



# Potomac Valley Chapter American Rhododendron Society

www.arspvc.org

Summer Newsletter: July 2007

## Calendar

- \* **August 5, 2007** - Chapter Picnic / Plant Exchange
- \* **September 16, 2007** - Regular Meeting - National Arboretum
- \* **October 11-13, 2007** - ARS Eastern Regional, Mentor, OH
- \* **October 27, 2007** - Fall Banquet - JR's Steakhouse
- \* **January 13, 2008** - Regular Meeting - National Arboretum

## Chapter Officers

**President:** Jon Wallenmeyer

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**Vice-President:** Bob McWhorter

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**Treasurer:** Phyllis Rittman

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## Next Meeting: August 5, 2007, 1:00 – 5:00 PM Chapter Picnic – Margaret White's Home Cutting Exchange and Plants for Members

Margaret White has kindly offered to let us hold our chapter picnic at her home again on Sunday, August 5<sup>th</sup>. This meeting is a potluck, so please bring some food to share such as an appetizer, salad, meat, casserole, dessert, etc. Drinks and eating utensils will be provided. We should eat by 1:30 - 2:00 PM so we have time to see her lovely 13-acre estate and garden.

At this meeting, we will also have our Plants for Members distribution. Last year, we sent some rare cuttings out to Van Veen Nursery in Portland, Oregon. We also tried to root some ourselves. The Van Veen plants are back now and look great, so we have potted them up and are offering them to our members. In addition, we have a few left over plants from last year's Van Veen Order. We propose selling the rooted cuttings at \$5 each, and those we don't sell at the picnic will be held for future plant sales. Don't forget your checkbook! Look for a list of varieties we have rooted in this newsletter.



*Margaret White's Home*

put 3 to 5 cuttings in a clear plastic bag, wrap the ends with a piece of moist paper towel, label with the name of the variety and description, and bring them along with you. We will give the cuttings away to interested people after we eat. Rare varieties might be auctioned off to the highest bidder or we may decide to send them off to Kathy Van Veen again so we have plants to offer next year. Kathy got excellent rooting percentages and they really look great.

## Directions to Margaret White's House: Falls Church, VA

From I-495 in Virginia: Travel east on Rt. 50, turn Right on Annandale Road, turn Left on Holloman Road and follow from there. Margaret's private driveway begins at the end of the lane. Don't rely on Yahoo or MapQuest for directions since they usually miss her driveway by bringing you into one of the other nearby streets that borders her property.

Please drop plants, food, or other supplies off at the house, and then park cars in the area below the barn. There is plenty of room to park in the field, too. Signs will be posted to assist you.



*Vista across Margaret's Field*

This will also be our annual cutting exchange for both azaleas and rhododendrons. If you have some unusual varieties that you are willing to share, please

## 2007 Plants for Members:

### *Varieties Available at the Picnic*

The following rhododendron varieties will be available at this year's Plants for Members distribution at our picnic on August 5<sup>th</sup>. With some varieties, we have as many as 10 cuttings available but for others there may be only one or two. We intend to set the price per plant at \$5.

Because some plants will be in high demand, we intend to arrange some equitable way to distribute the very rare and choice varieties. Then we will open it up so people can purchase as many cuttings as they wish of the remaining varieties.

### **Rhododendron Hybrids:**

'Albert Close'  
'Babylon'  
'Beechwood Pink'  
'Big Catmar'  
'Cape White'  
'Crete'  
Consolini #320  
'Dexter's Spice'  
'Disca'  
'Gigi'  
'Great Eastern'  
'Great Smokey'  
'Gretchen'  
'Hardy Giant'  
'Helen Ring'  
'James Allison'  
'John C. White'  
'Mac Kantruss'  
'Martin Keister White'  
'Mary Belle'  
'Mary Garrison'  
'Mary K'  
'Mount Siga'  
'Reileyridge Bright Day'  
'Reileyridge Low Boy'  
'Reileyridge Picotee'  
'Reileyridge Target'  
'Reileyridge Sweet Sue'  
'Rochelle'  
'Sagamore Bayside'  
'Taurus'  
'W. H. Ebaugh'

### **Rhododendron Species:**

*R. hyperythrum* 'Cornelia Sanders' (Beaudry's pink)  
*R. makinoi*, Don Hyatt's form  
*R. makinoi*, Will Smith's form  
*R. metternianum* album  
*R. yakushmanum*, 'Ken Janek'  
*R. yakushmanum*, Will Smith's #1  
*R. yakushmanum*, Will Smith's #2

## Annual Flower Show - May 12, 2007

### *U.S. National Arboretum*

We hope you had a chance to see our Annual Flower Show held at the National Arboretum on Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>. We had some excellent entries and the flowers looked great.

We tried to list all of the prize winners and exhibitors, where known and Don Hyatt managed to scarf up both top awards. A spray from the evergreen azalea 'Ben Morrison' that he broke off as he backed out of the driveway on the way to the Arboretum that morning took **Best Azalea**. A huge pale pink truss on his Dexter, 'Betty Hume' took **Best Rhododendron** as well as **Best in Show**. See images below.



*Top Winners: 'Betty Hume' and 'Ben Morrison'*

### **Prize Winners Listed by Class**

#### **Class 1.0– Species (Elepidote)**

1<sup>st</sup> *brachycarpum* - Bill & Ann Mangels – **Best in Class**  
2<sup>nd</sup> *yakushmanun* 'Ken Janek' - Bill & Ann Mangels

#### **Class 2.0– Elepidote Hybrids**

##### **White**

1<sup>st</sup> Cape White - Carol Segree  
2<sup>nd</sup> Queen Annes – Norman & Jean Beaudry

##### **White with Blotch**

1<sup>st</sup> Calsap – Rosa & Bob McWhorter  
3<sup>rd</sup> White Peter - Norman & Jean Beaudry

##### **Pale Pink**

1<sup>st</sup> Betty Hume - Don Hyatt – **Best in Class, Best Rhododendron, Best in Show**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Dexter's Pink - Norman & Jean Beaudry  
3<sup>rd</sup> Powder Puff - Norman & Jean Beaudry

##### **Deep Pink**

1<sup>st</sup> Rocket – (exhibitor??)  
3<sup>rd</sup> Anna Rose Whitney - Carol Segree

##### **Pink w/ Blotch**

1<sup>st</sup> Kluis Sensation x Caroline - Norman & Jean Beaudry  
2<sup>nd</sup> Scintillation - Bill & Ann Mangels  
3<sup>rd</sup> Scintillation – Richard & Ginny Mohr

### Light Red

- 1<sup>st</sup> Fantastica – Carol Segree
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Red House - Norman & Jean Beaudry
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Red House - Bill & Anne Mangels

### Red, Black, or Vermillion

- 3<sup>rd</sup> Lee Ann - Norman & Jean Beaudry

### Red with Blotch

- 1<sup>st</sup> Henry's Red - Rosa & Bob McWhorter
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Midnight Mystique - Richard & Ginny Mohr

### Lavender to Light Blue

- 1<sup>st</sup> President Lincoln - Rosa & Bob McWhorter
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Katherine Dalton - Jane Goodrich

### Blue Purple w/ Blotch

- 1<sup>st</sup> Great Smoky - Norman & Jean Beaudry
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Smoky Mountain – Carol Segree

### Blue Purple

- 1<sup>st</sup> Lavender Lace - Rosa & Bob McWhorter

### Yellow, lighter shades

- 1<sup>st</sup> James Allison, op - Jane Goodrich

### White w. Green Blotch

- 1<sup>st</sup> Jane Grant - Bill & Ann Mangels

### Yellow / Pink

- 1<sup>st</sup> George's Delight - Bill & Ann Mangels

### Blush Pink with Green Blotch

- 1<sup>st</sup> Ingrid Mehlquist - Bill & Ann Mangels
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Kalinka - Bill & Ann Mangels

### Class 3rd 0 - Lepidote Hybrids

- 1<sup>st</sup> fimbriatum x minus - Carol Segree – *Best in Class*

### Class 4.0 - New Elepidote hybrids

- 1<sup>st</sup> Scintillation x Maryke - Don Hyatt – *Best in Class*

### Class 5.0 - Deciduous Azalea Species

- 1<sup>st</sup> *calendulaceum* - Norman & Jean Beaudry - *Best in Class*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> *japonicum* - Rosa & Bob McWhorter

### Class 6.0 - Deciduous Azalea Hybrids

#### White

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Ballerina – Don Hyatt

#### Yellow

- 1<sup>st</sup> Unknown - Bill & Ann Mangels
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Chetco - Don Hyatt

#### Orange

- 1<sup>st</sup> Unknown - Bill & Ann Mangels

#### Bi or Tricolored

- 1<sup>st</sup> Mt. Saint Helens - Don Hyatt – *Best in Class*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Cannon's Double - Bill & Ann Mangels

### Class 7.0 Evergreen Azaleas

#### White Single

- 1<sup>st</sup> Glacier - Don Hyatt
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Glacier - Carol Segree

### White Double

- 1<sup>st</sup> White Rosebud - Bill & Anne Mangels
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Secret Wish - Carol Segree

### White w/ Stripe

- 1<sup>st</sup> Clara Haller - Rosa & Bob McWhorter
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Shimmer - Richard & Ginny Mohr

### Orange Pink Single with White Edge and Blotch

- 1<sup>st</sup> Ben Morrison - Don Hyatt – *Best in Class, Best Azalea*
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Ben Morrison - Joe Miller
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Ben Morrison - Norman & Jean Beaudry

### Orange Pink Single

- 1<sup>st</sup> St. James - Joe Miller
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Dreamsicle - Don Hyatt

### Orange Pink, Hose in Hose or Double

- 1<sup>st</sup> Easter Parade - Joe Miller
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Fashion - Joe Miller

### Pink Single

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Aphrodite - Gabrielle & Bill Scott

### Rose Pink, Hose

- 1<sup>st</sup> Pink Ruffles - Carol Segree

### Rose Red, Hose in Hose or Double

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Hexe - Richard & Ginny Mohr

### Light Pink, Single

- 1<sup>st</sup> Pink Cloud - Don Hyatt
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Nancy of Robin Hill x Ben Morrison - Rosa & Bob McWhorter

### Orange Pink Single

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Pocono Pink - Rosa & Bob McWhorter

### Lavender Pink, Hose in Hose or Double

- 1<sup>st</sup> Delos - Don Hyatt
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Eliza Hyatt - Joe Miller



*Carol Segree with her Truss of 'Cape White'*

### Chapter Field Trips

The rest of this issue will be devoted to some of the meetings and trips people in our chapter took in the spring of 2007. If you have suggestions for other field trips, let your chapter officers know.

## Rhodoholics on the Road

The spring of 2007 offered so many rhododendron related activities it was hard to make them all. Below are a few of the highlights from April and May. In the next issue will be the June trips to Cape Cod for the Sandwich Club and this year's hikes to Roan Mountain and Gregory Bald.

### 2007 ARS Convention – San Francisco, CA

As the devastating Easter freeze was moving in on many southeast gardens, many of us were already on our way to the ARS Convention in San Francisco. The dates of the meeting ran from April 12-15, but some of us went out early to see other sights like Yosemite National Park, the Giant Sequoias, and the Monterey Coast. Others stayed after the meeting to see those sights or take the post convention tour. For most of us, the garden tours are among the most memorable activities at any convention. On Thursday's tour, we first stopped at the Conservatory of Flowers of Golden Gate Park, a historic white-washed greenhouse filled with orchids, tropical plants and waterlilies.



*Japanese Tea Garden*

After that, we headed off the San Francisco Botanical Gardens at Strybing Arboretum where we spent most of the day. The famed Japanese Tea Garden was a short walk away from the bus parking area, and there we were treated to a mature landscape in traditional Japanese style with winding paths, water features, and carefully trimmed shrubs that complimented the oriental architecture.

The Botanical Garden at Strybing Arboretum has a tremendous collection numbering more than

7500 plants from around the world. It seems in that mild climate they can grow just about everything. In the rhododendron display garden, we admired plantings of the fragrant, but



*'Mi Amor'*

tender maddeni hybrids like the creamy white 'Mi Amor' with its fragrant trumpets measuring nearly 6 inches across. It is a hybrid of *R. nuttali* and *lindleyi*.

In the native California exhibit, we finally saw the fragrant west coast native azalea, *R. occidentale*, in bloom. They had several lovely forms with ruffled and frilled flowers of white to pink with a gold flare.



*Rhododendron occidentale*

On Friday and Saturday, there were several tour options. Many of us took the South Bay tour which included private gardens and the famous Fioli House as the prime draw. This estate has extensive formal gardens and a spectacular spring bulb display. The house was used as the setting for the television show, "Dallas."

One of Saturday tour options was the North Bay tour which included a stop at Sonoma Horticultural Nursery, noted for their azalea hybridizing. The informal woodland gardens were lovely and in peak bloom, but we really wished we had more time so we could purchase plants. Sonoma no longer ships.

At the awards banquet on Saturday night, our own George McLellan was presented with the ARS Silver Medal. Congratulations, George!

On Sunday, some of us headed home but others embarked on a three-day post-convention tour. That trip went to Fort Bragg in northern California, stopping at the Quarry Hill and Mendocino Botanical Gardens, private gardens, and local wineries.



*Fioli House and Gardens*

## District 9 Meeting – Richmond, VA

It seemed as though we had only been home a few days when many of us took off to another great meeting. Hosted by the Middle Atlantic Chapter ARS, the District 9 meeting in Richmond from April 27 to 29 was one of the very best meetings we could remember, thanks to the careful organization by Barbara Hall and Debby Sauer.

One of the great features of this meeting that we hope to repeat at future meetings was a “plant swap” organized by Barbara Hall. Everyone went home with lots of new and exciting plants, for free!

Rosalie Nachman set the tone Friday night with her humorous presentation on gardening. We visited her lovely place the next day, and many of us wished we could borrow her careful and artistic eye to help us keep our plants in bounds so we could grow so many wonderful treasures in a small spot.



*Rosalie Nachman Gives Cuttings to Visitors*

We also visited Redesdale, the elegant estate of Mr. & Mrs. Charles Reed. Mr. Reed admitted that he only had two rhododendrons in the garden, but nobody complained. We toured the interior of their lovely home, and walked through formal garden filled with difficult to grow plants they had raised from like Icelandic poppies and delphinium.



*The Reed Estate*

We ate lunch at the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens and then toured the gardens and exhibits. Pots of heat tolerant native azalea hybrids like

brilliant gold Aromi hybrid ‘Sunny Side Up’ flanked some of the entryways. The plants in the garden were in prime condition, too.

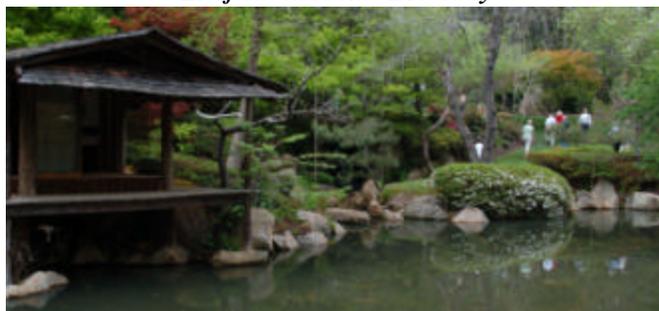


*Gray Carter and Jon Wallenmeyer with ‘Sunny Side Up’*

The final garden we visited was the private home of Mrs. Junko Liesfield, an incredibly artistic Japanese garden featuring huge stones, a waterfall, pond, and tea house landscaped with choice plants including many maples and azaleas. The driveway itself was a work of art, a mosaic of large slabs of rock and smaller cobblestones fit into a lovely design.



*Liesfield Garden – Driveway*



*Liesfield Garden – Tea House*

Encore Azalea hybridizer, Buddy Lee, was the keynote, followed by the auction. Our Potomac Valley Chapter is supposed to host the next District 9 meeting, but this is certainly a hard act to follow.

## Chapter Field Trip – *Peaks of Otter*

On May 7 to 8, a number of us took a chapter field trip down the Blue Ridge Parkway, similar to the post-convention tour offered as part of the 2006 ARS/ASA Convention. We traveled by car instead of bus this time, but had great time.

Convening at the Virginia Welcome Center on I-66 early Monday morning, we first stopped at the garden of Phil and Frances Lour in Haymarket. During the convention, it was pouring down rain as the buses pulled into the Lour's place but this time weather couldn't have been better. The azaleas seemed to be in peak condition, too.



*Lour Azalea Garden*

From there, we headed south to Charlottesville, but decided to stop at Prince Michel Vineyards on the way. After touring the winery and sampling all 18 of their current wine offerings on an empty stomach, we decided it best not to drive the hour to Michie Tavern and Monticello, and immediately stopped for lunch and black coffee so we'd be ready to negotiate those sharp turns along the Parkway.

Apparently, the dogwoods that had set so many buds the previous year were hurt by that April freeze so their flowers were not impressive as we had hoped. On the other hand, the native azaleas like *R. prinophyllum* and *R. periclymenoides* were not hurt by the freeze and they were excellent.



*Pioneer Settlement at Humpback Rocks*

That evening, we had dinner and spent the night at the Peaks of Otter Lodge, admiring the scenic lake and mountain views. After breakfast the next morning, we continued south on the Parkway to Roanoke and the garden of Paul James.



*Abbott Lake at the Peaks of Otter Lodge*

Paul's garden was in full bloom and spectacular. We checked out the many treasures in his rock garden, and strolled along the paths admiring his extensive rhododendron collection including the Delp and Haag hybrids.



*Paul James Garden*

We were all reluctant to leave Paul's paradise, but by early afternoon, people realized they needed to start heading home and left at random. Later we learned that Gabrielle and Bill Scott had been in an accident on their way home, and their truck rolled over several times. Although sporting some serious bruises at the Flower Show the next weekend, we were all so happy that neither one was seriously hurt.

Don Hyatt, George McLellan, and Billy Constable continued south that afternoon to Asheville to see the *R. vaseyi* and early spring flowers in North Carolina. They hiked up Pilot Mountain, and visited the former garden of Dr. Augie Kehr, one of the founders of our chapter as well as Velma Haag's Garden.

## A Trip to the Gable Homestead – by Don Hyatt

On May 14, Jean Beaudry, Jane Goodrich, and I took off to Stewartstown, Pennsylvania to see the original homestead and garden of the late Joe Gable. Michael Mills, President of the Valley Forge Chapter, and Randy Dalton, grandson of Katherine Dalton, one of Gable clan, had extended us an invitation to see the property. They asked if we could help identify some of the plants on the property.



*Michael Mills, Jane Goodrich, and Randy Dalton*

Recently, members of the Gable family started renovating the old farm house and cleaning up the place since the garden had not received care for many years. The property had been in the Gable family for at least seven generations, and they were anxious to bring it back to some semblance of its former glory.



*Gable Rhododendron 'Katherine Dalton'*

As one of the few remaining members of the original Gable Study Group, Jane Goodrich is our resident expert on the Gables. She had known Joe Gable and his late daughter, Caroline Gable. Jane and her late husband Ray had been to the property many times. With a folder of notes and some maps she had made years before, we were sure Jane's knowledge of



*The Gable Farmhouse*

the plants would help them identify many of the plants that had lost their tags over the years.

I had been to Gable's only once before, but I will never forget the late Caroline pointing out some huge plants in the garden, like the original 'Caroline' named for her, and the original 'Cadis'. That was in the late 1970's, and even back then those plants were like trees, the largest rhododendrons I had ever seen.

As we drove to Pennsylvania, we discussed the likelihood that the garden would be overgrown, and we were braced for a shock since the property and especially garden had been neglected for years. We didn't even have a street address, but we relied on memory, and some directions Jane remembered from Caroline, "Turn right in Stewartstown, and stop at the first house you can't see." Like many people who raise lots of plants, the yard was typically overgrown.

We had no trouble finding the home, and to our amazement, as we pulled into the driveway, we were met by a riot of color. Apparently, the Gable rhododendrons had stood the test of time. Growing with no care for decades, most of these stately rhododendrons were in glorious full bloom.

It was clear that the family had been trying to resurrect the garden, removing weeds and vines and



*Rhododendron 'Gretchen' in the Gable Garden*

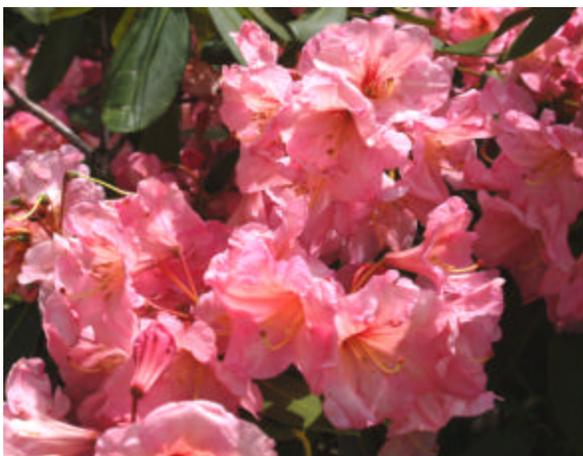
cutting down some of the trees. They had been remodeling the house, too. The place was beautiful.

It was too early for some of the Gable plants to be in flower like 'Cadis'. The plant was easy to spot with its enormous trunk nearly a foot across. The buds of the original 'Caroline', a plant of impressive size, were just beginning to stir but we noticed one flower just opening. The buds on 'County of York' were expanding, too, and it would be in bloom soon.



*R. yakushmanum and 'Katherine Dalton'*

Other plants were in full glory. The pale lavender 'Katherine Dalton' was an enormous plant, the perfect background for *R. yakushmanum* in the foreground at the edge of the lawn. The deep pink 'David Gable' was just past peak, but 'Gretchen', another deep pink with a darker blotch similar to 'Rochelle' was covered head to toe.



*'W. H. Ebaugh'*

As we worked our way around the garden we identified many others like the creamy yellow 'James Allison' with its dark red blotch deep in the throat, and 'Mary Garrison', a parent of many good yellows. We found lots of plants that Caroline had apparently propagated and had placed in various cutting beds below the barn, including the wonderful warm pink with red throat she named 'W. H. Ebaugh'. It is a

cross of ((maximum x haematodes) x 'Caroline') and has good foliage, too. We found several plants of the light pink 'Milo', quite identifiable due to its distinctive foliage from parent *R. brachycarpum*.

In regard to species, we located Gable's *R. fortunei*, a plant that must have shed a ton of seed that fall from all the pods still hanging on the plant. We noticed several forms of *R. yakushimamum* including the David Leech selection 'Mist Maiden', a nice pink *R. makinoi*, *R. maximum*, and a curious plant I had seen among Ray Goodrich's slides. That species was a form of *R. houlstonii* that changes color from pale pink to almost red as the flowers age.

There were other hybrids that none of us had ever



*R. houlstonii – Flower Color Deepens with Age*

seen before. We all admired a huge plant with light orange to peach colored flowers and a deep cranberry red throat. It was very distinctive but we had no idea what it could be. Below the barn was one of the Gable family favorites, a large peachy-pink to salmon hybrid with ruffled flowers. Although very distinctive, we couldn't identify that plant either.

There were some non-Gable hybrids in the garden that we did recognize, like the rose-red Dexter 'Gigi' and lavender 'Blue Peter'. There were some deciduous azaleas including the double yellow Ghent 'Narcissiflora'. We saw many evergreen azaleas in bloom, but didn't have time to look closely at those. We did see Gable's pride, the white 'Rose Greeky'.

There were many of the small-leaf lepidotes but since we were not too familiar with all the possible plants those might be, nobody suggested any names. Perhaps we'll tackle those later.

Since we were all getting weary and needed to get back home, we didn't have time to get down to Gable's woods, which was across a field and rather far away. That was the area where he lined out his seedlings and let them grow for many years before making any selections. Who knows what treasures are there, so we will have to explore another day.

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