



Hosta Happenings

East Tennessee Hosta Society

February 2019

President's Message

Welcome to the 2019 Garden season. To date we have had a rather mild but very wet winter. This excessive rain can be bad news for our gardens.

It is good to see all the Lenten Roses and Camellias blooming at this time of the year—even the Daffodils are poking their heads up.

The program planning committee have been working hard to bring you a fun and exciting year with lots of educational & social opportunities. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend as many activities as you can. It is your way of showing appreciation for the work that the planning committee has done.

A decision has been made to hold the last social gathering of the year with the AGM in last November. This is due to December being a busy social month.

It is that time of the year again when membership fees are due. If you are not intending to rejoin this year—can you let us know so we know not to pester you. If it is inconvenient for you to write a check and you won't be at the early meetings—I can come around and pick it up from your home. I will get to meet you and check out your garden at the same time. 😊

I hope you have considered attending one of the conventions this year. They are a lot of fun, you meet some really nice people and you bring home some unique Hostas. See you all at our first meeting later this month.

Fred Anderson

2019 President & Newsletter Editor

Ph: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

2019 Dues

\$12 for a single and **\$18** for a family membership. Contact Gina Buffum now to stay current so that you can continue to enjoy the benefits of membership.

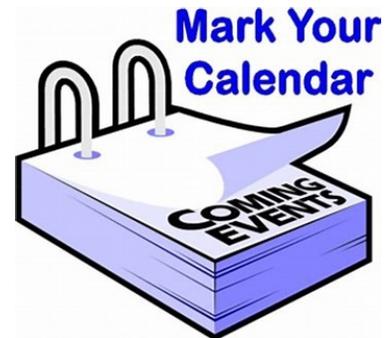
Gina Buffum

Treasurer - East Tennessee Hosta Society

7334 Wheatfield Place

Knoxville, TN 37919

Ph: [REDACTED]



Our first meeting of the year will be **Sunday February 24th at 2.00pm at the greenhouse room at UT gardens.** Let me know if you need directions. We will be discussing the **2019 program** and Fred Anderson & Rob Pearce will be giving a presentation titled **Camellias 101.**



Fun and frivolity playing dirty Santa at last years Christmas party

Ed Note: I saw this article in another Hosta newsletter and thought I would share it. This is what we would need to do if we ever wanted to sell plants to the public from our gardens. These tips are to help prevent possible insect and disease. It was written by Dave Jennings who is a master gardener volunteer for Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County in NY state.



Hostas dug from your garden and potted properly usually grow as well as plants grown in a garden with the proper TLC techniques. Although each plant has its own pot and soil needs, some general tips can simplify the potting process and ensure each

plant is grown in the environment it needs for optimum health. We are sharing these tips with you to show we are taking a pro-active stance to help prevent the spread of Insect and Disease problems at our Annual Fund-Raising Sale. Your Board discussed in detail this concern at their January planning meeting and has mandated that all plants being donated this year must be grown in new unused pots and sterile growing media. Therefore, we will have new pots and sterile soil for you to take home with you beginning with our April Meeting for you to use when you dig and divide plants from your personal collection to grow on for our sale. Please be very careful not to donate Hostas that may be infected with a Virus or harmful pests. We are very concerned in this regard with "Jumping Worms" becoming more prevalent in our area every year. (I don't think they are in TN)

Container Selection

If you don't use our supplied pots, please use new plant containers that feature drainage holes on the bottom so excess moisture can drain from soil. You can drill holes in plastic pots lacking holes. Size is also an important consideration. Choose a container one size larger than the plant's root ball. Plant in a container large enough to support the plant once it reaches its mature size for our plant sale, so you don't have to repot it multiple times during its growing season.

Soil Mixture

The best kind of soil to use is a standard artificial potting soil so that's why we are supplying you with as much artificial soil as you may need. DO NOT mix the potting soil with anything such as compost or garden/top soil because those materials drain poorly and could contain microscopic pest problems.

Method

The part of a plant where its stems emerge from its root system is called a crown. The only way to help insure you eliminate as many pest concerns as possible is to rinse as much soil as you can from the roots when you dig and divide your clump. Hostas require potting with the crown sitting at the top of the slightly compacted soil. When potting the plant, fill one-third of the pot with potting mix (or commonly referred to as SOIL... but NEVER Dirt). If the soil falls through the drainage holes, you can line the pot with a coffee filter before adding soil. The filter holds in the soil while still allowing water to drain properly. Set the plant in the pot, and then add or remove soil from beneath its root ball until the crown sits no more than 1 inch beneath the pot's rim. Add more soil around the roots, but don't cover the crown. Water the soil thoroughly after potting so it can settle around the plant's roots properly and eliminate air pockets.

Care

Plants may grow slowly or even wilt slightly immediately after planting because their roots must recover from handling and establish themselves in their new pot. Provide each pot with the proper amount of daily sunlight necessary for it to get acclimated to its new growing location; shade it from all intense afternoon sunlight after potting, to avoid sunburned foliage. Water potted plants when the top 1 inch of their soil feels dry, and always empty the drained water from any drip trays you use after watering. Regular soluble-fertilizer applications can begin about two to four weeks after potting to get the plants established more quickly for our sale.



Hosta Medusa

Elin's Column



Elin Johnson (Master Gardener extraordinaire) from Sweetwater TN was the editor of this newsletter for nearly 20 years and many of those years as President. Her contributions are very appreciative.

I have fallen in love again! A long time ago someone (I think it was Brian White) obtained an 8-track tape of a tour of Van Wade's display garden in Ohio. We were blown away by the size of his gorgeous, huge hostas, along with lovely conifers on a beautiful hillside. But the one thing that caught my eye was a picture of a little one—Blue Mouse Ears. I fell in love, and ever since have bought and grown not only the original mouse, but many of its progeny.

But it has happened again. Bob Solberg sent out his annual early notice of new and highly recommended hostas, and there on the first page was his creation, Hosta 'Lemon Snap'. Its lovely small, cupped, yellow leaves, with **real** red petioles that extend up into the leaf is not only unique, but one of the most beautiful hostas I ever



Lemon Snap

saw. It's not cheap (\$50). Only once have I paid that much for a hosta, and that was for 'Lakeside Hula Hoop', which turned out to not be that special, and I hadn't paid that much again—until now. I've sent in my order.

Then I received my copy of the **Hosta Journal**. I have belonged to the American Hosta Society for a long time, and consider my membership well worth the

cost, if for no other reason than the **Journal** itself. This issue was the 50 year memorial issue, and probably the best issue I can remember. But guess what was mentioned several times in that issue? Hosta 'Lemon Snap'. One article by Andy Marlow from Hopkins, Minnesota began by saying "Can you fall in love at first sight with a hosta?" And he described his reaction to seeing this plant for the first time at the AHS Convention in Pennsylvania. I couldn't believe how similar his reaction was to mine. And then there are two pictures of my sweetheart in an article about red petioles in the same issue.

I've asked for delivery in April, and I can't wait. I'm going to plant it in a dark red pot to emphasize the color of the red petioles.

A new recipe for killing Voles by Hale Booth

All gardeners that experience them hate voles and their exquisite taste for expensive and rare plants. I can just imagine voles getting together to discuss their taste preferences among various Japanese maples, Hostas and anything else that is expensive.

While walking through our garden on the Sunday ARS Garden tours I was talking with our retired ARS Executive Director Laura Grant who also battles voles in her garden in Toronto. Laura has found that mixing Vitamin D with peanut butter into small round balls, creates a lethal but attractive final desert for these loathsome rodents. Laura indicates that the Vitamin D is what poisons the voles by possibly upsetting their blood chemistry but the peanut butter is the irresistible component that attracts them to eat the mixture. She indicates that the peanut Vitamin D little round balls should be maybe a little smaller than marble size and just drop one in each vole hole. You can periodically continue till voleville looks abandoned.

Most of the Vitamin D that I have seen in stores are liquid gels. It seems a powder form of Vitamin D would be less messy and work better. Powder forms are available on the internet. One of the best things about this lethal meal is that none of these components are hazardous to humans, unless you have a peanut allergy.

Voles seem to do their worst damage to me in the late winter, so I plan to start rolling peanut butter vitamin balls soon and keep them separate from the Christmas treats.

Ed Note: I found that you need to add oats to the peanut butter to give the ball some body.

A nice thank you letter from Dr. Sue Hamilton - director of UT Gardens for our donation.

Dear ETHS

Thank you for your generous gift to our Hosta garden during our 'Big Orange Give' campaign. Your support makes a big difference in what we are able to accomplish this next year. We will be able to train new students in the care and maintenance of Hostas and upgrade many Hosta labels to a sturdier more durable material.

Please know how appreciative my staff and I are of your generous and continuous support of the gardens.

With deep gratitude

Sue Hamilton



Where Friends &
Foliage Meet

Green Bay WI 12-15 June

Member Profile

Each month we will profile a member to help us get to know other members better. Be ready for your turn.

This Month's Member is Howard Luttrell who was once a Master Judge for the American Hosta Society.



Ed Note: This story was taken from a 2005 Newsletter by Elin Johnson.

This month we will meet Howard Luttrell. He and his wife, Anna, have invited us to visit their garden this year (May 15), a perfect time when his Hostas will be young and at their most beautiful. Howard wrote his

own account of the development of his garden. What he doesn't mention is that the gardens contain a great many other plants in addition to the azaleas and Hostas he discusses. There is an extensive daylily garden, and he mentioned to me that there are about 50 varieties of daffodils that bloom in the spring, the perfect complement to the blooming azaleas and the emerging Hostas. "We bought a house (our first) while I was stationed at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. I wanted to improve our lawn landscape. Several friends at church belonged to the Men's Garden Club. I joined, and a long journey began. The first plant I bought was a hosta (Fortunei 'Albo Marginata'). When attending the garden club I met several people who influenced me—guys like Jim Cooper (past president of the American Hosta Society), Tony Avent (while he was at North Carolina State University), and Bob Solberg (a hosta lover just getting started).

"I began attending the conventions of several gardening societies: The Men's Garden Club of America, The American Hosta Society, The Azalea Society, and a few others. These travels gave me ideas for what I would like to do when the time came for me to retire from the Marine Corps and have a place where we would finally stay put.

"In 1990 I retired and we bought the place we now have in Lenoir City where I grew up. The house was nice, but the best thing was that it was surrounded by four acres of land. There was no landscaping, but after traveling to many gardens for many years, I was now ready to get started. The existing physical characteristics of the site dictated the development of the gardens.

"The first plants to enter the ground were 600 azaleas that I had propagated from a collector's garden in North Carolina. I've started many others since, and I think that 223 cultivars are now growing. Hostas were also being planted at the same time. I visited my best garden buddies and retrieved the plants that they had been holding for me. Most of the Hostas were original stock. The

garden now covers four acres full of a variety of plants. Many of the plants I propagated, and Hostas and azaleas are the predominant features. The hosta collection is significant.

"My style of gardening has not changed—I knew what I wanted from the beginning. The characteristics of the terrain dictated where I planted, and the many visits to tour gardens had given me the ideas for the design.

"That first plant I bought and planted in the landscape of our first home (Fortunei 'Albo Marginata') has now expanded to hundreds of Hostas. Each spring is a new beginning and creates so much anticipation. The Genus Hosta is good for keeping us young.

"I enjoy people visiting our place and admiring the creation. Many do so each year. The garden needs to be visited every two weeks during the spring to fully appreciate the contents. Each visit will be a different experience."



Howard Luttrell in his garden



This is what every edition of the Hosta Journal looks like—1985 to current in chronological order. This resource was donated by celebrity member Howard Luttrell.

Action Checklist

- Make sure your membership fees are paid
- Mark your Calendar for the 24th February