

THE CHATTANOOGA REGIONAL HOSTA SOCIETY



THE HOSTA CONNECTION



**MAY 5, 2018
MEETING IS PICNIC
IS AT FRANCES JONES HOME
ON SIGNAL MOUNTAIN**

Notes from the editor,

Spring has arrived, I think (hope). I've always heard the last frost date for Chattanooga is April 15. Hopefully Saturday night was our last frost. I'll share a little information on what I found on the web. Different sites showed different last frost dates. Makes you wonder which one is right.

I'm so excited about our PICNIC, Frances' home is on the brow and was on the Food Bank's Garden Tour twice, about 20 years ago and 8 years ago. The first time her gardens were overwhelming, the second time she had doubled the size of the gardens, everything was 'just beautiful'. She has a covered area where we will have our picnic. We'll bring the drinks, paper plates and silverware and buy some chicken, if you'll bring a covered dish or two we'll have a good picnic.

Johnny's cell phone number is 423-313-4646 if you have a problem.

This time last year my newsletter was very sad - I lost so many plants because of the drought, I wasn't going to spend a lot of money on plants, most of the plants I bought was on clearance at Lowes or hostas that we divided. This year Johnny and I are delighted -- what we divided and planted have all come back. All the frosts and freezes just barely touched a few things, they have already recovered. We are happily buying more plants. Now that the Expo is over we can concentrate on getting our garden under control. I'm late putting out snail bait, the snails will enjoy my hostas. Bob Solberg said, "put the snail bait out when the pips are emerging from the ground, this will keep snail out of the hostas, if you put the bait out after the hosta has leaves the snail are not going to leave fresh leaves for a little piece of man made poison".

Johnny will have the 2018 Year Books at the picnic. We decided that we'll include cell phone numbers in next years Year Book.

A Message from our President: Judy Nowlin:

Saturday, May 5th 1:00 pm: Meet at Food City at 12:30 pm. Frances Jones of Signal Mountain has graciously agreed to allow our chapter to tour her acclaimed garden and for us to picnic on the grounds. Frances has been creating a piece of Heaven on the brow of Signal Mountain for over 40 years. Her garden contains magnificent sculptures and plants that vary from conifers to coneflowers. She has beautiful Hosta selections and a view of the Tennessee river gorge that stops you cold. For those who do not know how to find Frances Jones's garden, meet at the Food Lion parking lot at the foot of Signal at 12:30 pm. 30 minutes prior to meeting time in order to caravan members to the location. We will head up the mountain promptly that 12:45 pm.

EXAMPLE OF LAST FROST DATES FOUND ON THE WEB

Nearest Climate Station	Altitude	Last Spring Frost	First Fall Frost	Growing Season
CHATTANOOGA LOVELL AP, TN	672'	Apr 6	Nov 1	208 days

ALL FROSTS ARE NOT CREATED EQUAL

Before we tackle frost versus freeze, let's start with what an "advisory" is. Advisories are issued for a time frame of at least 3 hours up to about a day of weather when there is a good likelihood of excessive cold temperatures. They break down as follows:

Frost Advisory - This is when the temperature is expected to fall to 36 degrees F. Down to about 32 degrees F. As air temperatures cool, the ground also begins giving off heat. This is called radiational cooling. Generally, the clearer the sky, the more heat is given off. For a frost to kill plants, the earth has to lose enough heat so that the freezing temperature occurs at ground level. If the ground is still warm, it is possible for the frost to hover a bit above ground level. That's what happens when the tops of your plants are killed by frost but the lower portions remain green. We tend to refer to this as a light frost. Frosts tend to be short-term events that occur overnight or in the early hours of the morning.

Freeze Warning - Issued when there is at least an 80% chance that the temperature will hit 32 degrees F. or lower. Freezes are usually caused by what is called advective cooling. Advection is the transference of some atmospheric condition, like heat, humidity, or cold, by the movement of an air mass. Think arctic blast; when one of these blows in, all the annual plants and tender perennials tend to call it a day. Freezes can be quick or they can linger. If they are cold enough, even a short freeze can do a lot of damage.

Hard Freeze - when the temperature falls below 28 degrees F. Even hardy perennials will be killed back to ground level by a long, hard freeze. This is when the ground crunches when you walk on it.

WHATS COMMING UP NEXT

[Plant Auction at Ruby's RUBY'S ON JUNE 2, MORE ABOUT THIS Next Newsletter](#)

SOME HOSTAS WILL TOLERATE SUN

Hostas are great plants for a low-maintenance garden, with many varieties to choose from. Though they are considered shade-tolerant plants, most will not thrive if grown in deep shade. Many hostas are more vigorous and will show best colors when given some exposure to sun, such as morning sun with afternoon shade. Full sun in the morning is less intense than full sun in early afternoon. Late afternoon sun will most likely be fine too. Still, hostas are not plants that I would normally recommend for a full-sun south exposure where it will be hot and likely dry. You should be prepared to do some trial and error with different varieties and be willing to provide extra water long-term to keep hostas going in your backyard. Watch out for symptoms of too much sun, such as browning at the outside edges of leaves and dull or faded colors.

. The best you can hope for will be a hosta that can tolerate your site, rather than performing well there. Hosta varieties with extensive white coloration or with thin leaves are likely to burn in full sun. In general, blue-leaf hostas require shade, in sun blue hostas will become stunted, more green than blue and burned at leaf edges.

Hostas with fragrant flowers, gold or yellow foliage or slight white variegation can tolerate more sun. Consider trying the following hosta varieties for your garden: Yellow-tinged foliage: "Sun Power," "Gold Standard" or "Gold Regal";
Fragrant flowers: "Guacamole," "Royal Standard" or "Fragrant Bouquet"

With white variegation: "Francee" or "Patriot"

If the hostas you try suffer in the sun, these tough plants are easy to move to a more suitable, better-shaded location.

by **Tim Johnson, Director of Horticulture for
Chicago Botanic Garden**