

# Spring 2014

## Hosta Meeting and Plant Sale

### Saturday, April 26, 1:00–4:00 p.m.

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

**Clarence Falstad III, Speaker**  
*"Hosta Flowers"*

- 11:00 Board Meeting (bring your lunch)**
- 1:00 Gathering for Hosta Hospitality (Dessert/munchies)**
- 1:30 Business Meeting and Feature Presentation**
- 2:30 Plant Sale — over 100 hostas!**
- 3:30 Chat and Clean-up**

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#### Directions to April 26 Meeting

The Tredyffrin Public Library is off the Main Line (Route 30), not far from the Devon Horse Show grounds.

**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

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## President's Message

We all can agree that the winter of 2013–14 has been the worst one in recent history. Walking around my gardens where there isn't snow, I find hosta crowns popped out of the ground, but the soil is frozen and I can't push them back in! Tree branches litter the ground or hang on, waiting to be pruned; a few trees are a total loss (another opportunity for a new acquisition!). As the snow melts, I quickly prune away the flattened hellebore leaves and admire the flower buds that are about two weeks later than last year. The sickle knife that the club sold makes quick work of all these leaves without sacrificing the flowers.

Yeah, it all sounds quite depressing, but the uplifting side is that on a warm day, the bees come out and fill the yard, find something blooming, and remind us that we will see spring again. Then DVHS will be really busy: Barnes, Tyler, Morris, and more! Conny and Marilyn have a busy spring planned with garden planting and designing in all of our display gardens. Then there's the hosta show that Kathy has scheduled for us in June. All the moisture your plants received this winter should produce some beautiful leaves, so work on the slug control now and get ready to enter them in the leaf show!

Check out the colorful centerfold in this issue. Charlie has been pampering some great hostas all winter long, and they can be yours for only \$10!!! This is another great reason to be a member of DVHS. Don't forget about the garden tours! June at the Teagate garden, and July at Tallwood. Plus there's the Hosta Convention in Iowa in June, and I'm sure Kathy will find more activities up her sleeve to keep us busy.

So, start your stretches now, sharpen your tools, and order the mulch, because this is going to be another busy season in the hosta garden!

— Rebecca Boylan

## The Winter Meeting: Hosta 'Thai Brass' Soup Recipe

David Teager

Six hosta-inspired soups sated our appetites at our "snow day" winter meeting. After the votes were in, I was humbled to claim the prize for this carrot-coconut soup, based on a recipe I found at epicurious.com. Below is the modified recipe. Very easy! Makes at least 4 main-dish servings. Freezes well, else eat within 3 days. Enjoy! 🍵

4 T (1/2 stick) butter or margarine  
Curry powder, about 1 T (I used Malasian curry) plus turmeric if desired  
1 onion, coarsely chopped  
1 lb carrots, cleaned and coarsely chopped  
1 thumb-sized piece of fresh ginger, peeled and grated or chopped  
2 cups stock (chicken or vegetable)  
1 can coconut milk  
2 T Thai chili sauce (this is more sweet than hot)  
Hotter chili sauce (like sriracha) to taste, if desired  
Peanut butter (optional; I added a tablespoon or two).

Melt the butter in a large sauce pan and briefly toast the spices. Add the onion, carrots, and ginger, and saute about 15 minutes. Add the other ingredients and some grinds of black pepper, and bring to a low simmer. Cook uncovered about 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Set the pot in the sink (easier to clean spatters) and let cool slightly, then purée with a stick blender until smooth. If you don't have a stick blender, use a drink blender to process in batches. (Work safely with hot soup!)

Reheat to serve, thinning with water or additional stock and adding salt and pepper (black or red) as desired.

Garnish (optional): Cilantro (chopped) and more Thai chili sauce.

