

Volume 21, No. 1 www.delvalhosta.org

Spring, 2012

Spring 2012 Hosta Meeting and Plant Sale Saturday, April 28, 1:00–4:00 p.m.

Tredyfferin Public Library 582 Upper Gulph Rd., Wayne, PA, 19087

David Culp, Speaker

"Hellebores are Hot!"

11:00 DVHS Board Meeting and Set-up (Brown bag lunch)

1:00 Gathering for Hosta Hospitality (Dessert/munchies)

1:30 Business Meeting and Feature Presentation

2:30 Plant Sale — over 160 hostas!

Please bring a treat to share. Beverages will be provided.



Directions to April 28 Meeting

The Tredyfferin Public Library is off the Main Line (Route 30), not far from Waterloo Gardens (Devon).

From Philadelphia: Take I-76 or the PA Turnpike West to King of Prussia/Valley Forge. Take Route 202 South to the Swedesford Rd exit just after King of Prussia mall. Take the first left onto Swedesford Rd, then the next left onto Old Eagle School Road. Follow Old Eagle School Road 2 miles to traffic light at Upper Gulph Road, and turn left. The Library is 0.2 mile on the right.

Or take I-476 South (or North) to Rt. 30 and use the directions "from the South" below.

From the West or Southwest: Take I-76 East to King of Prussia/Valley Forge, then follow directions above. Or, take Route 202 North (*e.g.* from Rt 1) to West Valley Road. Turn right at the traffic light onto West Valley Road. Follow West Valley about 2 miles up a long hill and down to a stop sign. Turn left onto Upper Gulph Road, and proceed through the traffic light about 0.3 mile. The Library is on the right.

From the South: Take I-95 North to I-476 North to Rt. 30 (Villanova/St. Davids) West. Take Rt 30 (E Lancaster Ave.) 2.5 miles to Old Eagle School Rd. Turn Right, and go 0.7 miles to Upper Gulph Rd. Turn Right, and the library will be on your right.



DVHS Officers

President

Rebecca Boylan 1200 Farmington Ave. Pottstown, PA 19464 (610) 327-8217 raboylan@comcast.net

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President's Message

This is my first "President's Message" as the new DVHS president, a job that I took with much trepidation. I didn't feel worthy of the title "president" as I'm not one of those people who can look at a hosta and instantly name it, nor do I know the origin of each cultivar. But after the second time Conny Parsons called me, I realized that what the president's job really entails is organization and schmoozing with the members, two things I'm already doing with the club.

The president is the team leader, and what a great team DVHS has! We've already had a social gathering in February—see the results of our Popularity Poll in this issue. We have great food at every meeting, and have some wonderful programs in store for the rest of the year. April brings our popular plant sale and guest speaker David Culp. Plant sale and auction chair Charlie Seaver has been growing some new cultivars and oldies-but-goodies for you to add to your garden; don't forget that you need to be a paid member to purchase these special plants! Bring along a friend as he or she can join that day (only \$10!) and purchase plants.

DVHS will be hosting **First Look 12** in June. Think of this as the equivalent of a Star Wars convention for hostas; never before seen cultivars, sports, tissue culture aliens, contests! Who wouldn't want to be there? While we're not doing a traditional leaf show this year, First Look will include some judging open to those of us who aren't pollen-dabbers and mutation (sport) hunters. Kathy Miller and Conny Parsons, our local liaisons, have added some fun contests and garden tours of nearby members' gardens to make it a fun weekend. It all culminates with a Sunday meeting at Eve and Per Thyrum's garden, the last chance to see this masterpiece before they move.

Our most exciting news concerns our display gardens. The Barnes Foundation has asked us to install a large hosta display garden at their original location as they reinvent themselves as a garden destination. Marilyn Romenesko and Conny Parsons are working with the Barnes on the vision; details will be forthcoming. We continue to work with both Tyler and Morris Arboreta as we get hostas to the forefront and we get DVHS known to the region.

