



Volume 17, Issue 8

October, 2016



Anemone - photo from [swallowtailgardenseed.co](http://swallowtailgardenseed.co)



Toad lily



Fall Sweet Gum leaves  
Photo [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org)

Goodbye hot, humid days, hello crisp mornings and mild afternoons. It's time to say so long to summer and embrace the sights, sounds and smells of autumn.

Time to start the chore that I dread – cleanup and close down. I hate saying adieu to my garden, but Mother Nature is telling me it's time.

The hostas look a bit worn - tattered edges, a bit of sun scald, shrinking sizes, blues turning to yellow, some already on their way to dormancy.

However, some companions are stepping forward to fill the gap. Hardy begonias have pushed up with their green and burgundy leaves and tall stems topped with bright pink flowers fluttering in the wind. Anemones with their welcoming pink or white flowers are also coming to the forefront. Hydrangeas are changing colors. Some moving from snowy white to pinks and lavenders and finally to tans. Hydrangea blooms are perfect for winter dried flower arrangements.

The bright feathery plumes of the astilbe have turned brown but still hold their form. Seed heads of the various grasses have emerged and will soften the winter landscape.

Soon the trees will slip into their fall attire. The pesky sweet gum makes up for its many balls with brilliant yellow and red foliage. The maples with their shallow roots, the bane of hostas, atone by putting on a glorious fall show.

As exciting as spring and summer are, everything needs a break, even gardeners. Saying goodbye is so much easier when there's pumpkin pie and cranberry salad in the near future.

Hope to see you all October 16!

Joan, your editor

## 2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 16	<b>Meeting with Speaker 'The Gourd Sisters'</b> <b>1:00 PM, Creve Coeur Government Center</b>
November TBA	<b>Board Meeting</b> <b>TBA</b>
December 4	<b>Holiday Party</b> <b>4:00 PM at home of Karen and Greg Frimel</b> <b>19 Dunleith Drive, St. Louis MO 63124</b>
January 21, 2017	<b>Winter Conference Meeting</b> <b>Naperville, IL</b>
June 7-10, 2017	<b>AHS National Convention</b> <b>Indianapolis, IN</b>
June 22-24, 2017	<b>MRHS Regional Convention</b> <b>Lenexa, Kansas</b>



photo: [gourdartenthusiasts.ning.com](http://gourdartenthusiasts.ning.com)

### October 16 The Gourd Sisters

Fall is rapidly approaching. I can smell the sweet spicy aroma of baking acorn squash, butternut squash soup and pumpkin pie. A cousin of the edible squashes is the gourd, commonly used to make toys, tools, musical instruments and decorative items.

Lindy Hoffman & Ann Beninato, who bill themselves as 'The Gourd Sisters', are artists who use gourds instead of glass, metal or canvas as their medium. They met when their daughters became kindergarten classmates and quickly became fast friends.

Their passion for gourd art arose in 2002 when they attended their first Show Me Gourd Festival in Sedalia, Missouri. They were amazed by what master artisans from all over the country were creating. Thus began their love affair with gourds. While other artists must buy their canvases, Ann and Lindy grow their own.

Since 2002, Ann and Lindy have exhibited their collection at numerous shows and events. They also love teaching workshops and educating others about this unique art form.



Connie Alwood  
*photo from SLMG.com*

## September meeting

### Connie Alwood “Birds in the Garden”

What a delightful afternoon! Connie Alwood, a Master Gardener and co-author of the book “Birds in the St. Louis Area”, mentioned there are over ten thousand species of birds in the world, of which about seven hundred can be viewed somewhere in the lower forty-eight United States. No, we didn’t see 700 slides!

Connie did tell about some “birders” whose quest is to see as many of these ten thousand as they can in their lifetime. One story involved speech writer and Special Assistant to President Kennedy, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. who once came to St. Louis with his security detail to see the Eurasian Tree Sparrow. This bird can only be found in the St. Louis area. He came, he saw, he marked it off his list and returned to Washington. That’s obsession! Connie prefers a more light-hearted, casual approach to bird watching.