# April 26, 2014

## Hosta Meeting and Plant Sale

### Guest Speaker Clarence Falstad III



Clarence Falstad III has been associated with Walters Gardens since he graduated 34 years ago with a degree in ornamental horticulture. His roles have varied over time. He has managed the tissue culture lab, started the Breeding Department, and worked with Hans Hansen in New Plant Development. Currently, he's in charge of licensing, patents, and trademarks for new plants. As most of you already know, Walters Gardens, located in Zeeland Michigan, is a leader in wholesale perennials of many kinds. While shopping for hostas we see their plants in nurseries and garden shops all over the country. Hostas from Walters are known for looking distinctive and for being vigorous growers.

Over the years Clarence has been interested in hosta flowers, an often-overlooked aspect of hosta breeding. A

few, but not many, hostas are marketed for their flowers. Are there new, better-flowering varieties on the way?

When first asked to submit a bio for our newsletter his first response was "I was born. I got involved with hostas and love everything about hostas." I think we can all relate to that. He added that he started getting into horticulture as a young boy, breaking off his mother's African violet leaves (playing ball where he wasn't allowed, as it were) and studying how those leaves could make new plants. At age eight he learned the "really neat" process of growing huge sunflowers and saving his own seeds for another generation. This really neat process informs his work today, as he hybridizes hostas and hardy hibiscus (the Summerific® series) for Walters Gardens. He has not, he says, written a book.



*H. plantaginea* 'Venus', with fragrant double blooms, was Clarence's "Hosta of Merit" choice when he received the Alex J. Summers Award at the AHS convention in 2006.

## Plant Sale

Following the presentation, it's time to shop! Charlie Seaver, with some input from the Board, selected and purchased the hostas last fall. This year's hostas came from Walters Gardens. Charlie is tending them so that they should be well flushed out by the day of the sale. See the centerfold for detailed descriptions.

Here are the rules for the day (subject to revision):

- 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. All hostas are \$10. Cash or check only!

## SOME MORE SOUP, PLEASE

A hardy little band of soup and dessert lovers met at Easttown Library on March 22 for re-scheduled Hosta Soup and Hosta Chat. The soups were all delicious, but the favorite was Hosta 'Thai Brass', a spicy carrot puree with Thai overtones (recipe on page 2).

Marilyn Romensko and Conny Parsons filled us in on our beautiful new display garden at the Barnes Arboretum. The arboretum is due to open this summer, so it won't be long before we will have the opportunity to enjoy the hostas as well as all the wonderful plants in the Barnes collection. Madelon Gilligan, our Souprise

guest, is a hosta grower in Winchester, New Zealand. Electronically, she wished us well with slides, hosta seeds and a beautiful New Zealand hand towel.

### Hosta-tality for April 26th

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.

Pictures and descriptions from Walters Gardens, Inc. ([www.perennialresource.com](http://www.perennialresource.com)), adapted by David Teager. More pictures are available at the Hosta Library, [www.hostalibrary.org](http://www.hostalibrary.org).



Alakazaam (Ron Livingston/Walters Gardens 2008) PP22342

This flashy miniature (but is it a “mini”?) hosta adds spark to combination containers or the edge of the shade garden. Long, narrow, tapered leaves are green with bright yellow, ruffled margins in spring. In summer, the margins brighten to creamy white. The leaves are held on stiff, horizontal petioles with little arching, forming a horizontal mound in the landscape. Lavender flowers are produced in late summer. Ron got this by crossing one of his streaked breeders with his famed (and still rare) ‘Atom Smasher’. Clearly he said the magic word!

Blueberry Muffin (Bill Meyer NR)

This tasty blue hosta is a strong grower and reliable performer in the landscape. It forms a medium sized mound of large, blue, rounded leaves that are rugose and puckered in unusual patterns. Late in the season, the foliage transitions to green. Attractive light mauve speckles appear on the petioles. Bill baked this treat by crossing June-blooming H. ‘Frances Williams’ with the late-blooming (duh) ‘Fall Bouquet’. DVHS offered this when it was first available, about 5 years ago. Here’s to getting a second chance if you missed it then!



Empress Wu (B. and V. Skaggs 2008) PP20774

This hosta already has a reputation as the biggest hosta ever. Huge dark green, deeply veined leaves of good substance can measure more than 1 1/2 feet wide and long. Large leaves are formed as a young plant, though entire clump takes about 5 years growing in the ground to achieve mature size. Mature being the size of a Mini Cooper. When you cross ‘Big John’ with ‘Big John’ (as Brian and Virginia did), you get “whoo hoo!” P. Allen Smith has this in his “Platinum Collection.” You really should see more pics at the Hosta Library.

## CHANGE IN LOCATION OF HOSTA SHOW

It is with regret that we announce we will not have the show at the Exton Square Mall. The mall had been very gracious in working with us to get the show organized, but the mounting costs had gradually exceeded our budget. In order to maintain funds for meetings, lectures, gardens walks and other activities, we will move the show to our old friend, the Tredyffrin Library. We hope all of you will continue your support. At the library we will have more time for cut-leaf preparation, a meeting room for clerks and judges, and a more relaxed schedule for cleanup and dismantling. The complete show schedule will be distributed at our spring meeting.

### A “Dewey” Hosta Morning

#### Saturday June 21

Set-up: 9:30 to 10:00 a.m.

Entries: 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Judging: 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 pm.

Open for Public Viewing: 2:00 p.m. to 5 p.m.

#### Sunday June 22

Open for Public Viewing: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Dismantling and cleanup: 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.



### Fragrant Queen (van den Top/Eechaute 2008) PP19508

Walters Gardens has been quite impressed with this new introduction in the 'Fragrant Bouquet' line (a sport at least four times over, and then converted to tetraploidy). Its elongated heart-shaped leaves display wider, creamy to pure white margins, a darker green center, and are of better substance. In comparison to 'Sweet Innocence', it has a darker green center and a faster growth rate. It holds up well all season long and exhibits some sun tolerance. Large, fragrant, flashy near-white to light lavender flowers are produced above the foliage in late summer.

### Guardian Angel (Thompson 1995)

Rick Thompson found this wonderful color-changing sport of the beloved 'Blue Angel' sieboldiana-type hosta. The centers start out near white, but in most garden situations will fill in with a blue-green mist as summer wears on. Even then it won't look like 'Blue Angel', as the variegation causes a delightful ruffle in the leaves. But it should still bear the heavy bloom scapes that make its parent so notable. Large but not as big as its parent.



### June Spirit (Walters Gardens 2012) PPAF

So new it's not even in the Hosta Library. You know 'June', one of the most popular hostas of all time, but that gorgeous center it shows in its youth (at the garden center) may not hold as the plant matures. 'June' led, among other hostas, to 'June Fever', with a consistently bright center and a thin green edge. Now Walters Gardens this latest sport, with the same bright colors as 'June Fever' but a wider green border more like 'June'. Got it? Get it!

### Lakeside Paisley Print (Chastain 2006)

One of the very best hostas to come from Mary Chastain! This stunning medium-sized hosta produces heart-shaped leaves with very wide, wavy, apple-green margins. The narrow, creamy white markings in the center of the leaves shoot out from the cream colored petioles in a feathery pattern. Its thick substantiated leaves make the perfect background for the cream scapes that carry the light lavender flowers in midsummer. Definitely a "20-foot rule" hosta.



### Mighty Mouse (Walters Gardens 2006)

This small but mighty hosta is a variegated sport of the award winning 'Blue Mouse Ears'. In spring, the rounded leaves of heavy substance are blue-green with a bright creamy yellow margin. By summer, the leaves transition to grey-green with a creamy white margin. Incredible substance. Lavender flowers on perfectly proportioned scapes appear in early summer. Plant this mini in a well-drained trough, and it will save the day!

