A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Hello All:

I don’t know about you, but I’m still waiting for spring to really arrive. The crocus are up, the winter aconite bloomed, the daffodils and narcissus are coming up. The Japanese maples are getting buds, but we’re waiting to see how much winter damage was done to them. Our conifers also suffered a lot from wind damage in spite of anti-desiccant spray. I certainly hope all of you fared better. But I’m excited and waiting for more spring-like weather. The hostas are valiantly working their way to the surface, but we have lots of heave and thaw damage, and will need to add compost to our beds if it ever dries out. Lots of work ahead!

The next society event is our Vendors Day. Jolly Ann Whitener is in charge of this, and she will need help carrying the vendors’ plants in before the event opens. Can we count on you to help her with this? Also remember to invite your friends or just bring them with you. The more, the merrier. Remember we always need new members too. The newsletter will have the vendors who are coming to join us for the day.

Remember, you will need to pick up your club plants that day also. Ted has extended the order date to April 6th, so contact him if you need to order plants. Ted is also in charge of our member’s auction. He has asked all of us to please divide hostas for the auction, and Janelle reminds us of the Missouri Botanical Garden sale for which we will need plants. The dates are in the newsletter. Please help all you can, and again remember we are always looking for new members to convert to avid hosta growers.

Jolly Ann has also volunteered to take on the job of secretary for the society. Many thanks to her for stepping up.

Thanks to all those members who help keep this society running. Without our volunteers we wouldn’t have a society.

Diana
### 2018 Calendar of Events

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<td>April 15</td>
<td>Vendor Day and Club Plant Pick-up</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
<td>Creve Coeur Government Center</td>
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<td>April 28</td>
<td>Work Day at the Missouri Botanical Garden</td>
<td>8 AM</td>
<td>Missouri Botanical Garden, AHS Display Garden beds</td>
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<td>May 4-5</td>
<td>Plant Sale at the Missouri Botanical Garden</td>
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<td>Missouri Botanical Garden</td>
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<td>Setup May 4, 4:00 PM – We are done</td>
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<td>Sale May 5, 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM</td>
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<td>May 20</td>
<td>Garden Walk/Meeting</td>
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<td>Jagger, Poos and Weidman Gardens</td>
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<td>June 17</td>
<td>Garden Walk/Meeting</td>
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<td>June 20-24</td>
<td>AHS National Convention</td>
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<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
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<td>July 12-14</td>
<td>MRHS Regional Convention</td>
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<td>Peoria, IL</td>
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<td>July 15</td>
<td>Members Plant Auction</td>
<td>1:00 PM</td>
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<td>September 16</td>
<td>Meeting with Speaker Mark Glenshaw: Owls</td>
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<td>Creve Coeur Government Center</td>
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<td>October 21</td>
<td>Meeting with Speaker Anne Kirkpatrick: Hydrangea</td>
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<td>Creve Coeur Government Center</td>
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<td>November 11</td>
<td>Board Meeting</td>
<td>2:00 PM</td>
<td>home of President Diana Plahn</td>
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<td>December 2</td>
<td>Holiday Party</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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### 2018 Membership Dues are Payable Now

**Last Reminder – Last Newsletter if not paid!**
This April’s meeting gives members and their friends an opportunity to purchase quality hostas, companion plants and garden supplies. Chairwoman Jolly Ann Whitener has assembled a full house of five vendors, all favorites from previous years. This event is open to the public. Bring all your friends and of course your checkbook. An afternoon of plant and garden supply shopping is the perfect way to welcome the spring gardening season.

AVALON ACRES

Avalon Acres is a 10 acre hilltop nestled among hundreds of large red and white oak trees in South Central Illinois near Effingham. The family owned and operated nursery’s mission is to bring you the highest quality plants at the lowest possible prices. Denny and Alicia Ricketts state on their web site that they “don’t just sell hostas, but are avid collectors as well.” They have had a sales table at our Vendor Day event for many years, offering quality plants, both new cultivars and old standards.

