

Shady Notes

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT



Greetings, fellow gardeners

It's that time of year as the weather breaks the gardener in us takes over. If you are like me, there's quite the satisfaction of experiencing our favorite plants coming to life once again, and getting my fingers in the soil.

The Society begins the year with our annual "Kickoff Meeting" on March 23 (details within this newsletter) during which Phyllis Weidman will review the basics of hosta gardening with her Hosta 101 presentation. This activity includes a potluck meal of fried chicken supplied with members asked to bring a side dish or dessert. Please, please, please RSVP to Kathie Soehngen (kasoehng@sbcglobal.net) with the number attending and what you'll be bringing.

The Board carefully reviewed the results of the member survey from last fall and has tailored the 2025 activity calendar with desires expressed by the membership. As you review the list of Hosta related functions, you'll see an emphasis on touring more gardens, sometimes two or three back-to-back. A number of these are new destinations for the Society. Please thank the hosts for the opportunity when you see them. We will continue to have speakers at some events with a limited number of business meetings.

Along with the garden walks, we'll have a sprinkling of social gatherings such as one in the St. Charles County Wine Country and another in a member's garden after touring two other gardens that day.

If you care to add to your garden, we offer three opportunities: the public plant sale at MO Botanical Garden, the Member & Friends Auction, and the Society plant of the year. I encourage you to step up and volunteer for either of the plant sales – it's fun and we can use your help! Know that proceeds provide the majority of income to run our club and purchase Hosta for the MO Bot Hosta area that everyone enjoys.

Remember that everyone is welcome at our activities. Please join us at our several events this year!

Dave

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Kris Ash of Saint Charles, MO

Mark Geringer of Kirkwood, MO

Karen Tecklenburg of Weldon Spring, MO

We are happy that you've joined the Society and are anxious to meet you! Please join us at the first meeting of the year on March 23.

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.

If you haven't already RSVP'd, please email or text Kathie to let her know what you are bringing ASAP.

BONUS! Everyone who RSVPs, will be entered into a drawing for a free plant! (So please RSVP, will ya?)

kasoehng@sbcglobal.net
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PIP'S TIPS



WHEN PLANTING HOSTAS IN CONTAINERS, AVOID “MOISTURE CONTROL” POTTING MIX. THE MOISTURE BEADS CAN KEEP THE SOIL TOO MOIST WHICH CAN CAUSE ROOT ROT, ESPECIALLY DURING WINTER DORMANCY.

HOLELY HOSTA, IT'S TIME TO GET A JUMP ON SLUGS!

Starting early is the best way to prepare for the slug war. Those slimy invaders have been waiting just as long as we have for our precious pips to emerge - and worse, a new generation of hungry babies is on the way. While there is no way to completely eliminate slugs in the garden, here are some methods to significantly put a dent in your slug population.



1. Make them uncomfortable. Slugs don't like sharp edges, so sprinkle clean, crushed eggshells, coffee grounds, or diatomaceous earth around your hostas. (Bonus: coffee can also serve as a deterrent.)

2. Pick them off. This is the most time consuming, yet oddly satisfying method. Slugs are most active at night, so use a flashlight to spot them, and gently pull them off with a gloved hand. Once collected, you can drown in a bucket of soapy water or give to a friend to feed to their chickens.

3. Buy them a beer. Slugs love beer so much, that they are willing to die for it. Place some shallow containers in your soil or mulch so that the top edges are slightly above ground level. Add some beer and you'll soon have a collection of drowned slugs. You can also combine two slug favorites and pour beer into a halved grapefruit. Be aware that beer may attract other critters like raccoons, so if this is an issue, cover with a wire basket, milk crate, or similar and secure with a weight.

FUN FACT: It's the yeast, not the beer itself that they are attracted to. So, you can make your beer more potent by adding yeast and sugar. If there is no beer available, you can make a concoction of water, yeast, and sugar for the same results.

4. Set up a slug shelter. Slugs like it damp. They need moisture to survive and reproduce, so a damp piece of cardboard is an ideal slug hideout. The slugs will cling to the underside to hide during the day which makes it easy to find and dispose of them. If you want to increase the allure of the shelter, you can add citrus peels or yeast.

5. Chemical warfare. The jury is out on this one. One popular slug bait, metaldehyde, has been banned in the United States and United Kingdom due to its harm to wildlife and the environment. Iron Phosphate, widely available in products like Sluggo, is Generally Regarded as Safe (GRAS) by the FDA. However, to make Iron Phosphate effective against slugs, manufacturers add Ethylenediamine-tetraacetic acid (EDTA). EDTA increases metal solubility, improving absorption and boosting the slug bait's potency. In other words, EDTA causes iron poisoning. There is evidence that it's killing earthworms and dogs and has great potential to kill humans.