### Rare Breed (Livingston NR)

Rare tri-color leaves make this large hosta incredibly unique and showy. The colors change a bit with the seasons, starting off with a creamy white center and green margins. Where the center and margin meet, a beautiful shade of army green appears and the center brightens to crisp white. The leaves become slightly cupped when they are mature. Ron Livingston originally called this "Tall Paul" (a Mousequeeters reference). So new it's not in the Hosta Library, and Ron hasn't divulged his breeding secrets on this. At right is a different picture from the "teaser" I used in the Winter Bulletin.



## What's with the PP/PPAF thing? (Plant Patents)

Note that several of the plants we're offering this year, whether registered with the AHS or not, have a notation that they are either patented (PP number) or that a plant patent application is filed (PPAF). What does that mean to you? Simply put, it means you are not allowed to sell that plant, or any division thereof, without paying the patent-holder a licensing fee. This is generally controlled by controlling the fancy plant tags that wholesalers provide to retailers. May you divide the plant and donate it to DVHS for auctions? Our answer: we think so.



## 6 Ugh. A Slug

David Teager and Conny Parsons

Every year around this time (tax time), a bell goes off in my head that April 15th is “Hosta IRS Day,” which stems from an installment of Warren Pollock’s “Views and Overviews” we published in 2007 (Volume 17, Number 1, available in the newsletter archives at [www.delvalhosta.org](http://www.delvalhosta.org)). In case you’re new or have forgotten, Warren said that IRS = Initial Reminder for Slugs.

While this winter was remarkably cold (so much for the recently updated USDA hardiness zone maps), it was also—and continues to be—remarkably wet. And that means, unfortunately, we’re likely to see a good crop of slugs this year.

If you’re digging through the DVHS newsletter archives (either your own or on-line), I suggest you also look at Volume 16, No. 4 to find a discussion of slug poisons (euphemistically known as “baits”) in the “Hostas on the Internets” column, as well as Bill Meyer’s “Warning” article from Volume 19, No. 1). Suffice to say that each gardener will need to determine, based on good research, what he or she will be comfortable using to control the slug population in the hosta garden; now is the time to consider what it is you will do.

This year, there may be an additional alarm bell with regard to these pests. One of us (Conny) sends the accompanying photo of a monster slug, with the note that “We have been finding more of this type of slug in the last few years.” And what is this type? Leopard Slug! While *Limax maximus* has been in our area since its first record of introduction almost 150 years ago, it appears to be making inroads into our gardens.

As you see below, leopard slugs can grow to 6 inches or more. For a brief period they were an internet sensation, by virtue of a rather spectacular BBC video (narrated by none other than Sir David Attenborough) depicting their bizarre mating ritual, whereby the two slugs (each hermaphrodites) cling and convulse while suspended by (ugh) a thick rope of slug slime.



*Limax maximus* with egg mass. Wikimedia Commons

According to Wikipedia, *Limax maximus* is nocturnal, feeding at night. It is not very active or prolific. When alarmed, or at rest, this slug merely draws its head within the shield, but does not otherwise contract its body.

The homing faculty is strongly developed in this species, which after its nocturnal rambling or foraging expeditions, usually returns to the particular crevice or chink in which it has established itself.

The other common slug in our area (also believed to be a European import from further back) is the grey garden slug, *Deroceras reticulatum*, shown below. These rarely reach 3 inches in length. While *D. reticulatum* individuals live only one season, over-wintering as eggs, *L. maximum* live for several years, not reaching sexual maturity until their second or third year.

If you don’t have leopard slugs in your garden already, do what you can to avoid importing them. Carefully check your nursery stock, being sure to pick off any hitch-hikers you might have brought home. 🐌



*Limax maximus*, the giant slug or leopard slug, shown approximately life-size. C. Parsons photo.



## Czech it Out!

Harshbarger Hosta Society says “*Vitáme vás*” (We welcome you) for the 2014 AHS National Convention. They have been planning and working hard to make your visit to Iowa a positive experience, and the convention a memorial one. Why the Czech welcome? At the turn of the twentieth century, over 25% of Cedar Rapids’s inhabitants were of Czech descent.

