



## Spring 2013 Hosta Meeting and Plant Sale Saturday, April 6, 1:00–4:00 p.m.

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

**John Lonsdale, Speaker**  
*“Woodland Treasures: Hardy Cyclamen”*

- 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 6 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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#### Raffles/Special Events

Position open

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## President's Message

Working in the garden always brings me out of my "winter funk" even if it means cleaning up all the leaves and other garden debris that I didn't get to last fall. I've been slowly uncovering plants that I forgot that I had or others hidden by low-hanging branches. The process is slow as I prune, take frequent breaks, and call for my doggie garden companions who wander off upon hearing the UPS truck, as there's always a treat to be had. Plenty of vole tracks, no destruction seen, but the Cairns, being terriers, need to dig to make sure.

Here in the third week of March, the hostas are still dormant, but the epimediums are beginning to unfurl. I can't get enough of these plants as they thrive in dry shade and make great companions to hostas. Unfortunately, epimediums are just as expensive, too!

The borders of hellebores are buzzing with activity on warm, sunny days. I got to them just in time to cut away last year's foliage, revealing the mottled flowers filled with my husband's honeybees. The bees ignore me as I prune away, and their hum is a welcome addition to the variety of birds who take up residence in houses and shrubbery. I let the hellebores seed around to fill in areas where nothing else will grow, eliminating the need to mulch.

Now I need to move around to the back of my property, a disaster since we've let the chickens roam through the gardens. Once I start working, they'll be relegated to their spacious coop area while I try to replant Hostas and shrubs that they've unearthed while looking for a meal or a good dust bath. Mulch needs to be rearranged, and most of the minis in troughs have lost their tags. Since I use chicken grit in the trough mix, it was perfect for the chickens to dig in!

I'll get it all done before the June meeting at our garden, but now I'm looking forward to our April meeting and John Lonsdale's talk about hardy cyclamen. I've purchased some plants from John, and they're now blooming underneath a river birch where very little thrives. You'll find that there's a cyclamen for every growing condition out there, and many make great hosta companions.

Our plant sale offers some wonderful cultivars, many can't be easily found in the local trade. Proceeds from our plant sales, auctions, and raffles help fund our display gardens at Tyler, Morris, and Barnes Arboretums. Remember that you have to be a PAID member to purchase plants at our April plant sale.

So, while you work around in your garden these next few weeks, clearing away the debris and discovering what has survived, mark any empty areas for new plant acquisitions. Also mark plants that may need to be divided for our two plant auctions in June and July. Don't work too hard, though; make sure you stop and smell the witch hazels too!

— Rebecca Boylan

## The Winter Meeting: Hosta Soup and Hosta Chat

Kathy Miller

Eleven different hosta-inspired soups and some great desserts were the foundation of a delicious meeting. We each received three votes to cast for our favorite soup. All the soups were creative and interesting, but the winners were: in first place, spicy 'Cajun Sunrise' Shrimp Gumbo from Charlie Seaver; tied for second and third, manly 'Big Daddy' Beef Barley from Conny Parsons and elegant 'Silver Ladle' Mushroom from Betty Bradford; and fourth, a ginger-laced '24 Carat'/'Squash Casserole' from Barbara Tiffany. Charlie Seaver won a beautiful pottery soup bowl for his fabulous Cajun cookin'. At the end of the meeting the crockpot was empty! 🍲

# April 6, 2013

## Hosta Meeting and Plant Sale

### Guest Speaker John Lonsdale

John Lonsdale joins the Delaware Valley Hosta Society to start our 2013 season. John comes to us from Sheffield, England, but has been gardening in our midst since 1995. His gardening passion, already in full force, took new shape when his family moved to the U.S. and purchased a 1.7-acre property in Exton he and his family call Edgewood. As befits the garden's name, John specializes in woodland plants, both native and exotic, while also maintaining an interest in alpine and xeriscapic gardens. He is well known for his extensive collection of cyclamen. For a gorgeous museum catalog of his plant collection (no hostas!), and an extensive discussion of *Cyclamen* species and their cultivation, visit [www.edgewoodgardens.net](http://www.edgewoodgardens.net). John plans to bring some of these these gems to sell at the meeting. In return, maybe we can convince him to grow hostas!