Like other controversial ingredients, there are conflicting reports regarding safety. It's ultimately up to each gardener to review the information available and decide whether to use these products.



HOW DO WE LOVE MULCH? LET US COUNT THE WAYS

1. Moisture Retention: Reduces evaporation which means less watering
2. Weed Suppression: Blocks sunlight from weed seeds so fewer of them germinate
3. Temperature Regulation: Protects plant roots by serving as an insulator keeping the soil cooler in summer and warmer in winter
4. Soil Improvement: Organic mulch, like wood chips, straw, or leaves, adds nutrients to the soil as it decomposes
5. Erosion Control: Prevents soil erosion by reducing the impact of rain and wind
6. Beauty: Gives your garden a neat and finished look, improving its overall appeal



HOW TO APPLY MULCH

Applying 2 to 3 inches of mulch is ideal for hostas. Adding too much can block oxygen from reaching the roots, which can lead to root suffocation and promoting conditions for fungal diseases due to excess moisture. It's also important to keep mulch a few inches away from the crown to prevent rot and other diseases.

HOW MUCH MULCH DO YOU NEED?

A yard = 27 cubic feet = 13.5 bags (2 cu ft size) = 18 bags (1.5 cu ft size)

If you don't want to calculate by hand, use an online calculator such as the one linked to below.

<https://www.calculator.net/mulch-calculator.html>

Once you have determined how many cubic feet of mulch you need, it's time to decide whether to purchase bags or bulk. It is generally less expensive to purchase in bulk, but there are additional considerations such as delivery fees and where the mulch will go. Do you have the capacity to have several yards dumped on your driveway or do you need it delivered to multiple locations in your yard? Will you be able to spread it all before the pile kills your grass? Is it easier on your back to carry a bag or shovel into a wheelbarrow? What type of mulch do you want?

Thankfully, we have many Society members who have years of experience with purchasing mulch. If you have questions, just ask!

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.

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 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.



WE WANT TO SEE YOUR GARDEN!

If you have photos of your garden that you'd like to share, please send to Lynn.Teller@gmail.com and she'll add to the [Gallery](#) on our website.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<p>Sunday March 23, 1:00 pm</p>	<p>2025 Kickoff Meeting & 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 4651 Shaw Blvd, St Louis MO 63110</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 550 Hwy F, Defiance, MO 63341</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) 596 Defiance Rd, Defiance, MO 63341</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 registration 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 4344 Shaw Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63110</p>

<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 meligon@sbcglobal.net or text to: 314-749-7307</p> <p>Mo Bot Jack Taylor Visitor Center 4344 Shaw Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63110</p>
<p>Sunday May 18 1:00 pm</p>	<p>Garden Walks South St Louis County</p>	<p>1:00 pm Bob Henson 6 Concord Lane, South St. Louis County 63128</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 3 Fox Meadows Lane, St. Louis MO 63127</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 3775 Gumtree , St Louis, MO 63129</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 & Lori Rockwell, 5559 Bellemeade Trail Ct, Saint Louis, MO 63129</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> <p>3:00 Kathie Soehngen 5111 Lampglow Ct., St Louis, MO 63129</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>
<p>June 19-21</p>	<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>https://americanhostasociety.org</p>
<p>Saturday July 12, 10:00 am</p>	<p>Garden Walks Manchester MO</p>	<p>10:00 am George Lynn 1607 Forestview Ridge Lane, Manchester MO 63021</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 & Shelli Handy 1611 Forestview Ridge Lane, Manchester MO 63021</p>

<p>Sunday July 13, 1:00 pm</p>	<p>Annual Plant Auction</p>	<p>Member & Friends Plant Auction Mo Bot CBEC Building 4651 Shaw Blvd, St Louis MO 63110</p>
<p>Saturday August 2, 10:00 am</p>	<p>Garden Walk Tower Grove South</p>	<p>Jesse Gilbertson 3667 N Utah Pl, St. Louis, MO 63116 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>
<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 Shaw Nature Reserve, 307 Pinetum Loop Road, Gray Summit, MO 63039</p>
<p>Sunday October 19, 1:00 pm</p>	<p>TBD</p>	<p>Meeting, topic TBD Mo Bot CBEC Building 4651 Shaw Blvd, St Louis MO 63110</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

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Secretary – Vacant

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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

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

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](#)