You may also want to take the opportunity to get excited about hostas (and their companions) at the national convention this year in Nashville, held June 13–16. I figured that since I'm the president, I need to represent DVHS at the convention, especially since it's in Nashville! No argument from my husband, so we'll drive down, look for food, plants, and chocolate (all our trips include chocolate), and bring back some ideas. A number of our fellow DVHS members are going, and plant people are always fun.

Get ready for an exciting 2012 with DVHS. There's a lot planned, but we also need our members to help in the process. First Look on June 1st to 3rd will need volunteers, we always need help setting up and cleaning up at meetings, our wonderful newsletter edited by David Teager could always use stories or favorite hosta photos, Kathy Miller would love some speaker ideas or mini meeting suggestions, and our summer auctions need your plant donations. Please wear your nametags at meetings and introduce yourself to any new or "lost" looking members. Remember, the hosta is the "friendship" plant.

- Rebecca Boylan

Wearing her Membership hat, Rebecca sends along the following note which came along with a membership renewal check, even though the senders had moved to Virginia a number of years ago:

"We enjoy the newsletter and we thank you and the staff for your hard work. We miss the DVHS and the great people and gardens there. Thanks again. Sincerely, Bruce and Lois Banyai."

April 28, 2012 Hosta Meeting and Plant Sale Guest Speaker David Culp

The Delaware Valley Hosta Society kicks off another active year with our Spring Meeting and Plant Sale. Our speaker is David Culp. David's personal and professional background lists many achievements, but first and foremost on his resume: "hands on gardener" — he is one of us! His personal garden, Brandywine Cottage, has been featured on HGTV, as well as in many publications, including *Martha Stewart Living*, *Fine Gardening* and *Country Gardens*. He is a national lecturer, contributing editor of *Horticulture* magazine, past chair of the Hardy Plant Society, and an instructor at Longwood Gardens. As Vice President of Sunny Border Nurseries, Kensington, CT, he is involved in plant research and development. His new book, *The Layered Garden* (Timber Press), will be available in October, 2012.



Hellebores are Hot!

Hellebores have increased in popularity over the past few years for many good reasons, as these are truly gorgeous plants and one of the first to bloom in the garden. They often bloom with snow still on the ground.

David Culp, hybridizer of the BrandywineTM Hellebore, will provide an overview of this "hot" genus including methods of propagation and cultivation; how to make selections; and international breeding programs. Hellebore's coveted characteristics such as pest resistance, drought tolerance and year-round interest will be highlighted along with companion planting display, ideas perfect for the winter garden.

A glorious Brandywine™ hellebore found at Brandywine Cottage. D. Teager photo

Following the presentations, it's time to shop! Charlie Seaver, with some input from the Board, selected and purchased the hostas last fall. We have 40% more cultivars than last year! Charlie is tending them so that they should be well flushed out by the day of the sale. See the sale insert for detailed descriptions. There may be some extra-special plants (including some BrandywineTM hellebores) available as well.

Here are the rules for the day:

- Please bring a small plastic lined box, basket or bag to put your purchases in.
- · Pick a number from the hosta bucket at the membership table (entrance door).
- Plant sales will run on a lottery rotation (based on your lucky number), giving everyone a chance to pick two plants with each rotation. After a few rotations, remaining hostas left will be up for grabs.
- Check out will be at the membership table at the end of the meeting. Bring your hostas to the table. Each hosta will have a color tag to indicate a price of \$10, \$15 or \$20. Cash or check only!

\$10 hostas: City Lights, Gothic Charm, Grecian Vase, Lakeside Baby Face, Moonstruck, Queen Josephine, Regal Splendor, Robert Frost, Stained Glass, Summer Breeze and Waving Winds.

\$15 hostas: Bogie and Bacall, El Dorado, Malabar, Lakeside Zesty Zeno, and Sea Angel Wings.

\$20 hostas: Champagne Toast, Dream Queen, Great Escape, Spinach Souffle, and The Queen.

Step right up!

The following is a list of committees/chairs, who are always looking for a few volunteers. EASY and FUN!