*C. purpurescens*, with  
fragrant summer blooms

### Woodland Treasures: Hardy Cyclamen

Many genera of alpine or rock garden plants contain species that span a broad spectrum of horticultural interest, from the stunningly beautiful through the botanically interesting to the downright ugly. The genus *Cyclamen* is one of few whose numerous species and cultivars are universally appealing.

Cyclamen are endowed with charming flowers ranging in color from near red through pink to white; some are even bicolored. Flower shape varies considerably, lending additional interest. If further encouragement is needed, different *Cyclamen* species can be found in flower at any time from July through to April. They possess a variety of fragrances, and variably shaped, beautifully marked leaves that give interest and much pleasure long after the blooms have gone.

The ease of growing most *Cyclamen* species adds to their horticultural value. There is hardly a region of North America that cannot provide a garden home for at least one species. *Cyclamen hederifolium* is remarkably winter-hardy and weather-resistant, even in the coldest zones, *C. purpurescens* and *C. coum* just slightly less so. The remaining sixteen species that are in cultivation make excellent garden subjects in appropriate climates and sites (most are at least frost-hardy), and those whose basic needs cannot be met without protection are wonderful pot subjects under glass.

(Excerpted from "The Magic of Cyclamen," John Lonsdale, the Bulletin of the North American Rock Garden Society, Fall 2001.)

### 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. 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:

- 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!

### 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 Romanesco, Chair,  
302-765-3581

**Hospitality:** Chris Dambro, Chair, 610-388-7743

### Hosta-tality for April 6th

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](http://www.hostalibrary.org).

## \$20 Collector Plants



Timothy (Peter Ruh 1998)

While 'Timothy' has been around for a while, it is still a rarity that deserves more attention. And it has a good story: Peter Ruh (b. 1921) is one of the great hosta hybridizers, and winner of the Alex J. Summers Award in 1984. And while Pete's name is on the registration form, it was his grandson Dustin who discovered this green-centered sport of 'Gold Edger'. To bridge the generation gap, they named the hosta for Dustin's father (Pete's son). 'Timothy' is a small hosta (18–20" wide) like its parent, but with more substance (dare I say it may be tetraploid?). Has lavender flowers on stiff petioles in early summer.

## \$15 Plants



Celestial (Elslager 2000)

This "star" hosta resulted from a cross of famed breeder *H. 'Dorothy Benedict'* with *H. hypoleuca*, giving this plant some hybrid vigor compared to 'Northern Halo' type hostas. The edge is a subtle gold in spring, turning creamy white as the season progresses, often with a nice Milky Way effect where the colors meet. And the edge stays nice and clean all season, compared to many hostas with a similar look. This will be a large hosta, to 40" wide. It makes a nice bouquet of near-white flowers in early summer. (Picture from Hallson Gardens)



Cuyahoga (Beilstein/Zilis 2009)

I mentioned hosta 'Dorothy Benedict' above, and here's another of her beautiful offspring. In this case she was crossed with another streaky plant, 'Swoosh'. 'Cuyahoga' retains the round leaf shape of its pod parent. It's so rare to see 'Swoosh' as a pollen parent it's hard to know what he brought to the party, perhaps a more upright fountain shape than most hostas with round leaves. This is also a large hosta, still too new to say how big but probably 40" or more. The scapes are taller (30"), with pale lavender flowers. This is new to the trade, and I expect it will cost you more if you find it anywhere else!

## More Cyclamen pictures from Edgewood Gardens



Left: *C. hederifolium*. Above: *C. cilicium* flowers. Right: *C. confusum* leaf.

**\$10 plants**

Aventurine (Beilstein/M. Seaver NR)

If you were lucky enough to attend First Look 2009, you would have received one of these rare treat hostas. It is similar in size (about 40" wide) and color (intense blue) to the popular 'Halcyon', but with a pointier, wavier leaf that gives the plant that more oomph. If you're wondering about the name, aventurine is derived from the Italian for "luck." It is a form of quartz, often blue-green, with shimmery metallic inclusions that make it glitter like gold. Start digging!

