecasts. We have been watering like crazy to keep the hostas lush. Seems like everything in the garden has a great thirst. Craig and I hope you have been blessed with periodic rain so your water bills aren't sky high. The hostas are gorgeous though, although the blue is starting to melt on the blue hostas.

Did you get a chance to help at the hosta sale setup at the Missouri Botanical Garden, or at the sale itself? The setup was expertly run by outgoing MoBot Sale Chair, Phyllis Weidman, and our new Chair, Janelle Criscione. Everything was organized and done quickly in no time at all. Many hands make short work. The sale itself went well also. Our Treasurer will have the exact totals for that and report that to us. Many people divided and dug plants for the sale, which helped make it a success.

Our next event was our hosta walk on May 20<sup>th</sup>, which featured three lovely gardens, with snacks and refreshments at the last one, although all three had beverages for hot and (thirsty) travelers. I'd like to thank the Weidmans, the Poos, and Josh Jagger (and his partner Adam) for opening their gardens to all of us. All the gardens were beautiful and the event was well attended.

*Diana*

## 2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**June 24**

**Note date change**

**Garden Walk**

**Homes of Janelle Criscione and Martha LaFata**

**June 20-24**

**AHS National Convention**

**Philadelphia, PA**

**July 12-14**

**MRHS Regional Convention**

**Peoria, IL**

**July 15**

**Members Plant Auction**

**1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center**

**September 16**

**Meeting with Speaker Mark Glenshaw: Owls**

**1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center**

**October 21**

**Meeting with Speaker Anne Kirkpatrick: Hydrangea**

**1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center**

**November 11**

**Board Meeting**

**2:00 PM, home of President Diana Plahn**

**December 2**

**Holiday Party**

**TBA**

### Welcome new members!

**Roxann Cole of St. Peters, MO**  
**Alexandra Haderer of St. Louis, MO**  
**Kevin Jones of Chesterfield, MO**

We hope that you will join us on June 24 for our Garden Walks. This is the perfect time to meet some of your fellow members and for us to meet you. June is a beautiful month to be in a garden – everything is bright, healthy and uneaten. Hopefully the unseasonable heat wave will be history by then.

### Mark Your Calendar – July 15 – Member Auction

Don't forget to dig a plant for the July Member Auction. The plants look and sell much better if they are dug and potted a month before they are put up for sale.

## June 24 Garden Walks 1:00 – 3:30 PM

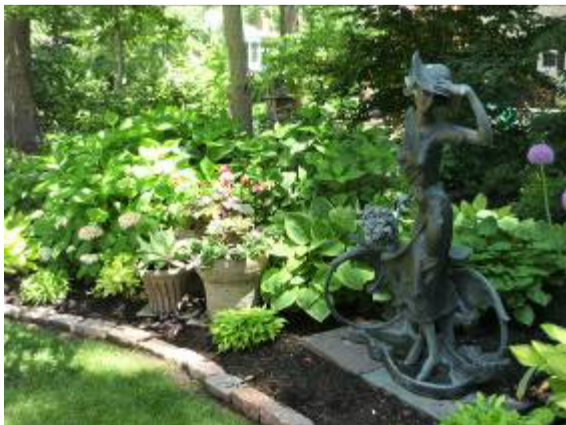
Two members have graciously volunteered to open their gardens for our enjoyment on Sunday June 24. Note that this is a change from the June 17 date which was previously listed in the newsletter calendar. The festivities begin at 1:00 PM at the beautiful Webster Groves home of Janelle and Jim Criscione. After about 45 minutes, members and guests will travel a short distance to the lovely home of Martha and Paul LaFata, also in Webster Groves. As is customary for these social events, please bring a snack to share with fellow gardeners. The food will be put out at Martha's home where we may stay and chat until 3:30.

**Janelle and Jim Criscione**  
**640 Locksley Place, Webster Groves, MO 63119**  
**314-324-4380 or [lambypie@gmail.com](mailto:lambypie@gmail.com)**



Secluded in the heart of Webster Groves is the serene garden of Janelle and Jim Criscione. This was one of the gardens featured during the 2016 AHS Convention.

