

# Shady Notes

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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



President Dave Birenbaum

Greetings, fellow gardeners

Welcome to 2025! I look forward to the cold of winter turning to spring and warmer times around the corner. And with it our Hosta friends popping up, which always brings me great inner joy. And seemingly reduces my age by many years. My mind drifts toward how this year those eyes of Hostas with names not previously found in my garden acquired at our sales and at the Midwest Regional Hosta Society convention will develop larger and stronger than any of their previous kin. Of course I'll win the envy of my neighbors, perhaps a few SLHS members, and blue ribbons.

Then reality sets in. It is a cold February. I see a lot of unfinished business waiting for me out the window. Those self-inflicted dreams of a lush garden have not come to fruition in the past 20 years, what was I thinking would happen in the next few months to change that course? We all have the opportunity to wish, but to change the outcome a different strategy must be employed.

Thus, I pledge to repair my signage before May 1. I vow to clean and sharpen my tools. I will bring in top dressings and manure when the last snow melts. As the pips unfurl and my friends put on their display, I'll pay attention to their condition for evidence of slugs, nematodes, mold, Hosta Virus X, raccoons, rabbits, and oh, those deer, then take appropriate action. I commit to reinforcing my deer fence. And I'll take the time to keep my friends hydrated, frequently.

I thank all SLHS friends who have supported my quest and offered constructive criticism year after year to improve my garden habitat. This club of ours has afforded me all sorts of benefits I had not anticipated when I first, almost reluctantly, plunked down the (cheap) membership fee.

By attending garden walks and education meetings, I've found an abundant resource of plant knowledge. My garden techniques and garden itself have improved by implementing all sorts of things garnered from these interactions. And I have acquired a Rolodex of friends of all ages with similar interests. Not to mention, all the opportunities to literally grow varieties of Hostas purchased at our annual auction and Mo Bot plant sale. I have been pleasantly surprised by the extraordinary kindness shown by this cadre of friends who will willingly dig up and share a piece of H. 'Sharp Dressed Man', H. 'Goodness Gracious', H. 'Old Faithful', etc., etc. just because I expressed appreciation of the beauty of those plants in their gardens!! Holy cow, we have some awfully nice folks in the Society!!

Dave Birenbaum

## A WELL-EARNED RETIREMENT



Dave and Joan Poos

Members may notice "Shady Notes" has a new look and Editor, Lynn Teller. After 14 dedicated years, Newsletter Editor Joan Poos has hung up her hat and retired from that position. Joan (and husband David) have offered a treasure trove of useful and interesting hosta specific garden information over the years. The membership and St. Louis community have greatly benefitted from their years of tireless efforts for the Society. Thank you, Joan!!

St Louis Hosta Society Board Members

## WHAT ARE YOU BRINGING TO THE POTLUCK?

We are having a Potluck lunch during our March 23 meeting. (See [Calendar](#) for details) The club will provide fried chicken and we are asking members to bring a side or dessert.

Please email or text Kathie to let her know what you are bringing by March 16.

[kasoehng@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kasoehng@sbcglobal.net)  
(314) 435-7471



## A SMALL FAVOR

As your plants start to appear, please choose a few varieties to pot up for a donation to our plant sale or member auction. This will give them time to establish roots and is less stressful to the plants than digging up in the heat of summer.



## Club Plant 2025 (A Membership Perk!)

This year we are offering H 'Lord Puckersheen', a new hosta from hybridizer Charlie Kwick. It is a medium to large plant with dark green leaves that are puckered, shiny, and a little bit unruly. Green hostas are necessary companions that provide contrast to all of those unusual variegated or striking colored hostas in your garden.

Plants are \$20 and will be available to pick up at the May meeting. We have ordered 20 of these so don't miss your chance to have this unusual hosta at a great price. We planted this hosta in the hosta garden at MoBot in 2024, so check it out next time you're there.

If interested call or text Phyllis Weidman (314-630-9036) or email [pow1031@gmail.com](mailto:pow1031@gmail.com).

Orders taken until March 15. Based on last year's offering, these plants will be smaller than the retail offering and will probably have one eye.