Publications: David Teager, 610-485-4149 Membership: Rebecca Boylan 610-327-8217 Plant Sales and Auctions: Charlie Seaver Display Gardens: Marilyn Romenesco, Chair, 302-765-3581

Hospitality: Chris Dambro, Chair, 610-388-7743 Raffle: Mary Tilger, Chair, 610-454-7372

Hosta-tality for April 28th

Chris Dambro requests:

Please bring some treats for our meeting. Beverages will be provided. Come early if you can help set up.

DVHS Spring Plant Sale

After we confirm your dues are paid, you get a numbered ticket. Groups of tickets will be called; select two plants per purchasing round. See more details on page 3.

Plant descriptions by David Teager. Pictures from Q&Z Nursery, except where noted. More pictures are available at the Hosta Library, www.hostalibrary.org.

\$15 Plants...Hard to find and rich in character!



Bogie and Bacall (Beilstein/Zilis 2009)

A hosta with a classic look, in homage to a classic Hollywood couple. The plant is medium sized, with leaves 7" x 4" showing a classy creamy margin (yellow early in season) on pointed green leaves. Blooms late in the season, August into September.

El Dorado (M. Seaver 2009)

Not a new plant, just one of Mildred's favorite golds, newly registered and being made available through tissue culture. This is a medium-large *sieboldiana*-type gold, with good substance. Slowgrowing to nearly 4 feet across.





Lakeside Zesty Zeno (Chastain 2004)

The red legs on this one caught my eye when touring a convention garden last year. The scapes, and even the seed pods, show that deep wine color as well. In the picture I took, thin, crisp white margins sometimes send nice jets into the center of the leaf (7" x 4"). A small-medium plant.

Malabar (Zilis 2009)

The name evokes the spice coast of India, and I'll agree that the variegation on this leaf gives it a tropical look. This is a 'Breeder's Choice' seedling with a ragged creamy-yellow margin mingling with the medium green center. Expect a slow-growing mound to about 3 feet across.





Sea Angel Wings (M. Seaver NR)

The Queen of Hostas brought us this gorgeous gold, which has not yet been registered. The long (8" x 5") tapered leaves develop a nice rippled edge as the plant matures. This is the plant from which sported 'Emerald Ruff Cut' (Anderson 2003). It will form a medium-sized mound.

\$20 Collector Plants...New to the market and available only through mail order!

Champagne Toast (Zilis NR)

Out of the same variegated seedling that produced 'American Gothic' (white-margined leaves) and 'Interstate 71' (blue foliage) comes this center-variegated beauty. Mark Zilis reports that the leaves (9" x 6") emerge with a bluish margin and yellow centers, but the center lightens and the edges turn green as the season progress.





Dream Queen (van den Top NR)

Halfway in between two outstanding hostas—the all-blue 'Elegans' and the finicky gold-centered 'Great Expectations'—lies another of our queenly hostas. It could get big. Hugo Phillips photo.

Great Escape (van den Top 2006, PP 19003)

Another discovery from one of our friends in northern Europe (Netherlands). This is Hugo's version of a 'Halcyon' sport that shows a wide white edge from first emergence. The leaves are 6" x 4", maybe larger in time, and the plant should form a medium mound.





Spinach Souffle (Solberg 2006)

Here's a sport of 'Garden Treasure' which is a treasure unto itself, whether or not you like spinach. The margins are much wider than those of its parent, and the leaf texture could indicate it's a tetraploid mutation. The leaves are rounded at 8" x 8". Expect a beefy medium-sized plant.

The Queen (Schwarz 2008)

Of all the "queen" hostas, is this *The* one? She has some wild colors, like a streaked plant that stabilized—or maybe not—just last week to a semi-streaky, cream-centered looker. Expect this one to grow steadily to about 30" across, with leaves 8" x 6". Blooms? I'm sure it has them, but look at that center!



\$10 plants: A mix of new and old



City Lights (Aden 1978)

A classic but little-seen hosta that is being revived through tissue culture. Big and gold, coming from Paul Aden's cross of his own 'White Vision' and 'Golden Prayers'. Will be bigger than its registered size, with leaves up to 12" x 9" and a plant growing to 4 feet across.

