

DR. ALLEN OWINGS WINS LSHR MEDALLION AWARD

ALLEN OWINGS HOLDS UP A POTTED PORTERWEED BEFORE THE ASSEMBLED LSHR PLANT AUCTION BIDDERS. HE SAYS WITH A DEVILISH GRIN, “I LUST FOR THIS PLANT! HUMMINGBIRDS GET DRUNK ON ITS NECTAR!”

Bidders’ auction pie plates start going up, showing they lust for it too. It sells after brisk bidding.

Later in the auction, Owings offers a Minnie Pearl daylily, introducing it with the singer’s trademark greeting, “how-DEE!!” The bidders’ pie plates go up, and Minnie Pearl finds a new home.

Later in the auction, Owings offers additional specimens of a plant that had just sold for \$25. He chides the bidders, “Some of those \$25 pie plates need to go back up.” They go back up.

This year for the third year in a row, the LSHR plant auction set a new sales record: \$7,335, which



Dr. Allen Owings

topped 2021’s \$6,225, which topped 2020’s record sales total of \$6,052.

“The LSHR annual event is one of the best Saturdays of the Year,” Owings says. And indeed, Owings devotes countless hours to making the LSHR annual

meeting a great Saturday, for he not only serves as auctioneer, he personally cajoles and importunes and connives donations of the vast majority of the auctioned plants.

“Many folks regularly ask, ‘where do all the LSHR auction plants come from?’” Owings says. “As part of my responsibilities working in the wholesale and retail nurs-

ery business, I am blessed to travel to many garden centers, wholesale nurseries, botanical gardens and similar places across the southeastern USA. New plants, unique plants, less common (harder to find) plants are always on my radar. Plants like

the giant African blue salvia (not a true salvia), Mary Helen geranium, unique basils, new salvias, varieties of porterweed, Nova and Pink Remembrance pentas and more are now more available (although still not easy to find) than they used to be thanks to our LSHR efforts. One of my

missions on travel these days is to find and bring back (hopefully via generous donors) plants for the LSHR auction. On my trips to Lafayette I regularly stop and see Billy and Kristy at the Ira Nelson Horticulture Center and bring them plants: ‘Here you go, these are for LSHR,’” Owings says.

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Plant auction bidding was lively this year, with 51 members participating, setting a new sales record for the third time in three years.



Owings keeps the auction fun and informative.

Owings describes the annual LSHR plant auction as “live and very lively. It is two hours of intense action. A lot of fun is to be had. Nothing better than spending money on plants! It is crazy how successful the auction has been the last 4-5 years. We are getting better every year.”

This year at its annual banquet, LSHR gave Allen Owings its Me-

dallion Award, in thanks for his extraordinary success in building the plant auction, but also to recognize his lifetime of service to horticulture.

After earning three horticulture degrees (B.S., Southeastern Louisiana University; M.S., LSU; Ph.D., Mississippi State), Owings worked for LSU for 25 years (Calhoun Research station, one-year postdoctoral appointment;

LSU Baton Rouge, 1993-2007; and Hammond Research Center, 2007-2017).

During his LSU days, Owings won more than \$1.5 million in grants for research on ornamental plant trials, specialty crop enhancement, plant marketing, urban forestry and environmental research. Owings and two colleagues created the Louisiana

Super Plants initiative, which evaluates and promotes high-performing plants that are adapted to Louisiana growing conditions. At the Hammond Ag Center, Owings helped redirect the center’s mission from fruit and vegetable research to ornamental horticulture. To that end, Owings was involved with the Hody Wilson Camellia Garden, the Margie Jenkins Azalea Garden, as well as sunny and shady field produc-

Plant auction sets third sales record in three years: \$7,335! LSHR thanks these plant donors

- Buds and Blooms Greenhouse, Miss.
- Mizell’s Camellia Hill Nursery, La.
- Bracy’s Nursery, La.
- Clegg’s Nursery, La.
- LSU AgCenter Hammond, La.
- Martin’s Nursery, Ala.
- Van der Giessen Nursery, Ala.
- Kim’s Nursery, Ala.
- Ira Nelson Horticulture Center, La.
- Louisiana Chapter, Azalea Society of America
- Kent’s Nursery, Youngsville, La.
- Allen Owings
- Albert Durio
- Buddy Lee
- Jason Stagg

tion plots for bedding plants. The Hammond Center also includes rose research plots, an urban forestry area, and a piney woods garden.