### 'Lord Puckersheen'



IT'S NOT EASY BEIN'  
GREEN...  
LIKE LORD PUCKERSHEEN



## A STORY OF GRATITUDE

By Dave Birenbaum

This is a tale of human kindness, a simple act that just may have saved my marriage. In December, I purchased a special gift for my spouse online. As soon as the order processed, I realized the shipping address belonged to the Missouri Botanical Garden, an address that I had used during my time as treasurer when we purchased plants for the Garden. And to further complicate matters, it was addressed to the hosta area supervisor who had recently retired. The company wouldn't let me change the shipping address, but said I could have FedEx redirect it once I received the shipping confirmation.

So I waited. Finally the notification arrived and to my horror, stated that it was scheduled to be delivered in 3 hours - to a person who no longer worked there! Now what? Will it be trashed or put in a holding bin deep in the bowels of Mo Bot? How would I begin to find that box at the Garden at this late date? Presuming it was lost, thoughts of last-minute shopping and cold sweats came over me - I dreamt of heavy traffic, long lines, and a poor last minute gift selection. Oh my!

I called Mo Bot hoping for a sympathetic ear during one of the busiest times of the year. After a long wait and almost giving up, I explained my silly error and was put through to Judy on the loading dock. Judy was patient and knew immediately what I was talking about. She had just received a mangled box - Anne's gift - and was not sure what to do with it considering the supervisor had retired and the contents were not suited to the Garden.

Judy McClure was my angel. She saved my marriage.

I hopped in the car and made a beeline to the loading dock aka Judy's office. I arrived 45 minutes later and to my delight, Judy had repackaged my things into something more suitable for gifting. Judy McClure was my angel. She saved my marriage.

I'm thankful for the Judys in our lives. Whether a seasoned gardener or newbie, I encourage you to attend our activities. You'll find fun, camaraderie, and gardening knowledge. And perhaps you'll meet one of the Society's own Judys.

And now you know the rest of the story.



SPRING IS THE PERFECT TIME TO DIVIDE HOSTAS, JUST AS THEIR PIPS START TO EMERGE. THIS GIVES THE DIVISIONS PLENTY OF TIME TO ESTABLISH ROOTS IN THEIR NEW LOCATIONS BEFORE THE SUMMER HEAT ARRIVES.

American Hosta Growers Association Hosta of The Year 2025

# 'SKYWRITER'

Available locally from [Hostas on the Bluff](#)



A medium hosta with heavily ruffled blue leaves atop purple petioles. Lavender flowers bloom on purple scapes in late summer.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<p>Sunday March 23, 1:00 pm</p>	<p>2025 Kickoff Meeting &amp; Potluck Lunch</p>	<p>SLHS will provide fried chicken, Members are asked to bring their favorite side or dessert.</p> <p>Speaker Phyllis Weidman will lead “Hosta 101”</p> <p>Mo Bot CBEC Building <a href="https://www.mo-bot.org/4651-Shaw-Blvd-St-Louis-MO-63110">4651 Shaw Blvd, St Louis MO 63110</a></p>
<p>Saturday April 26 1:30 pm</p>	<p>Field Trip to Frisella Nursery</p> <p>OPTIONAL 12:00 Lunch at Chandler Hill Vineyards</p>	<p>Open to members and friends. Staff will share how they choose, pot, and raise Hostas, and then provide a tour of their private greenhouses.</p> <p>Frisella Nursery <a href="https://www.frisellanursery.com/550-Hwy-F-Defiance-MO-63341">550 Hwy F, Defiance, MO 63341</a></p> <p>Before the meeting, join us at Chandler Hill Vineyards for lunch on their huge deck (in the restaurant building in case of inclement weather). Seating will be as-available. Chandler Hill has a gorgeous hillside setting overlooking a verdant valley.</p> <p>Chandler Hill Vineyards (1.3 miles from Frisella) <a href="https://www.chandlerhillvineyards.com/596-Defiance-Rd-Defiance-MO-63341">596 Defiance Rd, Defiance, MO 63341</a></p>
<p>Tuesday May 6, 11:00 am</p> <p>Doors open at 10:30 am</p>	<p>Mo Bot Speaker Series</p> <p>Here’s to Hostas with Gene Pulliam (Past President of the Society)</p>	<p>LIMITED TO MO BOT MEMBERS. Free, but <a href="#">registration</a> is required on Mo Bot website.</p> <p>With their ease of growth, variety of plant shapes and sizes available, and diversity of leaf color, hostas are one of the most desirable garden perennials. Join Gene for an exploration of the “queen of the shade.” Learn about selecting the right hosta for your space and how to plant, care for, and divide hostas. Following the presentation, join members of the Hosta Society out in the Garden to explore the collection and get your hosta questions answered.</p> <p>Bayer Event Center <a href="https://www.mo-bot.org/4344-Shaw-Blvd-St-Louis-MO-63110">4344 Shaw Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63110</a></p>