If you are looking for a particular hosta, send them an e-mail. They have over a thousand varieties in their vast collection - some rare or in limited quantities.

You may also place a pre-order. Individual orders can be emailed to sales@aahostas.com. Include your name, phone number, items ordered and state that you will pick-up your order at the St. Louis Hosta Society’s Vendor Day. Do not place your order online.

If you are unable to attend the April 15th meeting, the Ricketts welcome visitors to their nursery. Please call ahead (217-536-9443) so they can dedicate quality time to you. They are available most evenings and Sundays from April 30 through August 25. For more information, visit their web site www.aahostas.com.

HOSTAS ON THE BLUFF

Hostas on the Bluff is a specialty hosta farm and display garden. The new small family owned business, the brain child of Brian and Erica Kniffin, is situated on the French Village bluffs overlooking the St. Louis skyline and river valley near Fairview Heights, Illinois.

Currently hostas can be purchased online through their website - https://hostasonthebluff.com/. Their first hosta sale and open house of 2018 is planned for the weekend of May 4-6. Stop and talk with Brian to learn more about his St. Louis area enterprise and his upcoming open house.
Homestead Farms Nursery is a family owned perennial flower nursery located near Owensville, Mo, which specializes in field-grown daylilies, hostas, peonies and Siberian iris. They also have a nice selection of clematis and hardy ferns. The nursery, run by Ron Vitoux and his family for over 25 years, offers over 1200 varieties of daylilies, 350 varieties of hosta, 100 different peony cultivars and 50 Siberian iris varieties. For a number of years, Ron and his sons Kurt and Brett have brought hostas, companion plants and a wealth of gardening knowledge to our April Vendor Day event.

For a special treat in May, take a leisurely drive through Missouri’s rolling hills to Owensville, about 60 miles northwest, to see the field of peonies ranging in color from white to hot pink to deep red. In June, visit the colorful daylily beds. Of course, a vast number of container grown hostas and ferns are always available.

Homestead Farms Nursery also has an outstanding web site, www.homesteadfarms.com/, which is easy to navigate. Besides a picture inventory, the web site has hosta growing tips as well as information about the other perennials they offer for sale. If there is a particular plant that you would like, call or send Ron an email and he will bring it with him.

Made in the Shade Gardens is a home based business founded in 2000 by Rob and Sheri Mortko in Olathe Kansas. They sell over 400 different varieties of hosta. In addition to their retail hosta enterprise, Rob operates a hosta tissue culture lab.

In 2000 Rob registered a cultivar he had developed, H. ‘Heart and Soul’. This was followed in 2006 by the unique H. ‘Stitch in Time’.

If you are in the Kansas City area, take the time to visit the Mortko’s garden. Grass paths wind through a shade garden that features over 300 different perennials and over 100 different mature hosta cultivars. The gardens include a number of viburnums, daphne, hydrangea, dogwood and other shade tolerant shrubs. At the heart of the garden is a water lily pond.

Rob’s name should be quite familiar to our members. For the last four years, Made in the Shade Gardens has been the source for our member’s club plants. Many of you will be picking up his plants that you ordered earlier this year.

If you are looking for a particular hosta, check Rob’s website http://www.hostaguy.com. Send him an email and he will be happy to bring it with him.
**Overland Hardware**

Owners, Gregg Wesche and Don Burkhardt, continue the long tradition of excellent customer service established by their father and father-in-law. They state that they are an “old-fashioned” hardware store. In their minds that means “you can get in and out without having to walk a quarter mile, that someone offers to help you when you walk in the door and the person who helped you find what you needed also checks you out and helps carry it out to your car”. They stock everything from Italian granite paint for countertops to numerous blends of birdseed and rabbit chow.

Overland Hardware, located at 2520 Woodson Road, Overland MO 63114, is the place to go for those hard to find services. Specialties available at Overland are: cutting glass and acrylic to size, sash and screen repair, sharpening chainsaw chains, lock re-keying, chip keys for cars, cutting and rethreading pipe, sharpening lawn mower blades and lamp repair. Visit their web site, [www.overlandhardware.net](http://www.overlandhardware.net) for more information, hours of operation and directions to their store.