A people person as well as a plant person, Allen Owings has served as president of the Azalea Society of America (Louisiana Chapter), president of the Louisiana State Horticultural Society, and Gulf district director of the American Rose Society. He is a member of dozens of horticultural organizations. He served as lead coordinator of education at the Gulf States Horticultural Expo for 15 years. He is a well-known and regular presenter of horticultural information to nursery professionals and home gardeners.

In nominating Owings for the Medallion Award, LSHR board member Glenda Balliviero noted, “He is truly a very generous, selfless, kind, enthusiastic and passionate person when it comes to horticulture. Dr. Owings has become one of the hardest-working friends of LSHR by obtaining new and unique plants from various nurseries to support our annual fund raising auction. He has developed into a great auctioneer.”

After retiring from LSU, Ow-

ings has worked as horticulturist for both Bracy’s Nursery in Amite, La.; and for Clegg’s Nursery in Baton Rouge.



Above, Owings accepts the LSHR Medallion Award from Glenda Balliviero, who nominated him for the award; and from Rob Barry, right, LSHR president. The Medallion Award itself is the highest honor bestowed by LSHR. It has gone to only six recipients since 2000. The medallion itself depicts the red passion flower, which was reintroduced to cultivation by Dr. Ira Nelson, who found it on a plant collecting trip to Latin America.



ORNAMENTAL MAGNOLIA VARIETY EVALUATION: YEAR TWO UPDATE

by Jason Stagg and Dr. Jeb Fields

The magnolia variety evaluation at the LSU Ag Center's Hammond Research Station continues to survive, despite Mother Nature throwing lots of curve balls our way!

Two years ago, LSHR generously funded a long-term cultivar evaluation to discover new and under-utilized magnolia varieties that established easily in the landscape and provided reliable blooms each year.

This information would be shared with

LSHR FUNDING: \$4,275

LSHR and the Green Industry in the hopes of encouraging adoption of newer or lesser-known varieties into production in Louisiana, thereby increasing the diversity of cultivars available for use in the landscape. In addition to these more unusual selections, well-known varieties more commonly seen in southern landscapes were also included for comparison. While most of the cultivars are deciduous, we do have quite a few evergreen entries as well.

The first year was spent collecting as many cultivars as possible,

with the goal of planting three of each to provide a fair chance in three different locations throughout the evaluation area. Unfortunately, the pandemic made it difficult to find multiple plants of each variety of the same size in many cases, but at least one example was purchased to have some meaningful observational data on as many cultivars as possible. An extensive new irrigation system was also necessary to

install since the planting area was in between two existing garden areas. One-gallon-per-hour drip irrigation is used for the trees, and the planting location is mulched with coarse composted pine bark. Magnolias in the evaluation are mixed with some smaller established trees, and generally receive morning and mid-day sun, with some protection from the western sun once the Urban Forest planting's leaves emerge in spring.

As many of you know, Hurricane Ida's last-minute shift to the east brought widespread devastation far inland in the Florida parishes, including the Hammond



Hammond Research Station magnolia evaluation area

Research Station. We lost well over 100 large pine trees, cypress and oaks, and numerous smaller ornamental trees. The magnolia evaluation area, located just west of the Piney Woods Garden, took

a direct hit from some of these large trees. Although some cultivars were lost, most survived, if not a little worse for wear!

During their first year of establishment, we have observed that

generally the larger the specimen of tree we planted, the greater the survivability rate and establishment success so far. We were a bit surprised since the larger

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trees require more irrigation, but perhaps some of the smaller trees had weak root systems or were not developed enough.

Overall, the best establishment and most vigorous growth seems to be from some of the yellow-flowered varieties, such as ‘Elizabeth’, ‘Lois’, ‘Sunsation’ and ‘Yellow Bird.’ Familiar selections from the older Little Girls series, such as ‘Ann,’ ‘Betty,’ and ‘Jane’ also seem to be establishing well and growing vigorously, as does the beautiful ‘Alexandrina.’