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<p>Saturday May 10, 9:00 am-5:00 pm</p>	<p>Annual Plant Sale</p>	<p>Hostas from Society members’ gardens and splits from Mo Bot are made available to the public. Details for donating plants will be available in the next newsletter. Proceeds benefit Society purchases of hosta and supplies for Mo Bot and function of the Society.</p> <p>Volunteers are needed for a couple hours or all day! Please sign-up at the March meeting or contact Coordinator Melinda Ligon at <a href="mailto:meligon@sbcglobal.net">meligon@sbcglobal.net</a> or text to: 314-749-7307</p> <p>Mo Bot Jack Taylor Visitor Center <a href="#">4344 Shaw Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63110</a></p>
<p>Sunday May 18 1:00 pm</p>	<p>Garden Walks  South St Louis County</p>	<p>1:00 pm Bob Henson <a href="#">6 Concord Lane, South St. Louis County 63128</a></p> <p>Bob’s backyard is loaded with mature Hostas, companion plants, waterfalls, koi pond, other water features, and two greenhouses.</p> <p>2:00 pm Chris and Tara Siewing <a href="#">3 Fox Meadows Lane, St. Louis MO 63127</a></p> <p>The Siewings have one of the larger recreational ponds in St. Louis and is a showcase for their company, Nature’s Recreations. The pond features boulders set to mimic the natural environment, limestone shut-ins, waterfall, and koi.</p>
<p>Sunday June 8 1:00 pm</p>	<p>Garden Walks  South St Louis County</p>	<p>1:00 Marian McCord, South St. Louis County <a href="#">3775 Gumtree , St Louis, MO 63129</a></p> <p>This woodland garden is a tranquil retreat. Follow the walkway around the shaded Hosta garden, wander your way past the pond and stream to the gazebo where you can sit and enjoy the peaceful surroundings.</p> <p>2:00 Jamie &amp; Lori Rockwell, <a href="#">5559 Bellemeade Trail Ct, Saint Louis, MO 63129</a></p> <p>The main feature of this stunning backyard is the large pond surrounded by beautiful hardscaping, studded with a variety of plants and a restful patio under a large shade tree.</p>



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

		<p>3:00 Kathie Soehngen  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/kathiesoe">5111 Lampglow Ct., St Louis, MO 63129</a></p> <p>As you enter this backyard, you'll be greeted by the koi in the pond. As you meander between the gardens, you will be surrounded by hundreds of Hostas, a pollinator garden, many perennials, annuals, and a variety of whimsical garden décor.                  After the tour, Kathie will host an informal gathering.</p>
June 19-21	<p>Convention                      East Peoria, IL</p>	<p>American Hosta Society and Midwest Regional Hosta Society Double Feature Convention</p> <p>Garden tours, Numerous vendors, plant auctions, Seedling Competition.</p> <p><a href="https://americanhostasociety.org">https://americanhostasociety.org</a></p>
Saturday July 12, 10:00 am	<p>Garden Walks                      Manchester MO</p>	<p>10:00 am George Lynn  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/georgelynn">1607 Forestview Ridge Lane, Manchester MO 63021</a></p> <p>The Lynns' garden personifies the ideal shaded oasis and provides a sense of cool, restful seclusion with mature oak and pine trees providing shade for more than 300 varieties of Hosta along with many companion plants that provide artfully designed foliage color and texture in mass plantings attractive all season.</p> <p>11:00 am Bill &amp; Shelli Handy  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/shelliandbill">1611 Forestview Ridge Lane, Manchester MO 63021</a></p>
Sunday July 13, 1:00 pm	<p>Annual Plant Auction</p>	<p>Member &amp; Friends Plant Auction</p> <p>Mo Bot CBEC Building  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/mobot">4651 Shaw Blvd, St Louis MO 63110</a></p>
Saturday August 2, 10:00 am	<p>Garden Walk                      Tower Grove South</p>	<p>Jesse Gilbertson  <a href="https://www.facebook.com/jesse.gilbertson">3667 N Utah Pl, St. Louis, MO 63116</a></p> <p>This is our first peek into this garden! Jesse has been Director of Horticulture for U City in Bloom for 12 years. His garden is a delightful mix of 75+ bonsai specimens displayed with hosta and other bedding plants in a dapple shaded yard made for a gardener's enjoyment.</p>

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<p>Sunday August 17 12:30 pm</p>	<p>Member Picnic and Walk 'n Talk</p>	<p>12:30 pm Member picnic, bring your own 2:00 pm Walk 'n Talk Mo Bot's Mike Saxton will lead an interesting discussion regarding elimination of invasive honeysuckle</p> <p>Shaw Nature Reserve, <a href="https://www.shawnaturereserve.com/">307 Pinetum Loop Road, Gray Summit, MO 63039</a></p>
<p>Sunday October 19, 1:00 pm</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>Meeting, topic TBD</p> <p>Mo Bot CBEC Building <a href="https://www.mobot.org/4651-Shaw-Blvd-St-Louis-MO-63110">4651 Shaw Blvd, St Louis MO 63110</a></p>
<p>Sunday November 9, 1:00 pm</p>	<p>Board Meeting</p>	<p>Board 2026 planning meeting. Members are welcome. Location TBD</p>

## OFFICIALS

David Birenbaum, President  
(314) 650-5200  
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(314) 324-4380  
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Lynn Teller, Treasurer, Newsletter Editor, and Webmaster  
(314) 306-1478  
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Secretary – Vacant

Kathie Soehngen, Hospitality  
(314) 435-7471  
[kasoehng@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kasoehng@sbcglobal.net)

Membership Chair - Vacant



We have two open positions: Secretary and Membership Chair. If you are interested in either of these roles, please contact any of the members listed to the left.

### **SECRETARY**

The Secretary shall record the activities of the meetings of the Society and of the Board, send a copy of minutes to the Webmaster to post, and send copies to the Board members. They shall be responsible for the general correspondence of the Society as directed by the President.

### **MEMBERSHIP CHAIR**

The Membership Chair shall welcome new members via email, phone, or in person, direct them to the website, inform them of the roster password, and create and distribute name tags at meetings.

## St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

Application is available on our [website](#) or contact [Lynn](#)

Dues: \$10 per year,  
\$20 for three years  
Membership term is January - December

Check us out on Facebook  
[St Louis Hosta Society](#)

Please visit our website  
[stlhosta.org](http://stlhosta.org)

## THE AMERICAN HOSTA SOCIETY



Join the American Hosta Society and get to know America's most popular perennials and those who love them.

### MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- Full-color print issue of The Hosta Journal mailed twice each year
- Unique digital edition of The Hosta Journal emailed once each year
- Access to "Members Only" section of the website
- Access to display gardens throughout the country, many of which are only open to AHS members
- Eligibility to purchase a member-only hosta
- Exclusive invitation to exhibit hostas and compete for recognition in AHS-sanctioned Hosta Shows
- Updates on speaker programs, events, awards, plant auctions, news, and more!

### FIRST-TIME MEMBERS ALSO RECEIVE

- \$15 voucher for use at participating nurseries
- Option to receive an exclusive gift hosta (additional \$10 to cover shipping)
- Hosta Adventure—A Grower's Guide, a primer on hostas outlining what every gardener should know
- Hosta of the Year Booklet, a full-color publication featuring the American Hosta Growers Association Hostas of the Year

Join Today at [americanhostasociety.org](http://americanhostasociety.org)

## THE MIDWEST REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY



Membership in the society is \$20.00 for two years for both an individual or family membership. A family membership includes the primary member and his/her significant other. Members receive two issues per year of the society's newsletter, *The Hosta Leaves*. **First time members receive a voucher for \$10.00, good for purchases at our participating Hosta Vendors.**

In addition there are two meetings held annually. The Winter Symposium is held in the Milwaukee area in early February. It is a one-day event with an assortment of speakers that present the latest information pertaining to Hostas and gardening with them. All of this is offered in an enjoyable and down-to-earth format with something for everyone interested in gardening and learning more about Hostas.

In the summer, an annual convention, hosted by a local society, is held in different locations throughout the region. This three-day extravaganza features garden tours, a show of Hosta leaves, vendors selling the newest in Hosta plants, an auction of plants, a banquet, and informational speakers.

Send your completed membership application and check to:

Mona Keehn, Treasurer  
1635 Chippewa Drive NW  
Rochester, MN 55901

[Printable MRHS Membership Form](#)