Again this year, Gregg, a St. Louis Hosta Society member, is offering special prices for selected gardening items that he will bring to our Vendor Day event. Later in this newsletter is a list of products and prices. Email (greggdon@swbell.net) or call (314-427-1404) Gregg with your order and he will bring it with him on April 15th.

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**April 15, 2018 Meeting**

**Club Plant Pick Up**

1:00 – 3:00 PM
Creve Coeur Government Center

In addition to Vendors Day, this is the time to pick up the plants you ordered last February and March. Event chairman Ted Piekutowski selected plants that might be appealing to our members from Rob Mortko’s Kansas *Made in the Shade Gardens* catalogue.

The plants that members ordered have been obtained by Ted and sorted into individual member packages. Remember, if you are unable to attend the meeting, please designate another person to pick up your order. Many thanks to Ted for handling this member-only event.
Work Day at the MO Botanical Garden

April 28, 8:00 AM until about 11:00 or 12:00

Remember last year! Remember the relentless torrents of rain, the sucking sound of Japanese ferns being lifted from the mud, trying to carry slippery hosta plants, the trickle of water running down your back as you potted hosta divisions! Remember all the fun we had, laughing and gently poking fun at one another! Well Phyllis Weidman, event chairwoman, says we are going to do it again.

Each year members volunteer their time to dig, move, hoe, prune, spray, mulch and do the myriad of little jobs necessary for a well-kept garden. We pot all divided or discarded plants and take them to our Society’s MoBot Plant Sale the following week-end.

The Garden permits us to bring our own gear. Have a favorite shovel, hoe, trowel, or pruner, bring it with you. Don’t forget the gloves unless you like the feel of dirt on your hands and under your fingernails. Ask anyone who has been at the work day how much fun you can have getting dirty.

We will meet at 8:00 AM, rain or shine, in the AHS Display Garden hosta beds located in the northeast section of the Garden. If this is your first time, notify Phyllis so that she can help you fill out a MoBot volunteer form - pow1031@gmail.com or 314-965-7027.

IT’S TIME!

Dig, Divide, Donate!

St. Louis Hosta Society Plant Sale

Missouri Botanical Garden, Beaumont Room

May 4 – 4:00 PM until we are done
May 5 - Sale time 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

The plant sale is one of our Society’s biggest fund raisers. Monies from this sale pay the costs associated with publishing the society newsletter, maintaining its website, speakers, facilitating community projects such as MoBot hosta bed enhancements, plus our many other activities.

For a successful MoBot plant sale, your Society needs your donations and your time. Our hostas will soon be breaking ground. Now is the time to cut off a few eyes, pot them and let them grow so they are beautiful for the sale. Chairwoman, Janelle Criscione, is hoping every member could give at least 5 plants. Mini and large hostas were especially in demand last year. Variegated hostas of any kind always sell well. If you need help dividing those large clumps in your yard, digging crews are available.

Bring your plants to the garden on Friday evening May 4th at 4:00 PM, Saturday morning May 5th at 8:00 AM, the April 15th meeting or contact one of the co-chairwomen for transport.

Janelle Criscione - lambypie@gmail.com or 314-324-4380
Phyllis Weidman - pow1031@gmail.com or 314-965-7027
After listening to Marc Hartstein’s presentation at our March meeting, I’m sure glad I’m not a honey bee. What a life!

There are three castes in a hive, one queen, some drones and many workers. Larva which are feed “royal jelly” develop into queens. These queens must fight until only one remains. A hive can have only one queen. She spends her day laying eggs, 1500-2000 a day, while others feed and cleanup after her.

Drones are male bees whose purpose is to mate with the queen. After mating the drone dies. Pretty rough life for the man of the hive.

Workers do everything else. They produce wax and build the combs, clean the cells of debris, attend to the queen’s every need, guard the hive, forage for flowers, receive nectar from the foragers and turn it into honey. An individual bee lives about 23 days. Doing all that would certainly wear a bee out.

There are three types of commercial hives, the Langstroth, the Warre’ and the Top Bar. Mr Hartstein uses the Top Bar as he finds it easy to use and maintain even though it produces less honey. The easiest way to start a hive is to purchase a bee package which contains workers and a queen in a cage. The queen is released into the hive first, then the rest of the bees in the purchased package will follow.

A hive is dormant in winter. All the drones die, the queen does nothing and the workers cluster around her keeping her warm. In spring the cycle begins again with the queen laying eggs.

Worker bees that forage for food, use what is called a “waggle dance” to tell the other foragers where to find flowers. Their unique movements tell other bees both the direction and the distance to desirable blossoms.

Sadly, Mr. Hartstein reported that honey bees continue to decline. Neonicotenoids may contribute to the problem, but he feels there is more to it. Research continues.

We must do our part. Don’t kill honey bees. Hornets, wasps and yellow jackets sting. Honey bees do not unless provoked. If you see a hive or a swarm, leave it alone. If it is in a location that threatens you have a bee keeper remove it. Contact The Eastern Missouri Beekeepers Association for assistance: www.easternbeekeepers.com. Mr. Hartstein is quite enthused about bees. If you have a question or want more information, contact him at STLBeeGuy@gmail.com.
For the past several years, gardeners in St. Louis have enjoyed early, warm springs. This year Mother Nature seems to be swinging in the opposite direction. March has been cold and rainy. Forecasts indicate April will start the same way. Thus I thought it apropos to reprint an article about frost damage, written by Ray Rogers, obtained from the AHS Newsletter Exchange.

**Avoiding Spring Frost Damage**  
By Ray Rodgers

The anticipation and excitement of early spring – Spring is a joyous time for gardeners, a time of great anticipation as we start wandering around our gardens looking for signs of new beginnings. Such excitement must be tempered with the realization that freezing temperatures are always a possibility until approx. mid-May in Central Illinois. The average last frost date for Peoria is May 8 (in St. Louis, **average** last frost date is April 15). Every year, I hope spring will come in gracefully, without the major temperature swings we have come to expect. Unfortunately, this rarely has happened.

Last year was a prime example. After efforts to protect my rapidly unfurling hosta leaves on a couple of occasions, I thought those days were once again behind us when we reached the month of May, only to be surprised by an unexpected (to me) frost, that damaged gardens throughout the area on the night of May 2/ May 3.

Every spring, I give credit to *H. 'On Stage'* as being the smartest hosta in my garden: as it is the last hosta to emerge from winter dormancy, making it much less susceptible to frost damage.

When hostas should be protected – It is important to realize that hostas, even completely leafed out, can withstand temperatures below freezing (32 degrees F). I have repeatedly read that hostas can handle temperatures down to 28 degrees F for short times with minimal or no damage.

During winter, if I find exposed hosta buds, I scrape a little mulch or soil mix from the surrounding area over them for protection. In very early spring, if shoots are starting to emerge, I often cover them in the same manner, in an attempt to slow their progress and provide additional protection.

If shoots are a few inches or more tall, yet leaves have not started to unfurl or are still in the early stages, and temperatures below 30 degrees F are forecasted, I suggest providing additional protection via a choice of mulch or dried leaves piled around and over the emerging shoots. Alternatively, one of the protective methods described below can be utilized.

The more leafed-out hostas are, the more susceptible they are to frost damage. In these cases, covering via one of the methods described below is the best alternative.

One must consider the uniqueness of their gardens and plant placements when determining whether to protect or not. Of course, part of the decision process is how much trust one has in the accuracy of the forecast. Isn’t that a scary thought!

Plant protection – If one decides to protect, there are many options. Basically almost anything that can cover a hosta will help. It is important not to let the leaves touch the covering material as they are more likely to sustain freeze damage at that contact, if the temperature gets low enough.

There are many methods for protecting your plants via covering. Materials include:
(* Need to be propped up and anchored down. I try to keep a bundle of sticks or stakes around for props. I have also used covered sawhorses over larger hostas. Bricks and rocks are good anchors and also work well to hold down plastic pots during windy conditions.)