The convention will feature optional bus tours on Wednesday and Thursday to showcase their local culture and cuisine, including visits to the Amana Colonies and to the National Czech and Slovak Museum and Library, which celebrate the culture and heritage of thousands of Czech and Slovak immigrants to Linn and Johnson counties.

Of course, the real reason for attending the convention is for the hostas and gardens. The rich black soil of the heartland provides an excellent environment for beautiful gardens accented with the creative flavor of Middle America. They have 10 exciting gardens for you to visit on Friday and Saturday, with additional optional gardens on Sunday as you return home.

Visit <http://harshbargerhostasociety.weebly.com/> for more information. 🍷

## 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:** Dan 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

## From the Editor: Hostas on the Internets, etc.

David S. Teager

If you attended “snow date” winter meeting, I presented a sneak peak of the new DVHS website I’ve been working on. At last! My hope is to have it ready to launch within the next month (after I complete this *Newsletter*, and taxes...). I’m using an on-line website builder that should make it easier for me (and maybe some helpers) to keep the website updated, with space for more pictures from more DVHS member gardens.

If you can’t wait for something fun to do on the web, waiting for that new DVHS site, the buzz right now is that Don Rawson, of Comstock Park, Michigan, has released an update to his Hosta Lists. Don has combed the hosta literature, and the hosta library, and come up with a list of lists covering just about everything you can think of for hostas, including almost from A (albescens hostas) to not quite Z (white-petioled hostas). There are 88 individual lists in all, along with his gathering of hosta theme gardens (based on the names of hostas, such as angels, food, music, etc.). Visit [http://www.pwk.resteddoginn.ca/lists/hosta\\_list.php](http://www.pwk.resteddoginn.ca/lists/hosta_list.php), and be sure to check his listing of deer-resistant hostas.

Finally, a note of personal privilege, thanking Stephen Fugate for all he does behind the scenes helping with the newsletters. He is an outstanding proof-reader, and co-worker in folding, sealing, and labeling the Newsletters for mailing. And he puts up with me! 🍷

## JOIN THE AHS!

Visit [www.hosta.org](http://www.hosta.org) where you can join on-line.

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: Dan 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!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Would you consider opening your garden for a members’ tour? \_\_\_\_\_

Are you in the nursery trade? \_\_\_\_\_



# Calendar of Events 2014

## www.delvalhosta.org

**Saturday, February 15: DVHS Winter Meeting,**  
Tredyffrin Public Library, Wayne, PA  
Hosta Soup and Hosta Chat; Presentation on DVHS  
Hosta Display Gardens by Marilyn and Conny

**Saturday, April 26: DVHS Spring Meeting,**  
Tredyffrin Public Library, Wayne, PA  
Hosta plant sale and great hospitality  
Presentation by Clarence Falstad III: "Hosta Flowers"

**Saturday, June 7: DVHS Tour** of Teagate (David  
Teager and Stephen Fugate garden), Garnet Valley,  
PA. Potluck and plant auction.

**June 11–14: AHS National Convention**  
in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Visit [www.hosta.org](http://www.hosta.org)

**Saturday, June 21: DVHS Hosta Show**  
Tredyffrin Public Library. Entries/judging on Saturday,  
with public display on Saturday and Sunday.

**Saturday, July 12: DVHS Tour** of Tallwood (Betty  
and Michael Drummond garden) in Malvern, PA,  
with BIG LEAF contest and plant auction

**July 11–13: First Look 2014**  
in Marlborough, MA. Visit [www.hostalibrary.org](http://www.hostalibrary.org)

**Saturday, October 18: DVHS Fall Meeting**  
Presentation by Mary Ann Metz, former VP of  
Member Services of the AHS.

**Saturday, October 26: Tri-State Hosta Meeting**  
Frelinghuysen, NJ, with Don Dean, AHS President

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### IT'S DUES TIME

Please check your mailing label. If you see a number less than 14, you owe DVHS dues for 2014. 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 2014 membership fee today!

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

Mail to: Dan 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.

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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