An expanse of green grass draws one to Janelle's home which is surrounded on three sides by shady beds. Nestled under the canopy of numerous Japanese maples, conifers and other shade trees are hostas, hydrangeas, ferns, Itoh peonies, heuchera and other shade lovers. In sunnier areas look for Janelle's thriving crop of garlic. Peeping out from the hosta leaves are giant mushrooms, curious rabbits and winsome ladies.



Wander around back, past a tall blue cedar to their peaceful patio. During the convention, Jim's train traversed the garden bed beside their patio. Admire Jim's retreat and a chicken coop with beveled glass windows.

**Directions:** From the I-64/I-270 interchange, travel South on I-270 toward Memphis. After 6.56 miles **merge onto I-44 E via EXIT 5A** toward St. Louis. Travel 2.47 miles, then take the **Big Bend Rd exit, EXIT 278.**



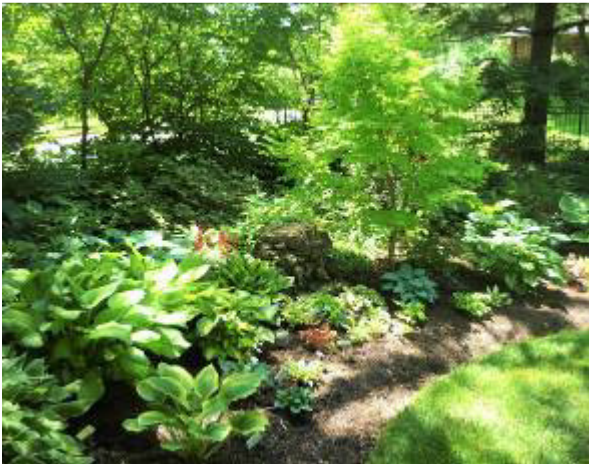
Keep right at the fork in the ramp. **Merge onto Big Bend.** After 1.49 miles, turn **left** onto **S. Rock Hill Rd.** Travel 0.13 miles and turn **left** onto **W. Frisco Ave.** You will pass over I-44 and train tracks. Take the **first right** onto **Locksley Place.** 640 Locksley Place is on the right.

**Martha and Paul LaFata**  
**433 Edgar, Webster Groves, MO 63119**  
**314-961-7163 or mvelafata@gmail.com**



Not far from Janelle's is the beautiful garden of Martha and Paul LaFata. Martha's garden was also featured during the 2016 AHS convention and was selected as a display garden for a Missouri Botanical Garden Tour. We will put out the snacks that we brought and spend the next hour and a half strolling through this beautiful area, relaxing on their charming patio and chatting with our hosta friends.

Wide heavily wooded garden beds encircle the LaFata 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. In the past raised beds were planted with a variety of herbs and vegetables.

I'm curious to see what changes have been made since 2016 and what Martha plans for the future.



**Directions:** From Janelle 's take Locksley Place **south**, then turn **left** onto **W. Frisco Ave.** Turn **right** onto **S. Rock Hill Rd.** Pass over I-44 and turn **left** onto **W. Glendale Rd.** (If you miss the turn and reach Big Bend, turn left onto Big Bend, then right onto W. Glendale Rd.)

Travel 1.13 miles. Turn **left** onto **Edgar Rd.** After 0.48 miles, Martha's house is on the left across from the park. Parking is available in the driveway and on the east side of Edgar Rd.

## May – Missouri Botanical Garden Plant Sale



The fun began on Friday night as members dropped off their donations. Members Jeannine Kalkwarf, Phyllis Weidman, Pam Wolkowitz, Barb Moreland, Josh Jagger and Diana Plahn begin the task of pricing plants.



Pam Belloli and Barb Moreland discuss the prices to be assigned a selection of mini hostas. Dave Poo waits to move the priced plants to tables in the sales area.



Warren Clark, Mary Westerhaus and Jeannine Kalkwarf apply price stickers to each pot.



Dave Poo and Jim Weidman then arranged the priced plants in alphabetical order ready for sale.



There was plenty of expertise available. Janelle Criscione listens to customer questions.



Josh Jagger shares some of his hosta enthusiasm and knowledge.



