



Volume 20, Issue 2

March, 2019

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



**President  
Diana Plahn**

Dear Hosta Lovers:

Winter just keeps hanging on, although the weather people were saying that this is really a typical winter for our area and that we have been spoiled by mild winters the last 2-3 years. I don't know about that, but I'm ready to get to spring.

It was unfortunate that we had bad weather for our potluck and had to cancel it. It can't be rescheduled on a separate day because Creve Coeur is booked. We could try to have a picnic for our June meeting, but we would need a volunteer to organize it and a place to have it. If there is interest, someone needs to step up and volunteer to find a location and take care of the details and planning.

I finally got a bill from Creve Coeur for 2018. It was for a small amount, but it does clear our books for that line item. Melissa, our treasurer has paid the bill.

Our plan for the meeting in March, is to have a business meeting, Hosta 101-which Phyllis is in charge of, a break of about 15 minutes, and then our main speaker. This month, Bruce Buehrig will be speaking on 'Woodland Wonders'. This presentation is about incorporating conifers amongst your hostas, along with a few other companion plants and some bulbs.

We also will have signup sheets for volunteers to help during vendor day in April. Remember, no volunteers, no event. We do not have club plants for sale this year, because there was no volunteer to chair the event. The event takes a year to plan and order the plants.

Phyllis has agreed to help with the MOBOT plant sale again this year, but will not do so next year. If we want to have this money maker for our club, we need someone to step up this year to work with her, and take it over for 2020. Again, if there's no chairperson, the event won't happen and the treasury will decrease yearly without the money from the sale.

This is your club and you determine what happens to it. It's up to all the members to keep it going.

Hope to see you in March.

*Diana*

## 2019 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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



**March 20**  
**Wednesday 7:00 PM**

**“Woodland Wonders”**  
**Presented by Bruce Buehrig**

The title of Bruce’s talk certainly describes his beautiful yard. Bruce and his wife Chick have transformed their shaded two-acre hillside into an exquisite garden. Large trees, Japanese maples and unusual conifers form a canopy over a vast collection of hosta, rhodea, ferns, bulbs and other woodland specimens. Many of these are unusual, rare or difficult to grow in the St. Louis area. In the sunnier locations of the yard, Chick’s beloved daylilies beckon summer visitors with their colorful displays.



This photo of a large pond and Waterfall in his yard was Bruce Buehrig’s award winning entry in the 2012 AHS photography contest

Bruce Buehrig, a co-founder and current member of our St. Louis Hosta Society, has taught classes in hosta culture at the Missouri Botanical Garden and regularly speaks at local nurseries and garden clubs about shade gardening. Their award winning yard has served as a tour destination for national daffodil, Japanese iris, daylily, hosta and conifer conventions.

**Wednesday March 20, 7:00 PM**

**Hosta 101**

**Presented by Phyllis Weidman**

Our society continues to attract a number of new members. Some are quite knowledgeable about the species, but for others, interest is just awaking. Even long-time gardeners need to refresh their knowledge and perhaps learn better methods. Throughout this gardening year, short presentations will be given by fellow members on the basics of hosta cultivation.

Topics might include hosta characteristics, soil preparation, planting and growing needs, dividing hostas, plant diseases and pests, where to buy hostas, planting in containers, or how to winterize your beds. Come with your questions and suggestions for topics.

At the March meeting Phyllis Weidman will give the first such talk. Phyllis is the past-president of our society and an avid gardener. Besides maintaining a beautiful home garden, she and her husband Jim volunteer at the AHS Display Garden at the Missouri Botanical Garden. She will be organizing a work day at MOBOT in early May. Phyllis often gives Hosta 101 presentations to other garden clubs.

## 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**



*photo: missouribotanicalgarden.org*

**The slugs are  
coming!**

**Time to Be Pro-  
active!**



*photo: nhhostas.com*

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. It is time for action. All those overwintering slug eggs now begin to hatch and any slugs that have survived the winter begin to feed regularly and lay even more eggs.

There are two primary types of slug baits, those with metaldehyde as the primary ingredient and those with iron phosphate. Both types also contain additives such as yeast to lure the slugs and snails to the bait. Either works well and neither, when used as directed, constitutes significant danger to pets and wildlife.

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.

Whether you use slug baits or organic 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.

