



# Potomac Valley Chapter

## American Rhododendron Society

www.arspvc.org

*Late Summer Newsletter: September 2012*

### Calendar

- \* **September 15, 2012** – Volunteer at the White Garden
- \* **September 30, 2012** – PVC Regular Meeting, Potomac Comm. Ctr.
- \* **October 25, 2012** – Volunteer at the White Garden, Falls Church
- \* **October 27, 2012** – PVC Fall Banquet, Normandy Farms, Potomac
- \* **November 2-4, 2012** – MAC Fall Meeting, Massanutten, VA
- \* **January 13, 2013** – PVC Regular Meeting, Potomac Comm. Ctr.

### Chapter Officers

**President:** Bob McWhorter  
mcwho@comcast.net  
**Vice President:** Dan Neckel  
vaneckel@verizon.net  
**Treasurer:** Phyllis Rittman  
prittman@erols.com

### Our Next Meeting:

#### “Rhododendron Registration”

*by Michael Mills and Don Voss*

**Date: Sunday, September 30: 1 – 4 PM**

**Location: Potomac Community Center**

We are excited to have the new ARS Registrar, Michael Martin Mills, and our resident expert, Don Voss, speak at our first meeting this fall. They will be discussing how one registers a rhododendron cultivar.

Using a PowerPoint presentation that Don Hyatt and Don Voss have been working on for nearly two years, expect to see the process carefully illustrated from start to finish. Learn why registration is important, how to decide upon an acceptable plant name, what various botanical terms mean, how to measure flower color, and more. This presentation will be entertaining as well as educational, filled with many lovely images of azaleas and rhododendrons. We are anxious for suggestions on any aspects that need clarity since eventually we will offer a version of this PowerPoint presentation to the membership through the ARS Digital Library. If you would like the beta version to review, bring a thumb drive with you and we can provide a copy of the PowerPoint presentation.

Michael Mills is the past President of the Greater Philadelphia Chapter ARS and recently replaced Jay Murray as the new ARS Registrar. Don Voss has humorously characterized himself as “a long-suffering reader of the Cultivated Plant Code”. Please join us to learn more about rhododendrons from the experts.

**Refreshment Duty:** Persons whose last names begin with **A** through **H** are asked to bring some refreshment goodies for the table.

### Directions to the Potomac Community Center:

From **I-270 North**, stay in the **Local lanes** and take exit **#4B/ MONTROSE RD WEST**. Continue west on Montrose Rd. for **1.7 miles**. Turn **LEFT** on **FALLS RD** (MD-189). Continue **1.4 miles** to the Community Center: **11315 Falls Rd** (on the left)



*Donald H. Voss and Michael Martin Mills*

### Fall Banquet - George Woodard “In Search of Little Epiphanies”

**Normandie Farms, Potomac, MD**

**Saturday, October 27, 2012 12:00 - 4:00 PM**

Be sure to save the date for our fall banquet. It will be held at the popular Normandie Farms in Potomac again. To save postage, the registration form is included with this mailing. Please note that the deadline to register is Monday, October 22, 2012.

Our speaker will be one of the leading hybridizers in our country, George Woodard, the Superintendent



**Woodard hybrid ‘Diana Marguerite’**

G. Woodard



**Phipps Estate Superintendent, George Woodard**

of the Howard Phipps Estate, “Erchless”, on Long Island. He has been there for approximately 30 years.

Naturally, George will talk about the incredible gardens he has designed and maintained during that time, as well as some of the hybrids he has been developing. The exquisitely landscaped property has magnificent old trees, a large rhododendron collection, perennials, fountains, lawns, and sweeping vistas. Not open to the public, the garden was on tour at the 2010 ARS Convention and the Phipps family hosted a luncheon for attendees. It was just phenomenal!

