



Potomac Valley Chapter

American Rhododendron Society

www.arspvc.org

Summer Newsletter: July 2018

Potomac Valley Chapter Calendar - 2018

- **July 14, 2018** – PVC Garden Workshop, Potomac Community Center
- **September 23** – Chapter Picnic, Seneca Creek State Park
- **October 19-20** – ARS Regional, Chattanooga, TN
- **October 27** – PVC Fall Banquet, Normandie Farm, Potomac, MD

Chapter Officers

President: Ginny Mohr
rngmohr@msn.com
Secretary: Diane Reinke
Isabelle49@aol.com
Treasurer: Phyllis Rittman
prittman@erols.com

Our Next Meeting: “Leaf Castings”

by Rachel Yungman

Plus Some Other Clever Things to Try

Date: Saturday, July 14, 2018

Time: 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

Where: Potomac Community Center

We are excited to have Rachel Yungman come from Roanoke to teach our chapter members how to make leaf castings. These are concrete impressions of actual leaves that can be very decorative. They can enhance your home décor or be used as accents in the garden. The process is not too difficult but it takes several days to complete. Some steps take time like allowing the concrete to set and cure before finishing them with paint. That will disguise the fact that the leaves are actually concrete. Our meeting will not be a hands-on workshop but should give you enough information to try the procedure at home.

Rachel is a talented artist and embellishes the leaves she makes or other sand castings with paint that turns them into true works of art. We have asked her to bring some finished pieces to our meeting so people can purchase them. Check out the link to Concrete Creations on the Falconer’s Field website to see some examples of her lovely work:

www.falconersfield.com/concrete_creations/

Please note that our meeting will be Saturday, July 14, rather than Sunday. We will be meeting in one of the smaller rooms at the Potomac Community Center which is to right after entering the building rather than the general meeting room we normally use. We expect to have some other crafts on display that will give people ideas of other things to try.

Refreshment Duty: We ask members whose last names are in the final third of the alphabet (**R – Z**) to bring a snack to share for the refreshment table.



Cement Leaf Castings Displayed in the Garden of Elissa Steeves

Directions: Potomac Community Center

11315 Falls Rd, Potomac, MD

From **I-270 North**, stay in the **Local lanes**

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 Center (on the left)

11315 Falls Rd, Potomac, MD

Fall Banquet, October 27: Tony Dove

Save October 27 for our annual fall banquet at Normandie Farm. Our speaker will be Tony Dove who designed Londontowne Gardens but has been a horticulturist at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center. He has raised rhododendrons at his family home for over 50 years and just authored a new book titled “Essential Native Trees and Shrubs for the Eastern United States.” It is available online but go to the ARS Store (www.arsstore.org) before linking to Amazon so we get a small commission.

Spring Garden Treks

by Don Hyatt

What a busy year we have had so far. In March, some of us took off to North Carolina for our annual trek to buy plants at several nurseries that hold their open houses at that time of year. We visited Camellia Forest Nursery, Big Bloomers, and Plant Delights Nursery. We admired display gardens and returned with crates of plants, some of which we had to protect until the weather warmed. It was worth it!



Agaves in the Display Garden at Plant Delights Nursery

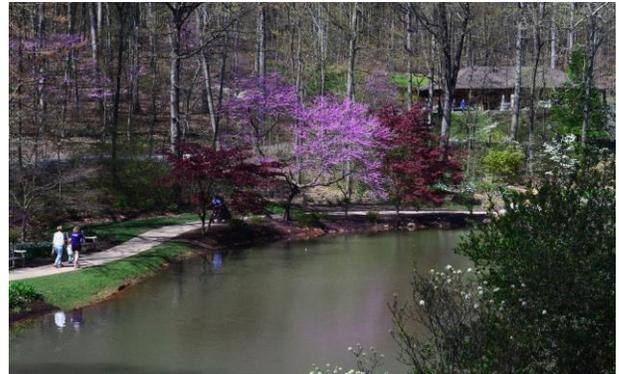
In mid April, we took a day trip to Pennsylvania to visit Groff's Nursery, Conestoga Nursery, and Black Creek Greenhouses to buy more plants. They have wonderful bargains and carry some rare varieties we don't often see locally. The dwarf conifers, bedding plants, and wildflowers I bought are glorious now and will provide color all season.



Assorted Begonias, Coleus, and Impatiens for the Deck

In late April, the Middle Atlantic Chapter ARS held its spring meeting near Harrisonburg, VA. Many of us are Associate members of their chapter since it costs just \$10 extra. In addition to a great newsletter, we can enjoy their weekend meetings which include speakers and garden tours. I was happy to see evidence of Ron Brown's volunteer work at James Madison University's Edith J. Carrier Arboretum. He and Norma had to leave their lovely home this year but the Virginia Bluebells and

Trillium grandiflorum he planted at the Arboretum were putting on a grand show. The tree peonies he donated were not open yet but my Ron Brown tree peonies were in bloom when I returned home.



Vista at the Edith J. Carrier Arboretum at JMU



Trillium and Bluebells from Ron Brown's Garden at JMU

Then came May and some of us realized it was impossible to do everything. Our chapter held its garden tour the first weekend of the month, but some of our members were already on their way to the joint meeting between the ARS and the German Rhododendron Society in Europe. I won't include garden tour pictures here but will write separate articles on those. The full ARS 2018 tour included preconference tours in the Netherlands, Germany, Denmark, and Sweden. Then there was the main conference in Bremen Germany which had more tours, banquets, and speakers. Finally, there was post tour to Finland. I only attended the Germany segment but I hope people will share photos and commentary of the other tours.

Suddenly it was June and time for our annual hikes to the mountains of Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee to see the native azaleas and rhododendrons in bloom. The flowers were glorious and I will try to share more on that later.

2018 Garden Tours *Potomac Valley Chapter ARS*

What a wonderful garden tour we had this year! The skies were cloudy and there was a slight threat of rain, but the weather was cool and the flowers were at their peak. There may have been a few sprinkles somewhere but the lighting was perfect for photographs. Bright sun tends to bleach out delicate colors when taking pictures.

Hidden View Farm – Richard Bradshaw

Our first stop was at Hidden View Farm near Annapolis. This 100+ acre estate has views of the South River. The home of Richard Bradshaw, it is now part of the Maryland Environmental Trust so this scenic property will be preserved for posterity.



Richard Bradshaw (right) and his dog greet visitors.

The Manor House and much of the garden is behind a substantial fence that protects his plants and peacocks from harm. Wide trails through the azaleas, wildflowers, and other plants provided views of the pond and garden. Richard has used many local evergreen azalea hybrids in the landscape including Marshy Point introductions. I am particularly fond of a pale, ruffled lavender pink called ‘Marshy Point Love Lace’ I saw along the trail behind the house. We also admired a Bowie Mill introduction called ‘Lil Fella’ which has small double flowers in shades of pink. So cute!



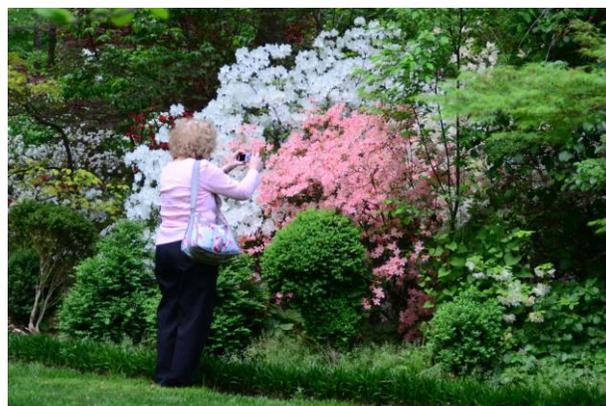
Ruffled flowers of ‘Marshy Point Love Lace’



Azaleas and ornamental plants including wildflowers and tree peonies border the expansive lawn at Hidden View Farm.



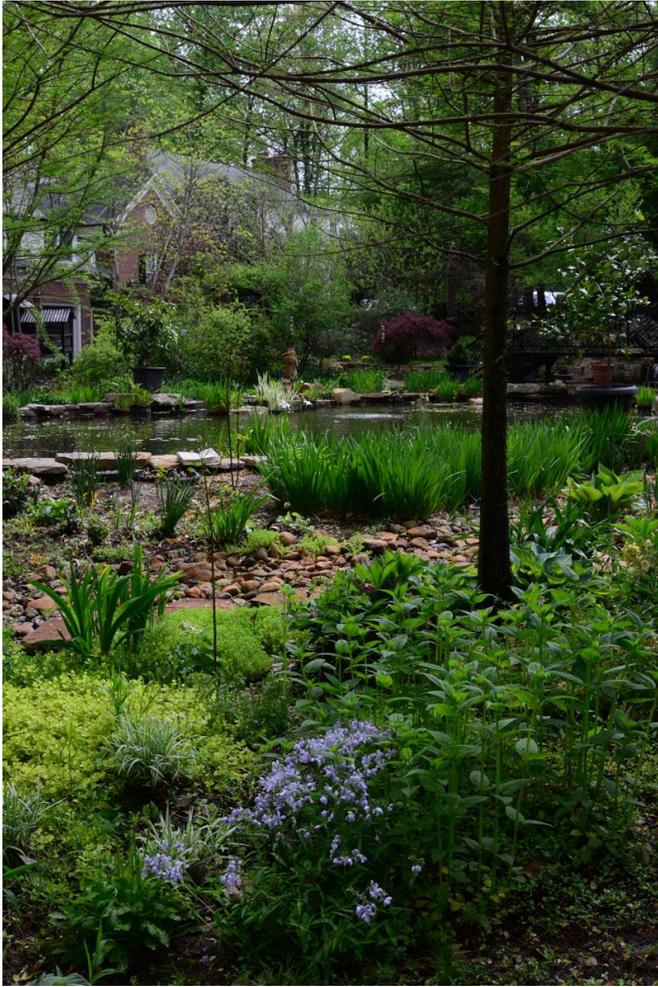
The Manor House is visible from across the pond.



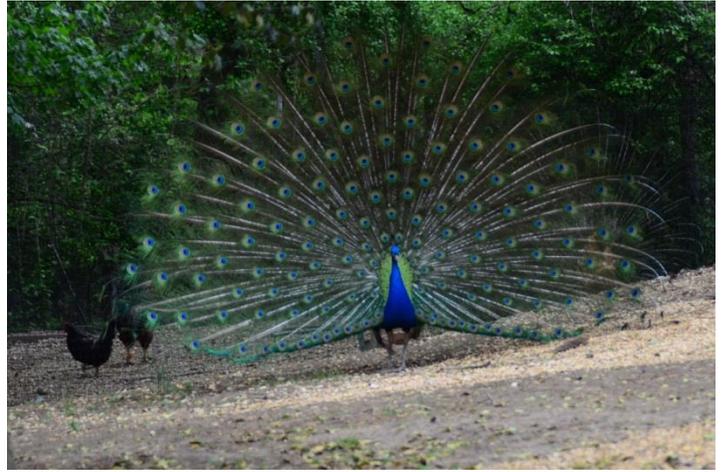
Diane Reinke photographs azaleas in the border garden



Juliette, the Wallenmeyer’s adorable granddaughter, escorts Richard’s dog to a chapter gathering on the patio.



Pond Vista



Peacock Attracting Attention



Garden Trail

**Hidden View Farm
Richard Bradshaw
Additional Images**



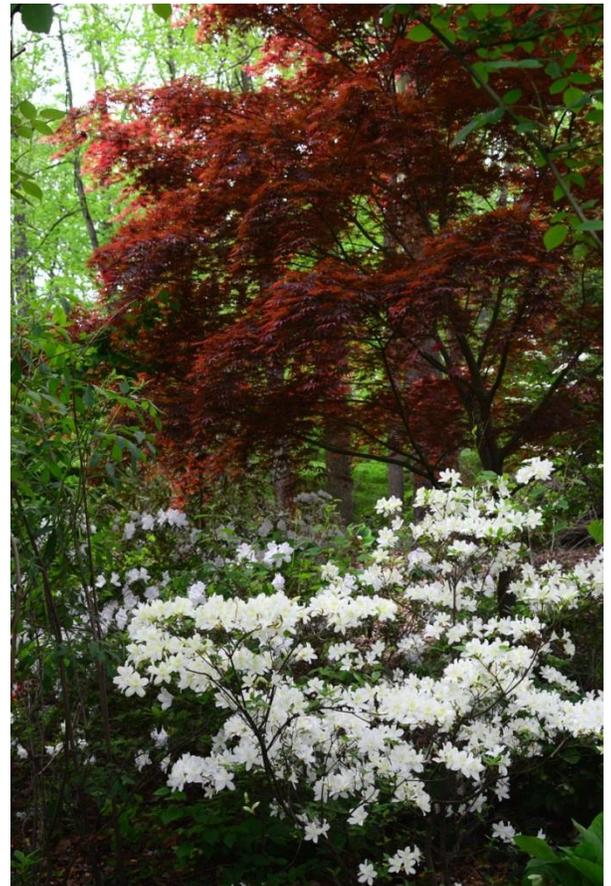
Tree Peony



Knap Hill Hybrid



Bowie Mill Hybrid 'Lil Fella'



White Azaleas and Japanese Maple

Carol Segree's Garden

Only a few minutes from Richard's place, our next destination was the beautiful garden of Carol Segree. We brought our own bag lunches and ate while admiring the spectacular landscape she has created over the years. Carol recently finished an addition on the back of her house that expanded her kitchen into an area that used to be a deck. Now she can admire her garden year round. She has built a new patio and garden paths, and re-landscaped the area. I have been to Carol's place many times but I don't ever remember seeing it at such perfection!



Carol's new kitchen addition (left) at the back of the house provides year round vistas of her garden.



Fragrant native azaleas add to the ambiance of her new patio.

Carol's garden has many rare rhododendrons and azaleas that have been produced by chapter members. The warm pink 'John C. White' that is a central feature in her back yard was a hybrid raised by late Ray and Jane Goodrich from seed donated by George Ring who ran our local seed exchange. The petaloid azalea 'Wagner's White Spider' was 'Koromo Shikibu' hybrid from Dave Wagner, and an open pollinated seedling of (Odee Wright x *wardii*) she got from Paul James has gorgeous white

The digital version of this newsletter has an extra page of pictures for each garden. If you did not get the email version, contact Don Hyatt: donaldhyatt@verizon.net.



Carol stands beside (Odee Wright x *wardii*) x (*hyperythrum*)?



'John C. White' creates a focal point from her kitchen window.

trusses. We have decided the other parent must have been *R. hyperythrum* due to the recurved foliage.

Some other unusual plants we admired included the very fragrant 'Hardy Loderi' with large, ivory white blossoms, a tiny flowered azalea called *R. serpyllifolium* that has pale pink blossoms less than ½ inch across, a light blue lepidote rhododendron from the cross (*carolinianum* x *augustinii*), and an evergreen azalea with no petals at all that is a *R. kaempferi* azalea selection called 'Kinshibe'. The blossoms are just a mass of red stamens.

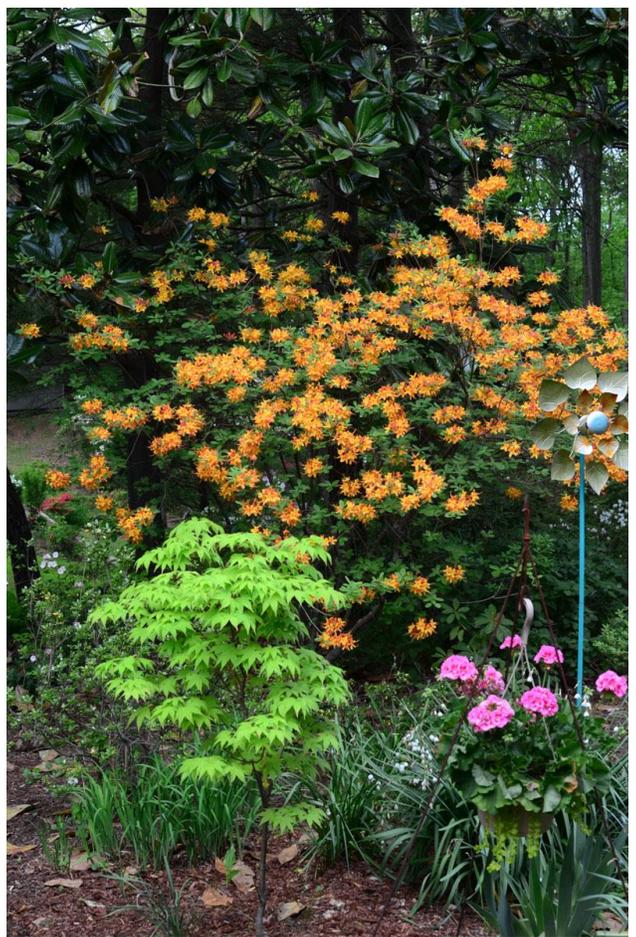
Professionally a graphics designer, Carol uses her considerable artistic talent to blend her collection of rare rhododendrons and companion plants into a superb landscape. What a treat!



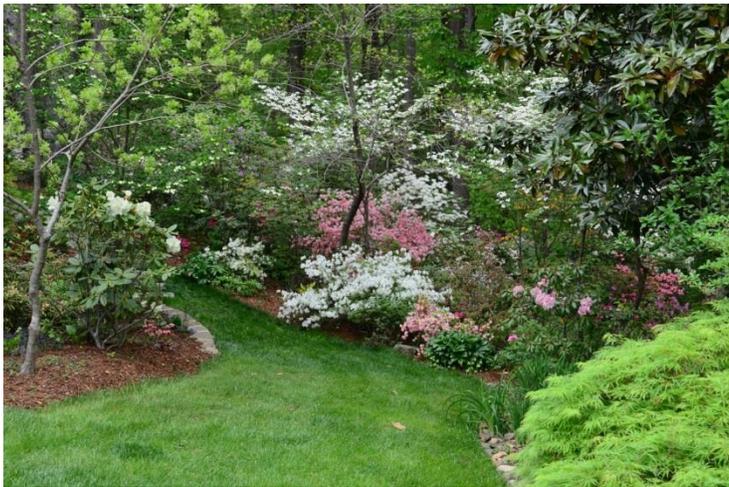
'Wagner's White Spider' planted with hellebores and hostas.



New Slate Walkway



***R. austrinum* Hybrid with Japanese Maple and Geraniums**



Backyard Vista

**Carol Segree Garden
Additional Images**



Frog Planter with Oxalis



'Kinshibe'



'Quiet Quality' and 'David Gable' along the Driveway



'John C. White'



Tree Peony

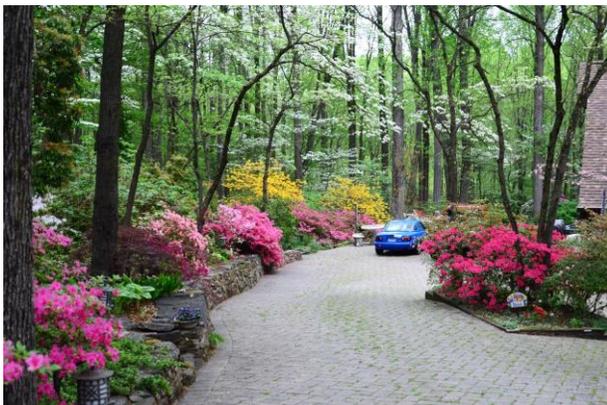
Bob and Rosa McWhorter's Garden

Our final stop of the day was the garden of Bob and Rosa McWhorter who live not far from Carol. When we visited last year, Bob said that heavy rains had beaten down the blooms and ruined the display. He lamented, "You should have been here last week." We admired the many plants still in bloom but thought the garden was still gorgeous.

This year, we saw the garden a week earlier and there were no weather disasters. Surely, this time we hit peak bloom. