

# THE CHATTANOOGA REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY

## THE HOSTA CONNECTION



**APRIL 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**MEETING AT**  
**THE**  
**BARN NURSERY**  
**1 O'CLOCK**  
WE WILL MEET IN  
THE POTTERY BUILDING  
CRAIG WALKER WILL BE OUR SPEAKER



### *Notes from the Editor*

*Spring has sprung the plants are popping out of the ground. Now the weather forecast is calling for freezing weather Friday. I know most of us took hostas home to pot for the Expo, we'll have to try and keep them healthy. The hostas that Jimmy bought from Mary's Greenhouse are at Judy Nolin's greenhouse---thank goodness for her greenhouse.*

*The hostas that I took to pot had wonderful roots - they filled the pot, I think next year I'm going to buy some for myself, they are a bargain and will do fine making a hosta boarder.*

***April 10, Friday, at one o'clock*** --- please bring your hostas to Camp Jordan Arena, some of you suggested bringing other shade loving plants - these too will sell. You can drive your car into the Arena to unload or call us 313-4646 and we'll come get your plants in my wagon. It shouldn't take long with everyone helping.

*Although, Johnny and I are Master Gardeners – we had already volunteered to help at the Expo ,hauling, decorating, helping Vendors set up, help the Vendors take their breaks during the day. Johnny and I will start Friday morning at 7 am on setting up the Arena for the Expo but at 1 pm we will stop what we are doing and set up our Hostas space.*

*Don't forget the hours you have volunteered to work on Saturday and Sunday, Carol has the sign up sheet from our March Meeting but we will need more people to help. We will pass this sheet around again at the April Meeting.*

***April 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> is the dates for the Expo, doors open at 10 am and close at 6 pm.** The cost is \$5 a person, I don't know how many vendors tickets will be given out for each display so you might want to plan on paying \$5. If you pay the \$5, you will be eligible for door prizes given out every hour, if you get a vendors pass you will not be eligible for the door prizes. There are some really good door prizes that the Vendors have donated.*

## DIRECTIONS TO CAMP JORDAN

FROM I-75 NORTH TAKE EXIT 1 A – TO RINGGOLD ROAD --- Turn left at first traffic light onto Saint Thomas Rd – Turn left onto Camp Jordan Parkway – follow road to Arena

FROM I-75 SOUTH TAKE EXIT 1 – TURN LEFT ONTO RINGGOLD ROAD. Turn left at the first traffic light onto Saint Thomas Rd – Turn left onto Camp Jordan Parkway – follow road to Arena

Camp Jordan and Fred Pruett Parkway share the same name.

To give you an idea of the general area of Camp Jordans location - it is located way back behind the East Ridge Flea Market.

## **Protecting Your Hostas from Late Frosts and Freezes**

For hosta growers, spring is probably the best time of the year. In our area, the eyes start popping up from mid-March to early April, and for many varieties, spring is when they look their absolute best, especially the bright yellows and powdery blues. And of course, spring is when we get to go out and count the eyes that are coming up to see how big the plants are going to be this year. What, am I the only one who does that?

In many areas, spring is also the time that a late freeze can come along and turn all those beautiful leaves to mush. Although hostas are incredibly hardy, thriving in cold winter areas and reportedly surviving temperatures as low as 40 below zero, just a single night of freezing temps after they break dormancy can cause a great deal of damage.

Each year is different and the weather seems to be getting weirder every year, so if there is still a chance of a freeze you can keep them in a protected place until it's safe to plant them. They can stay in their pots for weeks as long as you don't keep them soggy wet or let them dry out completely.

As long as the eyes are tightly furled, hard and pointy, they do not seem to be subject to damage even if they have broken the surface, but once the leaves begin to unfurl it's a different story. For a plant that is so hardy, the leaves are surprisingly delicate once they begin to open. Frost can cause varying degrees of leaf damage, and a hard freeze below 28 degrees can be devastating. In most cases the damage is limited to the leaves. The foliage will eventually regrow, but it can take a while. How long the plant takes to recover depends on the variety. In some cases though, freezing will injure the growing point of the plant and allow entry to the pathogens that cause crown rot, which can be fatal to the plant.

If your hostas have broken through the soil surface and a frost or freeze is coming, you should cover them with an insulating material. Nurseries generally use large cloth or plastic foam blankets specially made to provide several degrees of protection. Since these covers are often used to protect vegetable gardens, you can often find them locally at a garden center or farm store. These covers can give you a few degrees of protection by trapping the heat in the ground, but if temps go as low as 25 degrees for a length of time, you may still have damage. For the small garden, covering individual plants or small groups is often more practical. Spring freezes often last only a few hours, so if you can provide an insulating barrier between the outside air and the leaves, you can usually prevent or limit damage.

Anything from loose dry leaves covered with plastic to an overturned box or bucket with a weight on top can provide considerable insulation. Simply throwing an old sheet or other cloth cover over the plants will provide a bit of protection, but if you can prop the cover up over the foliage to keep an insulating layer of air over the leaves it will be more effective. Try to keep the cover from touching the foliage, especially if you are using plastic sheets, so that there is an insulating air space between the cold air and the foliage. Plastic touching the leaf surface provides virtually no protection.

If your plants are hard hit by a frost or freeze despite your efforts, there is nothing to do but cut off the mushy leaves and wait for them to regrow. Waiting a couple days before you cut them back after a light frost the leaves will sometimes appear to be damaged but will recover completely after a bit of warmer weather.