Gothic Charm (Beilstein/Zilis 2009)

New and intriguing. This is the all-green sport of the margined 'George M. Dallas' with a charm, gothic or not, all its own. Dark green leaves to 9" x 6". We'll call it a medium-large plant.





Grecian Vase (Schwartz NR)

Fast-growing semi-upright chartreuse hosta, perhaps somewhere between a 'Gold Regal' and 'Birchwood Parky's Gold'. (Note this is not the 'Grecian Vase' pictured at the Hosta Library.) The leaf grows to about 10" x 8", and the plant to 4 feet across.

Lakeside Baby Face (Chastain 1997)

Here's one on the borderline of being a mini. Sure to be one of the cutest little baby (hosta) faces in your garden. The leaves, probably under 3" x 2", are shiny dark green with a creamy edge, making a tidy clump a foot or so across.





Moonstruck (Zumbar 2009)

"Snap outta it!" O.K., so that's one of my favorite lines from one of my favorite movies. And this gorgeous hosta is the white-centered sport of one of my favorite hostas, 'Dress Blues' (Zumbar 1995). Expect narrow leaves (6–7" x 3") and a dense, mounded plant.

Queen Josephine (Kuk's Forest Nursery 1991)

The next in line of our royal hostas. This classic is known for its broad (6" x 4") shiny leaves and great constitution. Medium size plant with attractive flowers as well.





Regal Splendor (Walters Gardens 1987)

Another royal classic, this is a stunning sport of 'Krossa Regal', with its parent's powdery bluegrey leaf edged in a satiny cream. Just as big, too, with leaves over 10" long and a plant that can easily exceed 5 feet across. Hosta of the Year (HOTY) in 2003.

ert Frost (W. & E. Lachman 1988)

A hosta worthy of a poet's laurels. A cross between a streaked 'Fortunei' strain and 'Frances Williams' yielded this robust hosta which emerges with yellow edges that transform to a crisp white, all on broad (9" x 8") leaves. Slowly but steadily the plant will grow to 3 or 4 feet across.





Stained Glass (Hansen 1999)

Perhaps the best of the 'Fragrant Bouquet' line of sports, with a much brighter center than its popular parent, 'Guacamole'. And don't forget the fragrance! As with most fragrant hostas, it can also take more sun than many. Shiny leaves, 11" x 7", appear throughout the season. 2006 HOTY.

Summer Breeze (Zilis 1999)

Working backwards from 'Summer Lovin' (which DVHS sold a few years back), we have this sport of 'Summer Music'. All are known for their rounded leaves (8" x 6"). 'Summer Breeze' has a yellowgreen center with a yellow edge for subtle contrast—an unusual coloration. The registered plant size is 50" across, so think of this as medium-large.





Waving Winds (W. & E. Lachman 1991)

This vigorous hosta makes a low, fountain-shaped mound. The parentage is a self-cross of the classic streaked 'Galaxy'. Some of that streaking shows in these leaves, as you'll find interesting colors between the medium green centers and strong yellow margins. Leaves are 8" x 4" on a medium plant.



6 Rejuvenating a monster H. 'Sagae'

Photo Essay by David Teager (with Stephen Fugate)

It was time. As the first picture shows—taken just as the leaves unfurled in 2011 (April 22)—our beloved H. 'Sagae' was showing its age. It had developed the tell-tale "fairy ring" effect of having little or no new growth in the center of the crown, with an ever-expanding loose circle of eyes around it. As the season progressed, the clump looked a bit misshapen, oval when seen from above and sort of sloping when seen in side view. This winter, with no snow but ever-present moisture, made it look even worse: water actually pooled in the central depression, which seemed like a very good way to encourage some kind of rot.



We can't blame our monster for needing some attention. It was already a very large plant in 1998 when we moved it from its Wilmington, Delaware, city garden out to the country. This "Fluctuans Variegated" was the very first mail-order hosta we ever purchased, in early 1993, as we began to garden our city plot. (Not coincidentally, that was the year we discovered *The Hosta Book* by Paul Aden, and, by doing a little sleuthing, happened upon Ali and Warren Pollack's garden.) Our prized 'Sagae' had never, since we planted those first two eyes, been divided. Moved, yes, but never divided, and we intended to keep it that way.