George has produced many fantastic new hybrids in a broad range of colors. We all admired one of his deep burgundy red hybrids that we saw during the garden tour at the Phipps Estate. A sister seedling of



**Catwalk View at the Phipps Estate** G. Woodard

(Wine Fuchsia x (Kilimanjaro x Pink Petticoats)), one of that plant’s trusses won “Best in Show” at the convention. You will definitely want to see the fantastic new hybrids George has been developing. In time, some may find their way to our gardens. George may even bring a few plants with him for our auction.

George said he will also talk about the work of two other great hybridizers whose gardens he has visited, Frank Fujioka and Jim Barlup. This promises to be an outstanding banquet so be sure to register early!

## **Dues are Due! *By Phyllis Rittman***

Accompanying this newsletter is your dues notice for the coming year. Please return to me:

**Phyllis Rittman**  
**PVC ARS Treasurer**  
**prittman@erols.com**

Be sure to make checks payable to the Potomac Valley Chapter ARS, or just Potomac Valley. Annual Membership is \$40 per year - finally, something that hasn’t gone up. This amount is for either an individual or a family membership.

Associate membership for those who already belong to one ARS Chapter is \$10 per year. Indicate your base chapter on the form.

Some of the advantages of membership are:

- ✍ A great seed exchange.
- ✍ An even greater newsletter.
- ✍ Fall banquet w/speaker and plant auction
- ✍ Regular meetings with great speakers
- ✍ Summer picnic of good food and fun
- ✍ Plants for members
- ✍ January photo contest with prizes
- ✍ “Field trips” for plant buying and
- ✍ “Field trips” to visit spectacular gardens
- ✍ Spring flower show

Please make sure your current email address and phone number are correct and printed clearly on your renewal form. We will not include that information in our membership roster if you have concerns, but we do use it to alert members of any last minute changes.

You can send me your banquet registration fees at the same time, but please indicate on the check what the payment is for. Since we have to give Normandie Farms a head count, please send by October 22.

Please join us for 2013. It should be a great year!

Phyllis

## **Save the Azaleas!**

The Azalea and Boxwood Collections at the U.S. National Arboretum are the finest in the world but we haven’t saved them yet. As the year draws to a close, please consider making a charitable contribution to the cause through the Friends of the National Arboretum:

**FONA – Save the Azaleas**  
**3501 New York Avenue, NE**  
**Washington, D.C. 20002**  
Phone: **(202) 544-8733**  
Internet: [www.fona.org](http://www.fona.org)

## Spring 2012 Garden Tour

What a wonderful spring garden tour we had this year! We extend special thanks to our garden hosts, Richard and Ginny Mohr, Norm and Jean Beaudry, Jon and Phyllis Wallenmeyer, Bob and Rosa McWhorter, and Carol Segree. Thanks so much!



**'Great Smoky' in the Mohr Garden**

The gardens were lovely and we also saw so many unusual varieties in bloom. I know you must have your favorites. There are a few images with this article but also a color page showing a few of colorful, newer varieties that caught your editor's eye.

In the Mohr garden, three plants that stood out for me were 'Great Smoky', the pale lavender Haag hybrid with its deep people blotch, 'Brookhaven', a lovely yellow the Mohr's purchased at the 2010 convention, and then one of the Sandwich Club plants, 'Pilkington's Peach' that made a perfect combination with the yellow-green Japanese maple foliage.



**Ginger Burd admires 'Lara Janine' in the Beaudry Garden**

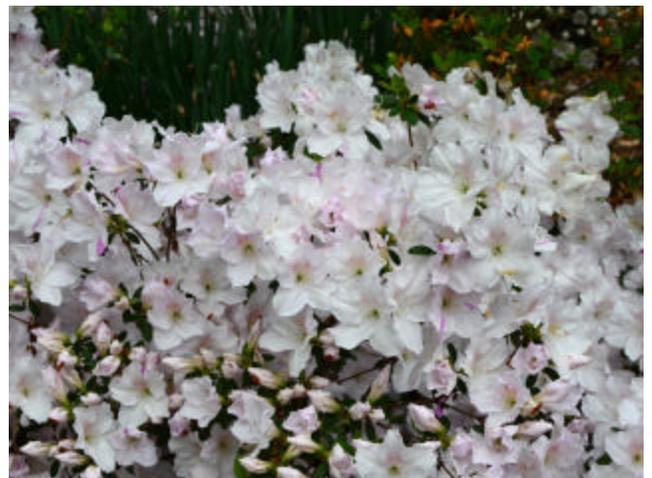
At the Beaudry Garden, Norman demonstrated how to make a cross, and we had time to walk around the

nearly 3 fenced acres of rhododendrons, azaleas, and companion plants. I was happy to see plants so many of their Dexter and Cowles hybrids from the Sandwich Club in bloom, like orange-pink 'Bea McDonald' and pale cream with a deep purple throat, 'Dottie No Sta', so named because it has no stamens. The Beaudry's frilled, pale yellow hybrid, 'Lara Janine' which they named for their daughter, was putting on a grand show.



**'Hardy Loderi' in the Wallenmeyer Garden**

Greeting us along the driveway at the Wallenmeyer home was the very fragrant, creamy white hybrid rhododendron, 'Hardy Loderi'. In the backyard of the Wallenmeyer garden were a number of spider azaleas including whites like 'Wagner's White Spider' which is like a white 'Kormo-shikibu' and 'Nannie Angell', which has spoon shaped petals. There was also Buck Clagett's reddish purple 'Tina's Whorled'. One of my favorite evergreen azaleas, 'Bayou,' was putting on a spectacular show. It was a solid mass of blush pink.



**'Bayou', one of the Belgian Glenn Dale Azaleas**

After having lunch at a pavilion in the McWhorter's community, we toured their lovely garden. They continue to expand the number of trails and plantings.

## Colorful Highlights from the 2012 Chapter Garden Tour



**'Tina's Whorled' – Wallenmeyer Garden**



**'Dreamsicle' – Beaudry Garden**



**'Razzle Dazzle' – McWhorter Garden**



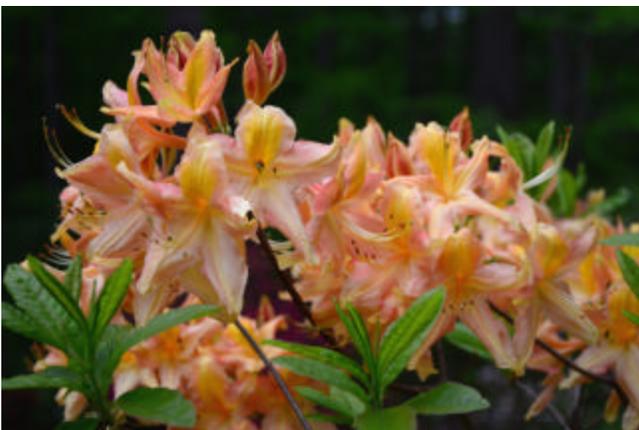
**'Lara Janine' – Beaudry Garden**



***R. carolinianum* x *R. augustinii* – Segree Garden**



**'Pilkington Peach' – Mohr Garden**



**'Long Mountain Peach' – Segree Garden**



**'Blazing Grace' – McWhorter Garden**

The plant that drew most attention was Tom Ahern's new hybrid, 'Blazing Grace'. Its bicolor flowers are yellow edged in rose and the color was really striking.



**Vista in the McWhorter Garden**

Bob had already started making crosses on the plant. I was also impressed with a Harold Greer hybrid called 'Razzle Dazzle' a large pale pink with a dark blotch.

Our final garden stop was at Carol Segree's home. Beckoning us into the backyard at the end of the brick path beside her garage were two gorgeous deciduous azaleas, 'Yellow Lights' and 'Long Mountain Peach'. As we strolled along the paths in the wooded ravines behind her home, the rhododendrons, azaleas, and companion plants were at peak bloom. Carol wanted us to see a beautiful, smoky light blue lepidote rhododendron that was a cross of *R. carolinianum* x *R. augustinii* from the late George Ring. We really should name and introduce that plant. It is charming!



**Chapter Members Touring the Segree Garden**

### **Sad News – Mary Rutley**

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Mary Rutley on August 23 due to complications following a fall. She will be missed.

### **Asheville Convention – May 2012**

Spring may have arrived a month early this year, but we were treated to a great convention and gardens filled with flowers in Asheville. In a normal year, that date would be too early for most of the native azaleas on the Parkway, but *R. vaseyi* was in peak bloom.



**Marianne and Bruce Feller (left) and Richard Mohr (right) Congratulate Don Hyatt on the ARS Gold Medal**

Photo: W. Bedwell

There were a number of ARS medals awarded at the meeting and the citations appeared in the recent ARS Journal. Your newsletter editor wants you to know he feels extremely honored and humbled to be named as a recipient of the ARS Gold Medal. He thanks all those involved in support of his nomination.

Three ARS Silver Medals were also presented at the convention including associate member Jim Brant from Gloucester, VA, associate member Steve Henning from Pennsylvania, and the team of Alan and Shirley Anderson from New Jersey. Congratulations!

We saw many lovely private and public gardens on the tours. One of the most impressive plantings to me was against the North Carolina Arboretum administration building where some native *Stewartia malacodendron* trees were in full bloom. The lovely white flowers with dark stamens of this rare species complemented the pink trusses of *R. 'Scintillation'*.



***Stewartia malacodendron* at the NC Arboretum**

Many of us visited the Haag Garden after the convention and we had a chance to see some of the spectacular hybrids of the late Russ and Velma Haag. We discussed with the new owners of the property the possibility of starting a project similar to the Sandwich Club where we evaluate plants each year, and then root some cuttings to test, distribute, and possibly name.

We were able to get some of the excess plants from the convention sale, so expect to see those offered for sale at our banquet auction and other activities. If you want to see the list, contact Bob McWhorter.

### **The Desperate Need for Volunteers**

When budgets for public gardens in our region like the Azalea Collection at the National Arboretum and the White Garden in Falls Church are low, one thing we can do to help is provide some time volunteering to help maintain these treasures. The advantage of volunteers is that they are usually highly skilled workers but cost the garden nothing. For those who volunteer, it is not menial labor but an enjoyable social activity that will provide lasting benefits. I hope we can encourage more members to become volunteers.



**Arboretum Volunteers Break for Lunch**

Barbara Bullock, the Azalea Curator at the National Arboretum for over 20 years, tells me she used to have quite a few people who helped her with the azalea collection. Unfortunately, many of her regulars have passed on and others are no longer able to assist due to age or other factors. They meet on Thursdays.

On Saturday, April 7, Barbara arranged a weekend volunteer session at the Arboretum that brought out a large crowd. We weeded, pruned out dead branches, cleaned up, and picked leaves out of the azaleas. It was so gratifying to see the transformation, getting the garden ready for spring! She is planning another session next April about the same time.

Mary Olien, the Director of Green Spring Gardens, now manages the John C. and Margaret K. White

Gardens. Sadly, we have not been successful in getting enough volunteers there, either. We meet monthly, usually the last Thursday of the month but also on some Saturdays. The electricity has been turned off so neither water or restroom facilities are available. Thus, our sessions are only half day.

There are only two work days left at the White Garden for this year. If you can spare a few hours to help weed, prune and clean up, we could use you.

**Saturday, Sept. 15, 2012 9:00 AM to Noon**

**Thursday, Oct. 25, 2012 9:00 AM to Noon**

Mary Olien coordinates the activity. For more info:

**Mary Olien: 703-642-5173**

**mary.oliem@fairfaxcounty.gov**



**Mary Olien (center) with PVC member Jim Hayes (far right) and other volunteers at the White Garden**

### **Status of the Great Azalea Planting**

Last October, a number of our members converged on Hooper Bald for the Great Azalea Planting. Hooper Bald is mountaintop south of the Smokies where some very large flowered forms of *R. calendulaceum* grow.