Being a former school teacher, Connie started off with a pop quiz. He showed us pictures of 22 birds that we might see in our St. Louis gardens. He then talked about each, pointing out distinctive plumages, nesting and eating preferences and any behavior habits that might aid us in their identification. Especially entertaining was Connie’s app which played each bird’s song. Listening closely, it is easy to tell where some of these birds acquired their names.

Most of these birds are seed eaters. A well-stocked feeder or suet holder might entice them to stop in our yards. Others feed on berries, insects or worms. The hawks and owls, of course, prefer small rodents. Connie reassured us that our precious pets are safe but cannot say the same for squirrels, chipmunks or other birds.

Some birds, such as the Robin and Cardinal, live in our area all year round, but most just spend the summer or winter. The Carolina Chickadee is one of only twelve birds endemic to the US. The House Finch, one of the most common birds feasting at our feeders was introduced to our area from Western US. The noisy European Starling was released in New York’s Central Park in 1890 by a group of Shakespeare enthusiasts who wanted to introduce all birds mentioned by the bard. Most could not adapt but the Starling quickly spread becoming a major pest. He is a beautiful bird if one could just overlook his bad behavior.

In 1870 twelve Eurasian Tree Sparrows were released in Lafayette Park by immigrants who wanted to be surrounded by some of their native birds. For some reason, unlike the Starlings, they have not spread far from the St. Louis area. This is the most allusive of the 22 birds selected by Connie.

Whether you are obsessive and have booked passage to see that rare bird in Madagascar or are just a casual observer, sit back and enjoy the flash of colorful feathers and melodic song that is present in your own backyard.



H. 'Brother Stefan'

*Photo taken from  
www.plantsdelight.com*

## 2017 HOSTA OF THE YEAR Hosta 'Brother Stefan'

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 distinctive, easy to grow in all parts of the country and beloved by many. They are a good choice for beginning collectors and gardeners alike.

Introduced and named by top hosta breeder Olga Petryszyn as a birthday present to her brother, H. 'Brother Stefan' has it all. Although slow growing, this hybrid of H. 'King Tut' x H. 'Mildred Seaver' forms a 22" tall x 3' wide clump of thick, heavily-corrugated, golden foliage edged with a wide border of blue-green. In late spring, two foot scapes of white flowers top the clump. Truly a gift for any garden.



## IT'S RIGHT AROUND THE CORNER THE LAST EVENT OF THE YEAR

### THE ST. LOUIS HOSTA SOCIETY HOLIDAY PARTY Sunday, December 4 at 4:00 PM

Due to increasing costs, the amount of work involved, and difficulty in booking a good caterer, the Board has looked at other options than a catered luncheon for this year's annual Holiday Party.

Karen and Greg Frimel have graciously offered to host our society members at a Sunday afternoon "happy hour" at their Ladue home. Members are asked to bring an appetizer and drink of their choice to share with other party goers. Coffee and dessert will be provided by the Frimels. The festivities begin at 4:00 PM and continue until we all go home.

No business meeting. No speakers. No cost. Come and mingle. Laugh and smile. Share the joys of the coming holidays with your hosta friends.

**RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED BY DEC 1**

**Karen Frimel**

**19 Dunleith Dr, St. Louis MO 63124**

**314-680-4222 or [cckmf@aol.com](mailto:cckmf@aol.com)**

## Companion Corner - Bulbs

One of the speakers at the AHS National Convention held this summer in St. Louis was Jason Delaney former North Gardens Supervisor and Bulb Collections Specialist at the Missouri Botanical Garden. Jason is now a Horticulturalist at Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum. Jason's topic was "Discover the Real Beauty of Your Home with Bulb Magic".

Bulbs are classified as geophytes. These are plants that spend part of their life cycle as dormant, fleshy underground organs. Geophytes also include corms, tubers, fibrous roots and stems and rhizomes. They are outstanding plants for the garden because of the tremendous selection available, their long flowering period, their long lifespan, and their adaptability to a wide range of soil types. They require little maintenance and the majority are animal resistant.

This topic is especially appropriate now as the prime time for planting bulbs in St. Louis is October and November, when the temperatures are getting cooler. Bulbs need 12 weeks of cold to put forth their best display of blooms.