But the time came for a needed rejuvenation. Trying to do this at any time when the leaves were up was a no-go: This 'Sagae' is about 7 feet across when leafed out, and has garden neighbors that also would be a challenge to work around. Fortunately, we got a break this year when we went nearly two weeks without rain, letting the ground dry as much as it ever gets in this bed. We could lift the hosta without lifting muck.

The process is simple to describe, and challenging to execute: cut around the hosta to free the crown, gently (if possible) remove dirt from the roots to make lifting and dividing easier, rearrange the eyes (dividing as needed) to reform the crown to the desired size and shape, and replant with fresh compost. All while avoiding all the other emerging hostas nearby!

As can be seen in the first in-process photo, there was nothing in the center of the old guy at all (sometimes a hosta will have a woody mass in the center of the

fairy ring). The picture shows the ring cut around the plant along with the tools of the job: a digging fork (actually under the hosta in the picture), a long "post-hole" shovel used to pry up big masses, and a handheld cultivating claw.





Next we show the claw in use to free up the roots. This also let us discover a few tree roots that had made their way into the garden.

After that it was time to assess the rearrangement of eyes. In this case we ended up breaking the circle at a

point that was already weak, and then prying the ring open to find a natural break point on the other side. This piece could then nestle against the other part of the crown.

This got us close to our goal, although our result was a bit misshapen. At this point we lifted all sides of the crown and filled under it with a mix of soil and compost.



We decided to take off a lump off the bottom edge of the ring, and use some of eyes to fill in the center. We then top-dressed with more compost mix, and watered it in well. The result is shown below. Technically we lost a few smaller eyes through unavoidable damage, and a few eyes were left behind in getting it all fit back together. So has 'Sagae' been "divided?" We won't tell.



While it's too early to know if we had a resounding success, our 'Sagae' will still be front and center when we open our garden for First Look. We hope you'll all come and see for yourselves.

2012 DVHS Hosta Popularity Poll

Kathy Miller

At our February meeting, twenty-seven members of DVHS met for soup and "hosta talk" at the Easttown Library. At least eleven different soups along with some fabulous desserts appeared, including a bread pudding made from cake instead of bread. Yummm!! Each soup was unique; I guess we were supposed to vote for our favorite soup, but the campaigning for favorite hosta over-shadowed the soup contest and we never got around to it. Apologies and thanks to all who brought soup—delicious!

Here are the results of the 2011 DVHS Hosta Popularity Poll. The top ten (plus) vote-getters:

- 1. 'Sagae'
- 2. 'June'
- 3. 'Sun Power'
- 4. 'Liberty'
- 5. 'Touch of Class'
- 6. 'Halcyon'
- 7. 'First Frost'
- 8. 'Blue Mouse Ears', 'Guacamole', 'Kabitan', 'Tokudama Flavocircinalis' (4-way tie)

Twelve through 25 included in order: 'Great Expectations', 'On Stage', 'Guardian Angel', 'Krossa Regal', 'Love Pat', 'Fantabulous', 'Chinese Sunrise', 'Niagara Falls', *Hosta plantaginea*, 'Gold Standard', 'El Niño', 'Mighty Mouse', 'Paradigm', and 'Frances Williams'. It was good to see some old favorites as well as newer introductions. 'Sum and Substance' was noticeably absent, beaten by such new comers as 'Mighty Mouse' and 'Fantabulous'. The beautiful August Lily, *Hosta plantaginea*, appeared on many lists; as did 'Krossa Regal' and 'Kabitan', continuing favorites going back to the 1975 AHS Hosta Popularity Poll.

The climate and growing conditions of the Delaware Valley are unique. I think it would be a good idea to poll our members periodically, so that local nurseries would know which cultivars grow well here. Old favorites as well as new varieties are both welcome.

First Look 2012: Keep Your Eyes Peeled! 7

David Teager

The Delaware Valley Hosta Society is excited to be hosting First Look 2012, the AHS Region One extravaganza held each year to give everyone a "First Look" at the newest and hottest hostas coming from both novice and experienced hybridizers and sport spotters.