Two unfamiliar varieties for us, ‘Genie’ and ‘Sue,’ were planted as smaller trees, but appear to be quite healthy and settling in nicely.

Magnolia denudata, often referred to as Yulan Magnolia, looks quite happy in our climate with all specimens growing well. This species has beautiful ivory-colored flowers, and has been used as the parent in many subsequent magnolia cultivars.

Some of the evergreen Sweetbay magnolia selections seem to be quite happy in their new location, with ‘Silver Mist’ performing the best so far.

As expected, most of the magnolias didn’t bloom well this year, but we should start getting reliable blooms within another year



Susan

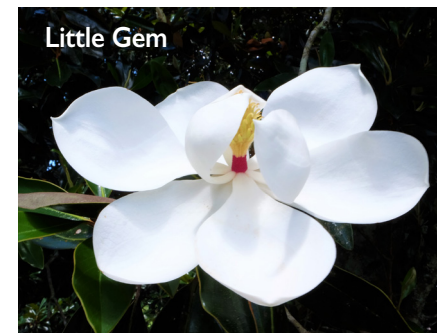
or two. Although we almost filled the huge evaluation area already, we do have some replacing to do and can always find a little space to squeeze in new cultivars as we find them!

We’d like to thank LSHR for their grant, which enabled us to

establish this new research area at our station, and we’d also like to thank Dr. Gary Knox of the University of Florida, Dr. Allen Owings and Tom Krenitsky of North Carolina for their donations and assistance in locating hard-to-find cultivars.



Jane, one of the U. S. National Arboretum “Little Girls” series.



Jon Jon, a late bloomer, which Jeb Fields calls “one of our favorites.”

LSHR AWARDS \$8,000 IN SCHOLARSHIPS TO LSU GRAD STUDENTS

At its spring board meeting, the LSHR board awarded four \$2,000 scholarships for the current academic year. Winners are Kris Criscione (profiled in the Fall 2020 Compost Pile, who won continuing support for graduate studies), and the following new recipients whose profiles follow: Samuel DesBordes, Baton Rouge; Ashley Edwards, Hammond; and Thomas McKeown of southeastern Arkansas. Profiles by Catherine Schoeffler Comeaux.

SAMUEL DESBORDES

Samuel DesBordes enrolled at Louisiana State University to pursue a bachelor's degree with the intention of going to medical school to focus on pediatric oncology.

He recalls his early college experience, "In my initial pursuit of pre-med courses I gained a decent amount of exposure to plant biology, and I grew a keen interest in plant science. My sophomore year I transitioned my coursework entirely towards plant and soil science after taking Introduction to Horticulture with Bob Mirabello.

"The SPESS (School of Plant, Environmental and Soil Sciences) faculty's passion for their work was contagious. Watching them go about their day loving every second of their work only reinforced my decision, and I knew

that I had found what I wanted to do for the rest of my life.

"The broad range of medicinal applications of Cannabis made entry into my current position studying Cannabis very easy for me. It combines two things for which I am very passionate about, plants and medicine."

DesBordes sees his research on hemp cultivation in Louisiana, with a focus on essential oil production, as a way of furthering our understanding of the role that horticulture plays in the pharmaceutical framework of our society, while helping fellow farmers.

He says, "One of the main goals of this research is to determine the efficacy of container production of hemp. Moving hemp to 'in-pot' production will hopefully mitigate disease spread



Samuel DesBordes examines his Cannabis crop

by isolating crops from the soil and therefore reducing their vulnerability to soil-borne pathogens, which plagued Louisiana in the 2020 and 2021 seasons."

DesBordes notes the potential for his research to affect the nursery industry. "Success in container production of hemp in Louisiana, along with the implementation of new cannabis legislation, could potentially move the hemp crop into the nursery to be made available to the public, as seen in other states. This could prove very beneficial to our nurs-

successful and vigorous rooted cuttings.