Jason facetiously told his audience that "if you can grow a dandelion, you can grow most bulbs." Check your light/shade conditions, soil type and moisture levels. Spring blooming bulbs can be planted in the shadier portions of your garden as they bloom before the tree canopy leafs out. Dig the soil so it is loose and workable. You may need to add some organic matter such as compost or peat moss. Jason recommends liberally adding Turface to the soil to improve its structure. He uses Turface Athletics MVP. To determine whether it is necessary to amend your soil, get it tested. You may not need to do anything. If a fertilizer is needed, use one that is low in nitrogen, high in potash and medium range in phosphorous.

Plant your bulb three times the diameter deep and that far apart. Plant in clusters for the best bloom display. Place the bulb in the hole pointy side up, root side down. Sometimes it is hard to tell top from bottom. Plant these on their sides - the bulb will figure it out. Fill the hole with soil and then water. Bulbs need moisture at the basal plate or crown to stimulate root growth.

There is a bulb for every season from spring to fall. The early spring beauties, snowdrops, ranunculus, snowflakes, squill, Spanish bluebells, and grape hyacinths are followed by daffodils, alliums, cobra lilies and tulips. Jason warned that tulips like it hot and dry and thus are not compatible with hostas. As summer takes over, Oriental and Asian lilies, crinum and daylilies take center stage. Fall brings the bright pink blooms of the Hardy Begonia, the surprise of the Magic Lily (also called Resurrection lily) and the hardy Cyclamens.

Some of Jason's favorite sources for quality bulbs are:

- John Scheepers (<https://www.johnscheepers.com/>)
- Brent and Becky's Bulbs (<https://www.brentandbeckysbulbs.com/>)
- Living Gardens (<http://www.livinggardens.com/>)
- Plant Delights (<http://www.plantdelights.com/>).



Photos from [www.hgtv.com](http://www.hgtv.com)

## WELCOME OUR NEWEST MEMBERS!

**Carolyn and Clifford Birge of Richmond Heights MO**  
**Kathy Chilcutt of St. Charles MO**  
**Greg and Marcia Plummer of Glen Carbon IL**

Look for them at future meetings and introduce yourselves. Show them how welcoming and friendly we all are. We hope all our members, new and old alike, will attend October's meeting to hear our guest speakers The Gourd Sisters.

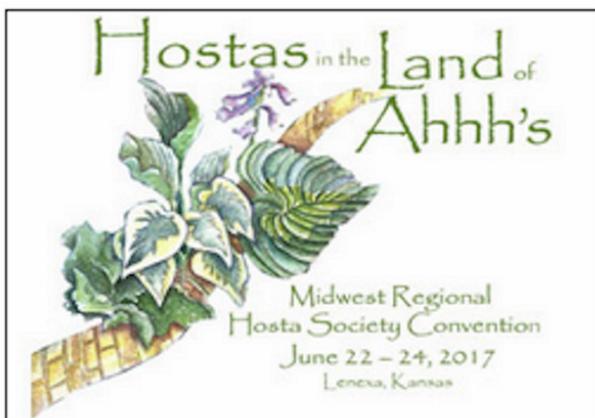


From June 7-10, the Indianapolis Hosta Society invites you to experience **HOSTA Hysteria** at the 2017 American Hosta Society National Convention.

They have scheduled tours of ten beautiful gardens, several speakers, vendors, Hosta show, and three pre-convention open gardens. An add-on event available is a day trip to the historic

West Baden Springs Hotel and garden in southern Indiana.

This gala event is scheduled for the Wyndham Indianapolis West Hotel. More convention and hotel information, plus a registration form is available on the Society's website: [www.indyhosta2017.com](http://www.indyhosta2017.com).



From June 22-24, Rob Mortko and his band of helpers invite you to experience **Hostas in the Land of Ahhh's** at the 2017 Midwest Regional Hosta Society Convention.

This event takes place in Lenexa Kansas, a southwest suburb of Kansas City, just a short four or five hour drive from St. Louis

More information will be forthcoming in the next few months. For now, mark the dates on your calendar and consider joining other St. Louis Hosta Society members making the trip.