Blue Flame (Naylor Creek Nursery 2004)

Fragrance is still a fairly rare attribute in hostas, so when Kevin Vaughan created 'Fragrant Blue' (appropriated and registered/promoted by Paul Aden), it set a new standard for hosta breeding. Now we have a beautiful gold-margined sport of 'Fragrant Blue'. While it is neither the most fragrant hosta (very light fragrance) nor the bluest gold-edge hosta, it is lovely to have the combination. This grows well pushing the boundary from medium to large, nearly 40" wide.



Emerald Ruff Cut (J. Anderson 2003)

Perhaps more than any hosta at the 2006 AHS convention (was it that long ago?), this hosta in the Cullerton garden drew the most Oohs and Aahs. It's known as a fussy grower, but well worth the effort if you've got the knack, as there is simply nothing like it. This is a sport of Mildred Seaver's 'Sea Angel Wings' and carries its parent's rippled edges with a glowing gold, heavily corrugated center. Walter may hold the size record for this; Q and Z's catalog says it will grow to 30" wide. Absolutely gorgeous in a leaf show or flower arrangement.

Fat Cat (Ward 1996)

It may be hard to believe, but this well-heeled hosta is a seedling of 'Sagae'. (The flowers scapes give it away.) It grows a bit like 'Sum and Substance' but won't get quite *that* big, getting (only) 4-5' wide. The color is a brighter gold as well. When Dick Ward received the Eunice Fisher Distinguished Hybridizer Award in 2010, he selected this hosta as his hosta of merit.



Orange Marmalade (Solberg 2002, PP 16,742)

This hosta is already a classic, and deservedly so. It is a sport of 'Paul's Glory', but with a much more dramatic distinction between the margin and the center colors. And yes, this picture shows *colors* for the center you may not find in any other hosta. If you wear the right sunglasses, you might even say it's orange in early spring; this orange-gold later fades to a creamy white. This one can get to large size, 40" or a bit more, when well-grown. Flowers in mid-summer. It does set seed; how about a cross with 'Tea and Crumpets'?

Summer Lovin (Zilis 2004)

This is a sport of 'Summer Breeze' (which DVHS sold last year), which itself comes from the classic 'Summer Music'. They just keep getting better: show this some love and it will have the best leaf shape—nearly lollipop round—and color contrast of the family, with a darker green center than its immediate parent. Mark Zilis didn't register a plant size with this but says it will get to 40" wide. Note the name has no final apostrophe.



Victory (Zilis 2003)

Big and Tall! This cream-edged sport of 'Elatior' will be a standout in your garden. ('Elatior' is known for having 6' flower scapes. When the plant is already waist-high, there's nowhere to go but up!) This will be the Hosta of the Year (recognized by the American Hosta Grower's Association) in 2015, so you'll be able to get a good head-start on growing this super-sized plant toward its ultimate 70" width.

**JOIN THE AHS!**

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

The current issue of *The Hosta Journal* has articles by **three** DVHS members!



## 6 Ruminations of a Plain Dirt Hosta Gardener, Part 3: Evolution

Elias S. Cohen  
Ardmore, Pennsylvania

The stages of our evolution as Plain Dirt Hosta Gardeners are hardly separate and discrete. Each stage, save the first, develops on the shoulders of the one before it, continuing or modifying the elements of hosta gardening. We incorporate gigabytes of data into our cerebral “hard drive,” do not store it systematically, but somehow recall a surprising amount almost randomly as we make our decisions on acquiring and managing the genus *Hosta* in our gardens.

*Discovery* and *Epiphany* are ever present. *Collecting* continues, but in a muted fashion—better informed by experience, observation at visited gardens and to a lesser extent, nurseries, literature in the growing collection of copies of *The Hosta Journal*, acquired books and periodicals dealing with *Hostas* and *Shade Gardening*, and always by the lessons learned at DVHS meetings and the accompanying auctions. Perhaps most important, we learn that just having 150 or 200 different cultivars, however fascinating the list, is no guarantee of having a set of good-to-look-at beds much less a beautiful garden. And so we move on to what is the first step in garden development.

### Stage 3: Initial Bed Planning—Rooms and Anterooms

In the mid-1990s, about the time that my wife was completing her course of study at the Barnes Arboretum school, we were visited by Martin Kromer, a member of the Barnes Arboretum faculty. He introduced us to the Garden Rooms and Anterooms metaphor, a new way (for us) of looking at the grounds we were developing. Some rooms were more obvious than others. Our “entry room” was an area between the house and the street. (As described in the *DVHS Newsletter* issue 21.3, the house is set back 43 feet from the street, with a narrow 12-foot foundation planting, a 100 year old beech at the sidewalk, and a 200 year old beech just 5–6 feet from the front door, and a mature Japanese maple on one side of the property. A flagstone walk is set on a light diagonal to the front door.)

The area under the Japanese maple—a triangular bed about 25 feet long extending from the tree to the entry walk, about 10–12 feet wide at the tree, coming to a point at the walk—did not support grass. What to make of this, with the old beech across the walk from the point? What I didn’t fully appreciate, even after digging up the triangle for a bed of hostas, was the fierce root competition from the maple.

Had I been more of a horticulturist, or had the eye of our extraordinary DVHS designer gardeners, I would have proceeded more systematically and logically (See, for example, Bolton, J.S. “Demand More from Your Fence” (*Design Workshop*), *Fine Gardening*, No.147, [October 2012]; Aden, P., “Landscape Concepts,” *The*

*Hosta Book*, Aden, P. Ed., Timber Press, Portland Oregon).

In fact, this PDHG eyeballed the area selected, decided that this might be a proper spot for a kind of oriental carpet effect, comprised of a wide variety of medium and small hostas (whatever those designations meant to me), probably variegated with larger ones toward the middle of the plot and smaller ones around the edges. I gave no thought, at the time, to any accompanying plants, which, of course, did make their way into the plot that eventually came to be.

I started with plants I had in hand in other locations: members of the Tiara Series (Grand, Golden, Emerald, and Diamond), ‘Amber Maiden’, ‘Fair Maiden’, ‘Vera Verde’, ‘Hadspen Heron’, ‘Allen P. McConnell’, ‘Kabitan’, ‘Rhodeifolia’, ‘Stiletto’, ‘Sultana’, ‘Suzanne’, ‘Verna Jean’, and others I no longer recall. Since then, I have made what I believe were “strategic additions”, e.g. ‘Pineapple Upsidedown Cake’, ‘Pineapple Punch’, and ‘Gold Edger’ at “endpoints” of the bed for definition, and a variety of “mice” (‘Blue Mouse Ears’ and its sports) to fill in spots along the edges. All by the seat of my pants: pleasing, but not deliberate.

And so it has gone with a number of beds at other locations. Probably not the best strategy, but one that comported with my style of gardening—not a style I recommend, but one that yields enough satisfactions and an occasional “attaboy” to keep me in the garden.

see *Plain Dirt* on p. 7



A drift of ‘El Niño’ that caught the author’s eye.  
D. Teager photo.

## Plain Dirt, continued from p. 6

It's the way many of us PDHGs garden, and a way many of us get joy from our gardens.

It is the early foray into "Rooms and Anterooms" that propels us quickly into Stages 4 and 5 ("Selecting and Positioning Hostas," and "Drifts and Broad Effects" respectively).

### Stage 4 – Selecting and Positioning Hostas

Plain Dirt Hosta Gardeners do not typically prepare an analysis of what they seek in a hosta: a systematic description and priority placement of the next one or five, or fifty hostas sought for the PDHG garden—plant size, leaf size, color(s), growth habit, parentage, price, characteristics of deer or slug resistance, flowers and scapes,

We are, at heart, existentialists whose hosta lusts are determined (a) by the exquisite specimen or grouping or drift we saw at the last garden visited, (b) by the comments of the auctioneer at the last DVHS meeting, (c) by the hostas offered at sale prices at the local nursery or garden center, and (d) by the "hole" or space(s) we hope to fill in our gardens. The latter is easiest when we are making a decision about edging a bed, or providing a backdrop at the rear of a bed. It is best informed, at least for me, by what I see in a visited garden.

It took me a number of years before I began to think about what I wanted both in terms of the individual plant and the garden challenge I confronted—did I want a small group (*i.e.* three plants) of "blues" to backstop a group of green/gold hostas? a specimen to anchor a bed or serve as an entry plant (*e.g.* 'Guardian Angel')? an architectural plant (*e.g.* 'Golden Sculpture') to define the direction or boundary? or even a couple of "Mice" (Ears, Holy, or Rural) to fill in at a bed my visitors might see close up?

And then it took me a few more years, I am almost ashamed to say, to realize that one can have a great hosta garden by paying attention to the Popularity Poll which appear annually in *The Hosta Journal*, and which differentiate between capital-H "Hostas" (which means large, variegated, distinctive plants) and "very small" hostas, a distinction initiated, wisely, in about 2008.

Starting with the polls, and then leavening the list with plants that strike your fancy for no particular reason (other than, perhaps, a sight in a visited garden where you saw mature plants in an especially well-chosen spot) will produce great satisfaction for the PDHG.

This approach works to an extent. It runs the substantial risk of producing a hosta hodgepodge which the PDHG will work on correcting over the next few years. But then, that feeds our optimism that next year will be even better.

### Stage 5 – Drifts and Broad Effects

This represents the logical progression from Stage 4. To be sure, "drifts" is subject to wide interpretation ranging from Tony Avent's embrace of the notion of "a drift of one" to ultimate drifts displayed in Wayne Guymon's spectacular display covering a hillside overlooking the pond at WynEden—drifts literally of thousands, an overwhelming sight, punctuated by specimens and small groups of exquisitely placed individual hostas reflecting Wayne's great sense of design. [Ed. note: DVHS will visit WynEden this July.]

This PDHG has a more modest approach starting with a beginning understanding of broad effect of color; even three mature 'Halcyons' can be impressive, almost startling, when backing up something like 'Yellow Splash Rim', or a long edge of 'Gold Edger' punctuated with a blue 'Hadsphen Heron'. Most recently I was struck by a beautiful grouping of mature 'El Niño' plants at Eve Thyrum's garden, inscribing a note on my mental garden design notebook.

I don't have the eye or adequate imagination to think "large", such as an area of 500–600 square feet, in a particular spot in the garden, which is another way of saying I don't have the necessary "nerve" to try something like that. But I do hope to graduate to that next level. Think about that for your own Plain Dirt Hosta Garden.

Future columns will focus on the Plant Dirt Hosta Gardener's enemies and devils; Sources suitable for the learning styles of Plain Dirt Hosta Gardeners, and other items, hopefully generated by comments and requests from DVHS Newsletter Readers. 🍷

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 2013

## www.delvalhosta.org

**Saturday, February 23: DVHS Winter Meeting,**  
Tredyffrin Public Library, Wayne, PA  
Hosta Soup and Hosta Chat

**Saturday, April 6: DVHS Spring Meeting,**  
Tredyffrin Public Library, Wayne, PA  
Hosta plant sale and great hospitality  
Presentation by John Lonsdale: "Woodland Treasures:  
Hardy Cyclamen"

**June 7-9: FIRST LOOK 2013.** Windsor Locks, CT  
Visit <http://www.hostalibrary.org/firstlook/>

**Saturday, June 8: DVHS Tour** of Rebecca and Dan  
Boylan's garden, Pottstown, PA. Potluck and plant  
auction.

**June 13-15: AHS National Convention** in  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin. [www.hosta.org](http://www.hosta.org) or  
[www.2013ahsconvention.com](http://www.2013ahsconvention.com).

**Saturday, July 13: DVHS Tour** of WynEden (Doris  
and Wayne Guymon garden) in Chadds Ford, PA,  
with BIG LEAF contest and plant auction

**Saturday, November 2: DVHS Fall Meeting**  
Jenkins Arboretum, Devon, PA. Presentation by  
Walter Cullerton: "The Lost Season: Winter in the  
Garden." Hosta seed exchange TBD.

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### IT'S DUES TIME

Please check your mailing label. If you see a number less than 13, you owe DVHS dues for 2013. 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 2013 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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Pottstown PA 19464-1826