The azaleas on Hooper had been getting overgrown, but under Jim Brant's leadership we have been working with the National Forest Service since 2004 to trim back competing vegetation to give the azaleas more room to grow. The Great Azalea Planting was the final phase of the project where we planted out 700 two-year old azalea seedlings on Hooper Bald and nearby Oak Knob from seed collected on the bald.

In early June, we returned to check on those seedlings to see if they had survived the winter. The plants we set out were smaller than we had anticipated, but even though there were casualties, we were pleased to see that the majority of the seedlings had come through the winter just fine and were leafing out. It will take a number of years before the azaleas reach blooming size, but they are on their way!



**Hooper Bald - The “Best Red” *R. calendulaceum***

The other exciting thing about Hooper was the floral display that greeted us this year. This was the heaviest bloom we had ever seen. We identified many superior plants flowering for the first time and the prize was a huge deep red with trusses as large as the palm of your hand. It is the best red *R. calendulaceum* we have seen anywhere. Hopefully, the plant will have some seed this fall.

### **Chapter Picnic – Election of Officers!**

We had a good turnout at our chapter picnic on June 24. In addition to feasting on hamburgers, hotdogs, and delicious side dishes prepared by our members, we held a plant exchange and everyone went home with many new plants for the garden. We also held an auction of rhododendrons and azaleas to help defray the costs of the chapter supplied picnic supplies.



**Chapter Members Gather for the Picnic**

We did elect officers for the coming year. We want to thank past President Richard Mohr and of course his wife Ginny for serving our chapter so capably for the past few years. We welcome Bob McWhorter as the new President and Dan Neckel as Vice-president. Phyllis Rittman has agreed to continue as treasurer.

### **Plans for the Coming Year**

Chapter President, Bob McWhorter, held a board meeting in July to plan activities for the coming year. Dates through January are posted in the calendar with this newsletter but we thought you might be interested in some of the other activities we are planning. Dates are not yet finalized, but when they are we will include them in future newsletter calendars.

Joe Marsala will be coordinating our annual trip to North Carolina nurseries in early March. This activity is always a lot of fun, and we hope you will join us.

In April, we are planning two flower shows and a field trip. One Flower Show we anticipate being at the National Arboretum in mid April, and it will include a plant sale and an educational component for the general public. The second flower show and plant sale will be held at the Farmers Market in Annapolis at the end of the month. In between, we are planning a two day excursion in the middle of the week to Pennsylvania. One day we expect to tour public gardens like Longwood, Winterthur, or Mt. Cuba, but the next day we intend to visit several nurseries in that area so we can buy plants. We will not interfere with the ASA Convention in Athens, GA, April 18 – 21.

Of course, the ARS Convention is scheduled in the Seattle area from May 1 – 4 so many of us will be heading out there. At the end of May, Norm Beaudry will be coordinating a field trip to Cape Cod to see the Dexter Rhododendrons. The Sandwich Club auction where we purchased rooted cuttings may be over, but that doesn't mean we can't go see the flowers.

The month of June will be busy, too. Somewhere around mid June, Don Hyatt will be organizing a trip to Roan Mountain and Gregory Bald to see the native azaleas and rhododendrons. He does plan to go there this October to collect seed and see the fall foliage. If you are interested, let Don know. Our annual picnic and plant exchange is scheduled for June 23. There will be plenty of time in July to cut the grass!

### **From Your District Director: *Don Hyatt***

In May, I took over from Ann Mangels as your new District 9 Director. David Banks became the new Alternate. I will be attending the ARS Board Meeting on the West Coast in mid September so if you have any pressing concerns, contact me soon. One initiative I would like to pursue is District wide testing of promising new cultivars. We are looking for cuttings of plants we should try and experienced growers to test them. If you want to be involved, please let me know.

Donald W. Hyatt, Newsletter Editor  
Potomac Valley Chapter ARS  
Don@donaldhyatt.com