Polyethylene film or similar materials, including plastic bags, should be avoided as condensation buildup on the inside can increase the likelihood of damage to hosta leaves. These materials are also a danger once the sun comes out.

Another method is to keep a continuous spray of water on plants when the temperature is below 28 degrees F as water is warmer than the air.

The morning after – After all the chosen plants are protected from the impending freezing temperature (usually during the night), one must address the uncovering task the following morning. Keeping the plants covered until the temperature climbs back above freezing is the best option. But, if one has to go to work, family or neighbors may have to be called upon for help. If the forecast calls for temperatures to remain in the danger zone, keep plants covered.

How cold is too cold – This somewhat depends on the number of hostas one has to protect. If hostas are completely leafed out and the temperature dips into the low 20s F, protective measures may reduce the severity, but it is unlikely that they will prevent freeze damage.

What should be done to frost damaged hostas – If hostas are hit by damaging frosts it is best to cut off and discard the most significantly damaged leaf tissue, keeping as many of the undamaged leaves and petioles as possible to allow the continuation of the plant’s food making process. At some point, if enough leaves are removed, hostas will force a second flush of leaves from smaller and previously dormant buds. This flush will likely produce smaller leaves.

Even worse than hosta leaves turning to mush, is the possibility of the crown being damaged, which if not attended to, typically allows rot to set in. The crown of the hosta is the base where the roots and shoots join. Crown rot can happen in early spring when water stands around the crown or by the plant freezing after it breaks dormancy. If hostas sustain significant leaf damage, be sure to check the crown for soft areas. If discovered, this tissue should be removed back to solid tissue to prevent further rot and possibly the death of the plant.

Which hostas are most frost sensitive – Late freezes can be a problem with any variety, especially the ones that break dormancy early. The species *H.*plantaginea and its sports have the reputation of being the most frost sensitive. It is widely believed all fragrant hosta have *H.*plantaginea in their lineage, making them candidates for protection. *H.*plantaginea is one of the only species that will continue to produce new leaves all summer long. This is an advantage when the original spring foliage becomes damaged. Contrarily, I have read that hostas in the Sieboldiana Group and Tokudama Group are slow to recover from frost damage as they tend to push only one good flush of growth in a season, also making hostas with these lineages, good candidates for protection. A few other of the more sensitive hostas include *H.montana* ‘Aureomarginata’, ‘Sagae’, ‘Lancifolia’, and ‘Chinese Sunrise’.

New purchases – If hostas are purchased prior to mid-May, I suggest leaving them in pots so they can easily be moved to a protected area when frost warnings occur.

Is it worth the effort – Protecting hostas from freezing temperatures is certainly a hassle. Each of us has to determine for ourselves whether it is worth the effort and when to take protective measures. In my opinion, we must always be aware of the possibility of freezing temperatures and react accordingly to preserve the beauty of our gardens.

| Newspapers | Bushel baskets | Bed sheets* |
| Cardboard boxes | Wheelbarrows turned upside down | Bath towels* |
| Garbage cans | Frost Cloth (available at nurseries)* | Light blankets* |
| | | Burlap* |
Thanks to everyone who purchased something from me the past eight years. Most of these items I use in my own hosta beds at home and I’ve marked the price down to benefit Society members as they begin to work in their own beds. Please email me if you have special requests. Prices include sales tax.

For the April Vendor Day Meeting, I will take preorders only for 36# Milorganite for $10 a bag. I will not be bringing additional bags to the meeting and I will need preorders by April 7th.

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**SNAIL & SLUG PRODUCTS**

I HAVE ALWAYS BEEN BLESSED WITH AN ABUNDANCE OF SLUGS IN MY HOSTA BEDS.

- 2 LB ORTHO BUG-GETA, ACTIVE INGRED.: 3.25% METALDEHYDE $8
- 2.5 LB HI-YIELD SLUG & SNAIL BAIT, INGREDIENTS: METALDEHYDE & BITREX $9
- 1.5 LB SLUG MAGIC, ACTIVE INGR.: PELLETIZED IRON PHOSPHATE $10
- 4.4 LB DIATOMACEOUS EARTH (FOOD GRADE) $10

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**WEED CONTROL**

ONE OF THE BANES OF ALL GARDENERS IS THE PULLING OF WEEDS, ALTHOUGH IT SOMETIMES GIVES YOU SOME TIME TO THINK OR WORK ON YOUR TAN.

- 5.625 LB PREEN WEED PREVENTER, ACTIVE INGR.: 1.47% TRIFLURALIN $15
- 16 LB PREEN WEED PREVENTER, ACTIVE INGR.: 1.47% TRIFLURALIN $27
- 16 LB PREEN WEED PREVENTER PLUS PLANT FOOD 9-12-9 $29
- 31.3 LB PREEN WEED PREVENTER $38
- 30 OZ SPECTRACIDE CONCENTRATE WEED/GRASS KILLER – MAKES UP TO 10 GAL $16
- 35.2 OZ ROUNDUP SUPER CONCENTRATE 50.2% GLYPHOSPHATE SALT $48

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**FERTILIZERS & AMENDMENTS**

- 8 OZ SCHULTZ 10-15-10 LIQUID PLANT FOOD WITH DROPPER $6.50
- 8 LB OSMOCOTE OUTDOOR & INDOOR 15-9-12 $19
- 8 LB OSMOCOTE FLOWER & VEG 14-14-14 $20
- 20 LB BONE MEAL 0-10-0 $18
- 2.75 LB BLOOD MEAL $8
- 1 QT ALASKA FISH FERTILIZER 5-1-1 ORGANIC WON'T BURN $6
- And For The Hardcore Gardener:
  - 4 LB SUPERPHOSPHATE $5
  - 4 LB MURIATE OF POTASH $6
  - 4 LB ALUMINUM SULFATE $5
  - 3 LB COTTONSEED MEAL $6
  - 4 LB COPPERAS (IRON SULFATE) $5

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**GARDENER HELPERS**

- THESE GLOVES I RECOMMEND WITHOUT RESERVATION! ATLAS NITRILE TOUGH GLOVES AVAILABLE IN SM, MED., LARGE AND XLARGE, TOUGH AND DURABLE, BUT LIGHTWEIGHT WITH MAXIMUM DEXTERITY. 7 COLORS AVAILABLE $4/PAR
- IS YOUR PRUNING SHEARS DULL AND/OR WORN OUT? FISKARS ALL STEEL BYPASS $10 OR GILMOUR COMMERCIAL BYPASS CAST ALUM $20
- FOAM KNEELING PAD 20 x 9.5 x 1 $4
- O’KEEFE’S WORKING HANDS - OUTSTANDING RELIEF FOR CRACKED/SPLIT FINGERTIPS $6. VALUE SIZE O’KEEFE’S - TWICE THE SIZE $11 NEW 3 OZ SQUEEZE TUBE $6
- POP-UP GARDEN BAG 27”H X 22”DIA LIGHTWEIGHT BUT DURABLE, COLLAPSES FOR EASY STORAGE OR TRANSPORT, GREAT FOR CLEANUP & WEEDING $16

YOU CAN EMAIL OR CALL ME WITH YOUR ORDERS AND I’LL BRING THEM TO THE VENDOR DAY. THANKS

GREGG WESCHE, OVERLAND HARDWARE
2520 WOODSON, OVERLAND, MO 63114
314-427-1404 OR GREGGDON@SWBELL.NET
St. Louis Hosta Society Membership Information

Contact: Melissa Byrd  
117 Gunston Hall Drive  
St. Charles, MO 63304  
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
Visit us on Facebook, St. Louis Hosta Society

St. Louis Hosta Society Officials

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Melissa Byrd — Webmaster  
mabyrd68@gmail.com

Joan Poos — Newsletter Editor  
314-821-1622  
david.poos@att.net

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.

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/