He gave an update on his research: "In Study 1 of this project we were able to mitigate southern blight incidence from 53% in-field to 0.02% in high-tunnel containers. A massive win, considering that the fungal pathogen southern blight is currently a major yield-limiting disease for Cannabis. It is untreatable and brings certain death to its hosts.

"Our preliminary findings indicate the optimum container size, planting dates, media type, and planting density of Cannabis grown under high tunnels in containers. Our repeat of the study this summer will confirm these findings, so that we can share them with the farmers of Louisiana and other Southeastern states."

He sees this research as essential in maintaining a supply of plant material that fills the pharmaceutical market demand for genetically identical and chemical phenotypically consistent plants.

DesBordes is grateful for the support he has received from LSHR. He notes, "Graduate

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LSHR SCHOLARSHIPS, CONTINUED

students must juggle heavy course loads, conduct research, and fulfill their assistantship requirements. At the end of our days there is little time left to worry about how to pay for it all. Your scholarship removes a large portion of the financial burden I will incur this coming year, allowing me to focus solely on my research and education.”

He is appreciative of how the

LSHR scholarship has allowed him to alleviate some of the issues currently faced by Louisiana farmers while simultaneously filling a large void in research and laying a foundation for his career goals.

You can learn more about DesBordes’ research by watching his video featured on the LSU Ag Center Web site’s Virtual Hemp Field Day: lsuagcenter.com.

ASHLEY EDWARDS

Ashley Edwards is working on her master’s degree in horticulture at LSU while also working full time as a research assistant at the Hammond Research Station. Her supervisor Jason Stagg notes, “From propagation to greenhouse work to planting and caring for trial plants in the field, Ashley has to pivot her focus numerous times a day. She is a critical member of the team, helping everyone at some point to make their jobs easier.”

Edwards has just begun her thesis research, which aims to show how fertilizer efficiency can be improved through placement (where fertilizer is placed in the

container and how it is incorporated) and root zone temperature stabilization. She is experimenting with container color and irrigation schedule to lower the temperature in the root zone, hoping to increase the longevity of the fertilizer. With her results, she is looking to be able to encourage more efficient use of fertilizer by nursery growers and homeowners.

In addition to her thesis research, she is involved in a variety of other projects at the Hammond Research Station, including ones that study root growth enhancement and water conservation through various methods



Ashley Edwards

including the use of sugarcane bagasse as an alternative substrate in container-grown crops.

As part of her research duties, Edwards photo documents each cultivar / trial entry in the trial gardens and has turned this task into an educational opportunity for the public by starting a weekly social media campaign called Monday Marvels, which features her beautiful photos of the top-notch performers in the gardens that week at the research station. Monday Marvels, found on the LSU Ag Center Ham-

mond Research Station’s Facebook page, is a chance to find out what is currently growing in the gardens, as well as learn a little bit about each plant’s growth requirements, bloom time and overall performance.

Edwards has a vision of incorporating more natives in the horticulturist’s design aesthetic to provide beneficial habitat for birds and pollinators. She notes, “In the gulf south, ornamental horticulture relies heavily on non-native

exotic plants, especially tropicals, often because they are deemed more aesthetically showy, pro-

viding a quick seasonal pop of color. However, often our native pollinators and birds may not be adapted to these plants. With that being said, I would like to find more showy and long-lived gateway natives to incorporate into the design aesthetic. I believe that we need to identify and market certain natives more aggressively to better compete with exotics.”

Edwards is grateful to the LSHR members for supporting her in her studies. She relates, “The financial burden of being a student can be stressful at times, but thanks to outstanding folks like you all, I can continue to pursue my master’s in horticulture knowing that the financial burden has been lifted. I look forward to filling you all in on the progress of my research as it unfolds. Thank you!”

MAX MCKEOWN

Thomas “Max” McKeown has always loved gardening since his early years growing up in southeast Arkansas, where he was his grandmother’s little helper in her extensive gardens. After completing a Bachelor of Horticulture Landscape and Turf Science

degree at the University of Arkansas in May 2021, his love of horticulture led him to LSU to work on a master’s degree in horticulture.

“My goal is to become director of a botanical garden,” he

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said. “I have always loved public gardening and want to bring beauty to the masses. I love plants and people. Botanical gardens combine the two beautifully. Many people have deep, personal relationships with plants. Many times, plants remind them of special people or places in their life. Knowing that I can help foster those connections, makes the field of horticulture much more special.”

McKeown’s favorite is the New Orleans Botanical Garden in City Park, where he likes to enjoy beignets and coffee amidst the cozy feeling evoked by the Podocarpus hedges, while listening to live music emanating from somewhere in the garden. “What makes it unique is the large number of tropical species the garden has to offer. I did not think of New Orleans as a very tropical place before I moved to Louisiana, but I was wrong.”

McKeown’s research involves an evaluation of twelve different species of groundcovers. He reports, “Based on the preliminary results, the perennial peanut ‘Golden Glory’ seems to be growing by leaps and bounds, as well as the ornamental sweet potato ‘Sweet

Caroline Kiwi.’ The Homestead Purple Verbena is doing the worst. It did not like the transplanting. This was no surprise as verbena perform better in cooler temperatures.”

He is grateful for the LSHR scholarship, which helps lessen the burden of fees not covered by his current graduate school contract, as well as gas costs for his weekly trips between his classes in Baton Rouge and his research station work in Hammond.



Max McKeown

photo by Chris Kozarich



TRES FROMME WILL DISCUSS THE DESIGN PROCESS AT MARCH 2023 LUNCHEON

Florida landscape architect Tres Fromme, principal of 3. Fromme Design, LLC, will be the luncheon speaker at LSHR’s annual meeting March 18, 2023.

Fromme’s client list includes dozens of botanic gardens. He

has developed master plans for such clients as the Atlanta, Tulsa, Huntsville (Texas), Springfield (Missouri), Fernwood (Michigan), and Jacksonville (Florida) botanic gardens.

In Louisiana he has designed for the Baton Rouge Burden

Center and Oak Alley.

He has consulted for the United States Botanic Gardens and for the Shanghai, China, Botanic Gardens.

Fromme’s approach emphasizes creative, broad-based solutions to *continues on p. 9*

CRYSTAL FALLS MONDO GRASS TOPS THE 2021 PLANT RELEASE RATINGS

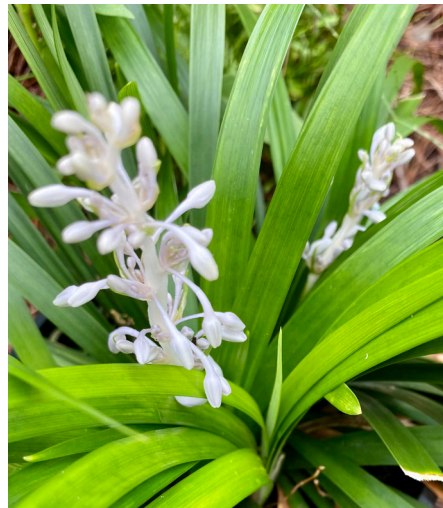
by Glenda Balliviero

What a year 2021 was for all of us! Hurricane Ida, flooding due to torrential rains, and freezes also took their toll on so very many plants, including the LSHR research plants.

One thing that has stood out to me during my many years of tallying the release reports is that even though the sheet included with plants when given out includes the growing conditions best suited for plants the reporting sheets indicate that very often they are not adhered to.

Plants that prefer a partly shaded area or morning sun will definitely struggle or succumb to being panted in full or afternoon sun. I've also noted that more and more people are giving away many of their release plants indicating that they do not have room for them.

I'm sure this is happening to a lot of us; however, getting the information requested for reports from the recipients of the plants is most necessary. Receiving fewer yet larger pots of plants definitely is helping, as larger plants have a greater chance of survival. Another observation is that there



Crystal Falls Mondo Grass

were no spouses who accidentally cut down a plant this year, so this must be a good sign of spreading our love of gardening to them. Unfortunately, squirrels are still a nuisance.

The Crystal Falls Mondo Grass was the top plant for 2021. It received a total rating average of 4.1, and it actually received more than 50 ratings of 5, which is great with no 1 or 2 ratings. Even greater news was that there was only one member reported the loss of this plant.

Even though the second-rated plant, the Beni Kujaku Ardisia, received an average rating of 3.6

with 25 ratings of 5, the Chinese Quince and White Woods Violet were right behind, both having an average of 3.5.



Beni Kujaku Ardisia

1. *Ardisia crenata* 'Beni Kujaku' MYRSINACEAE – 3.6 rating

This small evergreen shrub with deep burgundy-purple lanceolate leaves which are highlighted with bright pink was considered having attractive foliage that is very colorful, pretty and gorgeous. It was a slow grower but hardy and needed little maintenance. While it was reported as being a great plant and a favorite of some, a few considered it as invasive. More than 20 people lost the plant during the year with most blaming the flood waters of Ida.



Himalayan Honeysuckle

2. *Leycesteria formosa* 'Jealousy' CAPRIFOLIACEAE (Himalayan Honeysuckle) – 2.6 rating

This multi-stemmed deciduous shrub with chartreuse foliage was lost by almost 2/3 of the members. Only a few witnessed blooms but one that did said the white flowers against the lime colored leaves were very attractive.

Many said it struggled from the very beginning and others considered it having slow growth. Even though the release information indicated it needed part shade many planted in full or afternoon sun which could have accounted for losing it. Many felt too much

water while heat and freezing temperatures were also blamed. Insects were considered problems but members did not indicate which insects were troublesome.

3. *Ophiopogon jaburan* 'Crystal Falls' ASPARAGACEAE (Crystal Falls Mondo Grass) - 4.1 rating; photo at far left.

This evergreen mounding perennial with glossy, dark-green leaves, which are wider than other *Ophiopogon* species, was the Top plant released in 2021.

It was a no-fuss plant with vigorous robust lush growth. The star-shaped white flowers were considered an asset along with the bright-blue berries that followed in winter.

This lovely plant was described by Dr. Maher as being like an offensive lineman in football; i.e., not a star player. But like a lineman, this mondo grass is definitely a great asset to any garden, whether used as a border or individual planting.

Most indicated it had multiplied and they divided it, thus having many plants. Low maintenance was a plus and several felt you

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couldn't kill this plant. While it was indicated that it preferred shade, it survived in all types of lighting from morning sun to afternoon sun to full sun. Only one person indicated having lost it. The only issue with it was the brown tips on leaves that developed.



Chinese Quince

4. *Pseudocylonia sinensis* ROSACEAE (Chinese Quince) – 3.5 rating

This small tree with shiny, dark-green leaves with finely serrated margins was a rapid grower; in fact, one described it as taking off like a race horse. It became 5', 7' and even 9' in its one year. Many

described as leggy, tall and spindly in addition to being described as having beautiful foliage while another considered ugly. Most did not have any flowers while a couple said they enjoyed the beautiful light pink flowers. Most planted in full sun with great results and a few put in pots. It was described as very hardy. Several reported having aphid problems and another reviewer mentioned leaf spot.



Mel's Rose Azalea

5. *Rhododendron X 'Mel's Rose'* ERICACEAE (Mel's Rose Native Azalea) – 3.4 rating

This deciduous azalea, hybridized by Mel and Ruby Williams from Washington Parish, survived

for most in our hot humid zone; however, many said the foliage burned in the summer heat. Most planted in areas of morning sun and thus many were rewarded with beautiful pink blooms. When reports were made in mid-March a majority described them as budding out.

Several described Mel's Rose azalea as not liking a lot of water, thus succumbing after Hurricane Ida. One reviewer happily indicated it did well despite being planted in alkaline soil and being watered with New Orleans city water.



White Woods Violet

6. *Viola sororia 'Albifolia'* VIOLACEAE (White Woods Violet) – 3.5 rating

The herbaceous perennial with heart-shaped leaves was described

as a pretty, sweet little plant with dainty white flowers. Several thought it was a great addition to a woodland garden. While many were able to enjoy the flowers, about half said it was yet to bloom.

It was very prolific, thus most members were able to have several new plants either by its aggressively reseeding or by dividing the rhizomes. Some thought it to be a weed like the native violet, and thus gave it away. Unfortunately more than 25 lost the plant, but few gave reasons other than neglect after Hurricane Ida.

Hopefully all your 2022 LSHR release plants have been repotted or planted into the ground. With the severe heat we are already receiving, I'm sure summer heat will get even worse. So be sure to keep your plants hydrated just as you do yourselves.

Happy Gardening!

Tres Fromme, continued from P 7

design tasks. As he puts it, "to transform the mundane into the magical and memorable."

Accordingly Fromme's LSHR topic is titled, "Abandon Yourself to Design."

"How do abstract ideas, needs, and desires take concrete forms in the real world?" Fromme says. "People are very familiar with the end product of a successful design process, a beautiful and enjoyable garden. However, they rarely see all the 'mysterious' steps and ideas leading up to the final product."

According to Fromme, what may appear to be a simple and obvious conclusion almost always results from a controlled and creative chaos.

"Garden design involves choreographing dynamic guided interactions between people, plants, and spaces. Successful garden designs intentionally engage our bodies, imaginations, and spirits."

Tres Fromme will describe his experiences with the design process, outlining a basic framework for creating invigorating and compelling gardens of any scale.

THE COMPOST PILE

NEWSLETTER OF THE LOUISIANA SOCIETY FOR HORTICULTURAL RESEARCH

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LSHR plant people, send me your news!
I welcome articles and photos about your favorite plants,
growing techniques and plant lovers.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thanks to those who made our Spring Annual Meeting a success! Thanks to those who helped with registration, with the plant release, the auction, and the luncheon. Everyone did a great job.

Treasurer JoAnn had an auction amount of \$7,335 and 89 at the luncheon. Wonderful! We had a record turnout for new members.

Board member Billy Welsh tells me that the domain name for the LSHR Web site is secure. He really had to hustle.

Mark your calendar for our March 18, 2023, spring annual meeting. Our speaker will be Tres Fromme of 3. Fromme Design in Florida.

LSHR is looking for a Webmaster for lshr.org. The tasks would include posting this newsletter and other LSHR documents and notices to the Web. It would require some knowledge of WordPress or a similar Web design software package. If you're interested, please contact me at suncoteau@yahoo.com.

—Rob Barry, LSHR President

TREASURER'S REPORT

The March 19 plant auction was awesome. The outside setting under the lovely trees was so refreshing. All plants were prize specimens going to happy homes!

The grand total of \$7,335 was made at the auction with 51 members bidding. Another topping of all previous years' auctions by over \$1,000. The funds raised are used to award research grants and scholarships at state universities. The board did a great job in distributing plants, moving plants for auction and auction. It is a wonderful team to work with each year.

A total of 113 boxes of plants, with six new release plants, were distributed. We welcomed 18 new members who picked

up their plants for the first time. The luncheon had 89 attending to a great meal at Lafayette Petroleum Club to hear Todd Lasseigne's discussion of Bellingrath Gardens.

Please mark your calendar for March 18, 2023, for the next plant release day. The LSHR spring newsletter will have detailed information on the annual meeting.

Your dues will be due December 31, 2022, and they remain the same: active \$15, sustaining \$25, and donor \$100. You will receive an emailed reminder in November and December.

—JoAnn Pugh, Treasurer

EDITOR'S NOTES

As we all know, LSHR is one of the best gardening bargains on the planet. Members get a bevy of new and interesting plants, and have the opportunity to participate in a lively plant auction featuring unusual plants. All for the absurdly low dues of \$15. Then we have a national-caliber speaker following an excellent meal at Lafayette's Petroleum Club.

Apart from that, your participation in LSHR makes the gardening world a better place through research grants and scholarships to Louisiana scholars.

Want to share LSHR? Now is the time to nominate your gardening friends for membership, so that they will qualify for next year's plant release.

The LSHR board typically meets in late October or early November, and this is the last meeting at which new members can be approved in time for your nominee to get the 2023 plant releases.

New member nominations should be emailed to LSHR@lusfiber.net. Please include your proposed member's correct postal and email addresses.

This newsletter will appear twice a year in the future, which should be ample for an organization that meets for half a day, once a year. However, you'll get emailed reminders about the annual meeting, dues, plant evaluations and other news. So it's important to keep your email current!