## No Rest for the Spring Gardener

Have you ever walked past a hosta in your garden and noticed a leaf or two turning yellow or lying on the ground? Naturally, you lean over to check. Suddenly another, then another leaf drops or just pulls out. Welcome to the world of 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.

Some gardeners 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 All-In-One Rose and Flower Care or Bayer Advanced Disease Control for Roses, Flowers and Shrubs. 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.

**Don't let this disease establish a foothold in your garden. Take preventative action and drench all plants that exhibited symptoms last year now, just as the pips are breaking ground.** Two years ago the Missouri Botanical Garden instituted this preventive program and significantly decreased the number of Southern Blight occurrences. We can do the same in our gardens.

(All photos from the Missouri Botanical Garden website.)



Yellow leaves and collapsed petioles are a sure sign of Southern Blight.



Sclerotia (brown mustard looking balls) and mycelium (white cottony webs) present at the crown.



Closeup of the fungal mycelium and Sclerotia at the base of a hosta leaf petiole

## **New Name for Nematode Control . . . NEMA STOP™**

### **By Wendy Kamischke, CIHS President**

*(This article is courtesy of the Central Illinois Hosta Society via their newsletter, Great Expectations, Vol 24, Issue 8, October 2018. Editor Note: article has been slightly edited.)*

I was told recently by Barry Ankney (President of the Midwest Regional Hosta Society) that there have been some developments in the world of nematode control, namely that a new product is available with the same ingredients as NemaKill™. NemaKill is the American Hosta Society's (AHS) recommended product to control nematodes on hostas. I also read an article in the September 2018 issue of the AHS newsletter addressing the same subject. The article is titled "Combatting Foliar Nematodes," by Warren I. Pollock. This information is important enough to pass on to our local chapter members because I know many have had nematode damage to their beloved hostas and would like to control them. I won't go into great detail what nematode damage looks like here because there are many photos online that illustrate it. Nematodes are invisible worm like animals found naturally in the soil. Damage usually surfaces mid growing season with brown lacy looking areas between leaf veins where something has chewed the plant material.

Now available is a product called NEMA STOP™. It contains the same three chemicals as NemaKill, namely the oils of clove, cinnamon, and thyme. It is considered organic. PureGro™ is the marketing company for NEMA STOP. PureGro had representatives at the 2018 AHS Convention selling the product. NEMA STOP, when applied, kills nematodes on contact. So, what's different would you ask? PureGro says NEMA STOP also has the ability when sprayed on a leaf surface to flow to the lower unsprayed surface and can also move into plant tissue for a short distance to kill nematodes. That is not a claim made by NemaKill previously. I'm wondering if this means that even if you did your best spraying it on the underneath side of hosta leaves that any places not covered would have better chances controlling nematodes than it did with NemaKill. PureGro also claims NEMA STOP acts through inhalation activity. Be careful not to inhale the product when using it especially with the concentrated oils in it.

Although not included with the product, the suggested application instructions known by the hosta community and published in Fall 2016 issue of the Delaware Valley Hosta Society Newsletter (Volume 24, No.4) says in late winter or very early spring. BEFORE buds emerge from the crown, drench the crown and soil around the hosta with NEMA STOP solution. Also, thoroughly soak the pips (eyes). This is a bit earlier than I was told when to apply NemaKill. It also says to drench the crown and soil 2 weeks later and again 2 weeks afterward. There are arguments whether the extra 2nd and 3rd applications are needed. If you want to be sure you have them under control you may want to continue with the follow-up applications. It's your decision.

The best news about NEMA STOP is that it's available in smaller containers than NemaKill, so it can be marketed to homeowners and smaller nurseries at a lower price. I did some online research to pass on to our members to help them purchase NEMA STOP for themselves. Since application is early (March/April) you may want to go ahead and purchase it so you have it ready to use. The PureGro website is found at: <https://www.puregrousa.com/products/nemastopconcentrate>. It comes in a 16 oz. (pint) concentrate container for \$50.00. It requires 1/3 oz (2 tsp.) per gallon, so one 16 oz. container makes 48 gallons of spray at \$1.04 per gallon. This means it will treat about 100 hosta clumps using a 1/2 gallon drench per clump. The cost per clump is about 50 cents and it can be purchased online. PureGro says that NEMA STOP shelf life is 2 years.