## Garden Enhancements – Water Features



Moreland



Michniok



Frimel



Tempel



Lafata



Weidman

If your garden is starting to feel a bit ho hum, consider adding a bit of pizzazz with water. The sound of water brings tranquility to a yard, provides a relaxing environment, relieves stress and helps the mind unwind. Water adds an element of visual interest, a different texture and color, a beauty all its own. It demands your attention and could become a focal point in your garden. Water is irresistible to wildlife – necessary for their survival. Water draws birds, butterflies, bees, lizards and other wild things to the garden.

Water features can be large or small, simple or more intricate. They can range from a simple birdbath to a large pond with crashing waterfalls. You are limited only by your imagination and your budget.

Birdbaths are the easiest and quickest way to add water to a small area. There's a wide selection commercially available or use your imagination and repurpose a found item. There's a style and theme to please every gardener. Barb Moreland's brightly tiled birdbath stops the eye, makes one pause and look around. Cindy and Mark Michniok have added stones to theirs making it easier for birds to bathe and drink. Whimsical frogs take center stage in Karen and Greg Frimel's backyard.

Often located near a deck or patio, water fountains are popular because of their charm, elegance or sophistication. Water fountains come in various forms. In Arlie and Nancy Tempel's garden, water trickles from the hole in a millstone providing relief to the copper praying mantis resting above it. A beautiful circular black stone bubbler graces the side yard near Martha and Paul Lafata's patio. This piece, surrounded by black pebbles and shaded by a Japanese maple, gives the area an aura of tranquility. In contrast, the bubbler in Phyllis and Jim Weidman's backyard is a boulder that blends with their rocky hillside.



**Honaker**



**Wolkowitz**



**Frey**



**Payton-Hudson**



**Piekutowski**



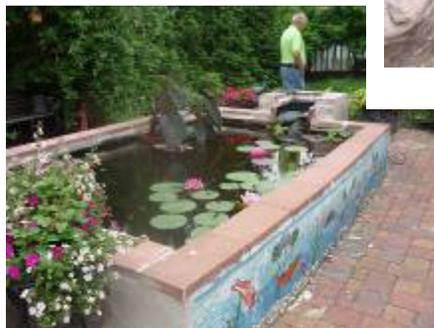
**Buehrig**



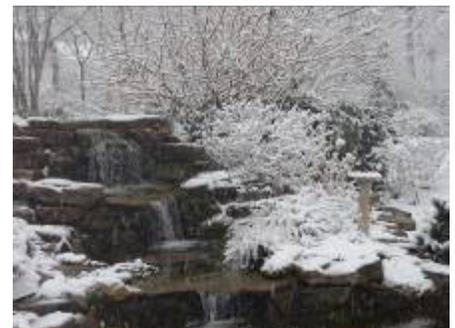
**Schmitt**



**Wolkowitz**



**Frey**



**Poos in winter**

A water feature can be as complex as the spiral located next to Basil and Sandy Honaker's patio or as simple as the frog spitting water into Pam and Chester Wolkowitz's pond. Imagine the soothing sound of water cascading from one level to another in this attractive pot arrangement outside the screened porch of Pat Payton and Jean Hudson.

You don't need a flashy water ornament to add interest to your landscape. A simple pond in a pot works just as well. Add interesting plants as Karen Frey has done.

A pond can be a small, simple pool with a bubbler, like the one built by Ted Piekutowski, or it can be a large fish pond with massive boulders and waterfalls such as those in the gardens of Bruce and Chick Buehrig, Mike and Sharon Schmitt and Dave and Joan Poos.

A pond can be natural in appearance like that built by the Wolkowitizes or the more formal geometric shaped pool designed and built by Karen Frey. Even in the dead of winter, water features enhance your landscape. The size and the look depends on your personal tastes, the style of your garden and, of course, the thickness of your wallet.

Jazz up your garden with a dash of water!

## St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

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## St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

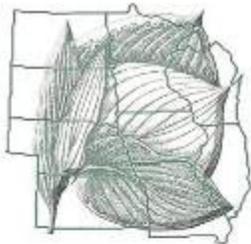
**Contact:** Kim Piekutowski  
1269 Brenthaven Lane  
Florissant, MO 63031  
[kimberlypiekutowski@gmail.com](mailto:kimberlypiekutowski@gmail.com)

**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/>