It was a beautiful day to be in the Garden. These ladies were out for a stroll and stopped to admire our plants. *photo by Jolly Ann Whitener*



Jolly Ann Whitener looks up information about particular hostas on the AHS Hosta Library.



Treasurer Melissa Byrd and Pam Hardy tally purchases, collect money and bag the plants.

Thanks to all who donated plants, helped with the Friday night setup, took a turn on the sales floor and stayed to clean up. The sale would not have been a success without all your help.

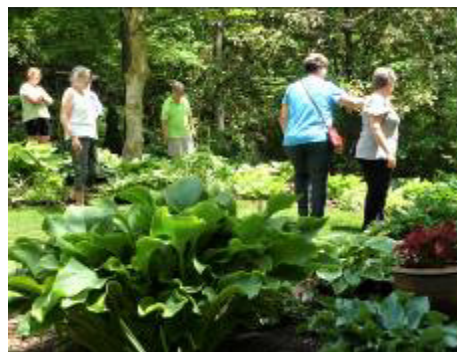
**Special thanks to co-chairpersons Phyllis Weidman and Janelle Criscione!**

## May Garden Walks

Mother Nature smiled on us. It rained in the morning and again in the evening. But in between it was a glorious day. Just as it should be when visiting three beautifully landscaped and maintained gardens.



David Birenbaum and friends admire hostas placed along the path from the front porch to the Weidman's side yard.



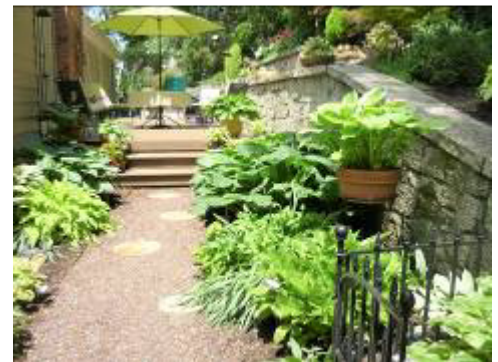
Members wonder at the beautifully grown hostas that reside along the dry creek in the side yard.



Small hostas are placed along the upper steps.



Hostas of all sizes, colors and textures flow down the side yard slope toward the street.



Hostas in pots grace the pathway inviting guests to the back deck.

Leaving the Weidman's home, the caravan traveled to the Crestwood garden of Dave and Joan Poos. Azaleas, just finishing bloom, form the backdrop for over 750 hostas and hundreds of daylilies. Flagstone and grass paths meander between the beds. Tall oaks, Japanese maples, birches, redbuds, dogwoods and viburnum provide a canopy for the garden.



Martha LaFata and Pam Belloli follow a grassy path meandering along beds of hostas, daylilies and azaleas.

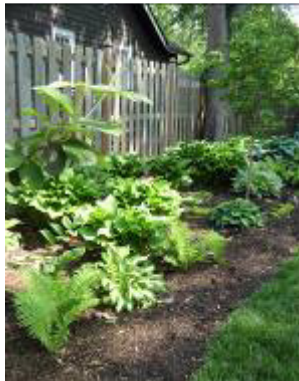


A big metal bird sits by the waterfall.



Jerry Riggs and Karen Frey admire a bed populated with small hostas sited under the shade of a river birch.

Leaving the Poos garden, members traveled to the Webster Groves home of Josh Jagger. Josh is an enthusiastic new member whose garden is only a few years old. Even though residing on a busy street the back yard is shady and serene. Josh has definite ideas for different aspects of his yard. He just needs to wait for the trees and hostas to grow.



Hostas and ferns are beginning to fill the back border.



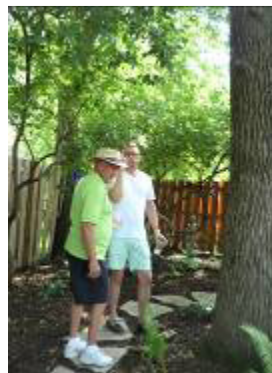
A mulched bed filled with hostas, ferns, Solomon seal, heuchera and other shade lovers has been created along Josh's back fence.



Dogwoods, red buds and viburnum add spring bloom.



Josh and Adam were wonderful hosts. Their blueberry basil lemonade was a big hit. We all would love to have their recipe. It was a perfect drink for a warm afternoon.



Josh shares some of his future plans with Dave Poos.



Members each brought snacks and appetizers to share. What a wonderful place to relax and chat.

## Membership Roster

I have had several requests to publish a list of current members with their contact information. We have many new members since this was last done. The list will be sent only to St. Louis Hosta Society members. The roster will contain member's name, address, phone number and email address.

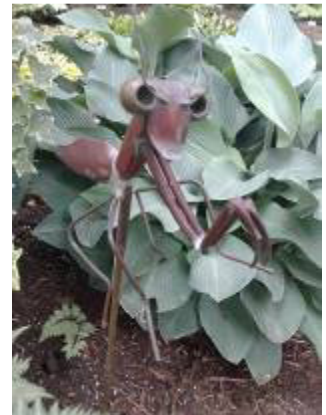
If you do not wish your name to appear or do not want your address, phone number or email address to be listed, you must call or email me to that effect. The roster will be included with your July newsletter.

Joan Poos  
314-821-1622  
[David.poos@att.net](mailto:David.poos@att.net)

## Companion Corner

Recently, our grandsons were taken aback while playing in our garden. One had reached into a flower bed to retrieve an errant ball when he glanced at a nearby branch. He was startled when he saw two big, googly eyes staring back at him. He had come face to face with a beneficial garden insect, the praying mantis.

Mantises, an order of insects that contain over 1,800 species, can be found worldwide in both temperate and tropical habitats. Masters of disguise, they are often overlooked in the garden. Brown or green in color, their physical appearance leads one to mistake them for twigs, branches or even leaves and flowers.



They have triangular heads with large bulging eyes supported on flexible necks. Some species can rotate their heads nearly 180 degrees. Talk about having eyes in the back of your heads. The two large compound eyes plus three other simple eyes located between them allow mantises to focus and also track movement. Their two spiked grasping forelegs are greatly enlarged and adapted for catching and gripping prey. The common name, praying mantis, derives from their upright posture with forearms folded as in prayer.

In our climate mantises do not survive the winter. In the fall, they lay 100 to 300 eggs, enclosed in a straw colored hard capsule on the branch of a bush or tree. The eggs protected by this hard shell hatch in the spring.

Most mantises are ambush predators. Blending in with their surroundings, they remain stationary waiting for prey to approach. They strike quite rapidly using those strong forearms to grasp and hold while they eat their prey. Mantises are equal opportunity hunters, eating whatever ventures near regardless of whether it is a harmful or beneficial insect. While they dine on mosquitoes and aphids they also attack butterflies and lady bugs. They are quick enough to catch flies and wasps. They in turn make a delicious meal for frogs, lizards and birds.

This fascinating insect is often kept as a pet. While not warm and cuddly, they are interesting to watch. In some cultures it is even considered good luck if this creature lands on your shoulder.



## St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

**Diana Plahn** – President  
314-346-3007  
[dplahn@me.com](mailto:dplahn@me.com)

**Jolly Ann Whitener** – Secretary  
[jawhit6@gmail.com](mailto:jawhit6@gmail.com)

**Karen Frey** – Hospitality

**Martha LaFata** – Vice-President  
314-961-7163  
[mvelafata@gmail.com](mailto:mvelafata@gmail.com)

**Melissa Byrd** – Treasurer  
[mabyrd68@gmail.com](mailto:mabyrd68@gmail.com)

**Melissa Byrd** – Webmaster  
[mabyrd68@gmail.com](mailto:mabyrd68@gmail.com)

**Joan Poos** – Newsletter Editor  
314-821-1622  
[david.poos@att.net](mailto:david.poos@att.net)

## St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

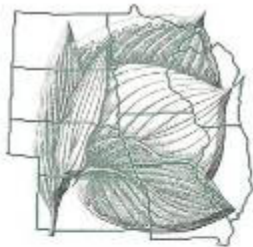
**Contact:** Melissa Byrd  
117 Gunston Hall Drive  
St. Charles, MO 63304  
[mabyrd68@gmail.com](mailto:mabyrd68@gmail.com)

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

Meetings held at **1:00 PM** 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/>