## NEMA STOP™ continued

I also found two other vendors selling NEMA STOP although neither was mentioned in the AHS article. Both of these vendors claim the same Fairfield, Iowa address which I found curious. One vendor was SOIL TECH whose website is found at: <https://www.soiltechcorp.com/product/nemastop>. They sell online a larger 1 Quart (32 oz.) container for \$37.95 which seems cheaper. However, the instructions are to mix 1 oz. per gallon (6 tsp.). This is a less concentrated product than PureGro has. It would make 32 gallons of mix for a price of \$1.18 per gallon of mix. Using the same application rate of 1/2 gallon per hosta clump means that its price is 59 cents per clump. It would treat about 64 clumps. Even though it is slightly more expensive than from PureGro, the quantity you may need for the cost could be just right for your garden.

The last vendor (although at the same address as SOIL TECH) is AMERICAN NATURAL PRODUCTS CO. Its website can be found at: <http://americanatural.com/products/insect-animal-controls/repellents/nemastop.html>. A pint bottle (16 oz.) costs \$24.95. It requires 1 oz. per gallon (6 tsp.) making 16 gallons of mix (same concentration as SOIL TECH). Its cost is \$1.55 per gallon of mix or 78 cents per hosta clump. Clearly the smaller amount you buy translates to the more cost per clump treated. No shelf life was mentioned by these last two companies. If you want to add a 2nd and 3rd treatment in your schedule, you must take that into consideration as to how much to buy.

My hope is that this information is useful over the next few months while preparing for the 2019 growing season. At least the cost is becoming easier for homeowners to buy their own supply and not have to buy a more expensive larger quantity to control nematodes risking a limited shelf life before it becomes inactive.



**Happy 2019!**

**I'm a gardener and I'm OK  
I sleep all night and  
I plant all day!  
I dress in grubby clothing,  
And hang around with slugs.  
Oh I'm happy in the garden.**

*enkiQuotes*



# Summer is for Conventions

## 2019 AHS and MRHS Convention

June 12 – 15

Green Bay, Wisconsin

The Green & Gold Hosta Society of Northeastern Wisconsin invites hosta lovers to “Hostaffinity, where friends and foliage meet”. This is the first ever joint American Hosta Society and Midwest Regional Hosta Society convention.



If you have never attended an American Hosta Society convention, this is your chance to experience an amazing event. Nationally recognized speakers and an expert panel of hybridizers and growers are slated to provide you with the latest information about your favorite plant. Scheduled to speak this year are Rick Goodenough, Don Dean, Olga Petryszyn, Doug Beilstein and Jeff Miller. Look around your garden. You are sure to have one or two plants hybridized by one of these nationally known plantsman.

Of course there will be a Hosta Show and this year a seed grower's show where attendees vote on their favorite seedling. SLHS president Diana Plahn and her husband Craig have developed some award winning seedlings. Perhaps they will attend and enter their jewels in the show.

Ten gardens will be open for viewing on Friday and Saturday. Some are small suburban plots while others encompass acres. But they all have one thing in common – hostas and more hostas. We who enjoy the warmth of the more southern reaches of hostadom will be amazed by the size and beautiful colors of hosta grown in the north. This is Wisconsin's reward for enduring all those long frigid days and nights.

We are often asked where we find our wide variety of specimens. Our answer - the vendor tables at national and regional conventions. Green Bay will be no exception. Eleven vendors appear on the list selling hostas and their companions and garden art to accent your beds. Another opportunity to acquire unique plants is through the live auction. The proceeds of this event fund the activities of the AHS and MRHS.

The convention web site, <https://www.ahs2019event.org/> has more information, fabulous pictures of the tour gardens and the registration form. There is also an active Facebook page: AHS Hosta Convention 2019.

Check out the website and plan to join several hundred others from across the country and around the world in Green Bay, where friends and foliage meet.

## 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  
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## St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

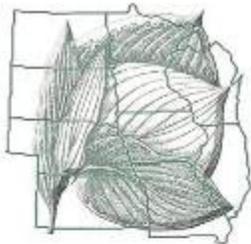
**Contact:** Melissa Byrd  
117 Gunston Hall Drive  
St. Charles, MO 63304  
[mabyrd68@gmail.com](mailto:mabyrd68@gmail.com)

**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/>