A registration form is included in this *Newsletter* and is available at www.delvalhosta.org and at the First Look website, hosted by www.hostalibrary.org. The registration fee is modest when you consider all it brings: a rare gift plant, access to four DVHS gardens on Friday or Sunday (schedule of tours to be announced), all the Saturday activities including lunch, vendor sales, judges' clinics and other discussions, and the dinner banquet featuring the always-entertaining Ran Lydell as keynote speaker.

There are also Saturday-only registrations available, and also tickets for DVHS members only to attend the Saturday night banquet dinner. Note that lodging at the meeting hotel is not included and may be booked separately at a discounted rate. See the registration form for details.

Of course the DVHS is adding its own touch to the First Look competitions with a nod to a full-blown Hosta Show. Although it won't be a judged show according to AHS requirements, we will require you to have FUN with creating containers and artistic arrangements featuring hostas. Some of our classes will be familiar to those who have entered shows before, but we're also giving a First Look to some new classes as well, such as floor displays and multi-pot arrangements. We'll provide a schedule describing the classifications in our next Newsletter (and post it to the website as well). Anyone who enters will get a gift, and we'll figure out some way to choose and reward the best entries in each class. We're hoping to do some of this in conjunction with Terrain at Styer's nursery, which is just across the road from the meeting hotel in Concordville, PA.

One more thing: HELPERS! Whether or not you're planning to attend the meeting, we'll need volunteers to set up, line up (as in guide our guests), and clean up. So, step right up at our next meeting, and sign up!

Cut off and mail in, or bring to the meeting.

Delaware Valley Hosta Society Membership and Renewal Form

Dues (household membership) are \$10 per year.

Mail to: Rebecca Boylan, DVHS Membership

1200 Farmington Ave. Pottstown, PA 19464

Please use this form also to update your records for address **and e-mail**, or to offer your garden for a potential meeting or tour. Thanks!

U	0
Name	
Phone _	
E-mail	
,	u consider opening your garden for a members
	the nursery trade?

Calendar of Events 2012 www.delvalhosta.org

Saturday, February 25: DVHS Winter Meeting, Westtown Public Library, Berwyn, PA Hosta Soup and Popularity Poll

Saturday, April 28: DVHS Spring Meeting, Tredyfferin Public Library, Wayne, PA Hosta plant sale and great hospitality Presentation by David Culp: Hellebores are Hot!

June 1–3: FIRST LOOK 12 in Concordville, PA. DVHS hosts AHS Region 1's premier hosta show!

Sunday, June 3: DVHS Tour of Eve and Per Thyrum's "Frog Hollow," North Wilmington, DE. Potluck and plant auction. Other gardens may be open for First Look attendees through the weekend.

June 13–16: AHS National Convention in Nashville, Tennessee. www.hosta.org or www.hosta2012.org. Register by April 14 to avoid late fee!

Saturday, July 14: DVHS Tour of Inta and Skip Krombolz's garden in West Chester, PA, with plant auction

Saturday, October 13: DVHS Fall MeetingWister Horticulture Center at Swarthmore College,
Swarthmore, PA. Presentation by Charlie Seaver:
A Tribute to Mildred Seaver.

Tour of new facility, hosta seed exchange, and arboretum walk.

IT'S DUES TIME

Please check your mailing label. If you see a number less than 12, you owe DVHS dues for 2012. Current members' renewal fees are due by the April meeting; any back dues also need to be paid in order to remain current. You must be a current member to purchase hostas at the special sales, and to receive the Newsletter by mail. The dues pay for the publication of this newsletter and maintenance of the website, as well as for other society activities. If you want to continue hearing from us, send in your 2012 membership fee today!

Dues (family membership) are \$10 per year.

Mail to: Rebecca Boylan, DVHS Membership

1200 Farmington Ave. Pottstown, PA 19464

Please provide your name and any address change. We would also appreciate an e-mail address so we can notify you of last-minute program changes.

Use the form on Page 7.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED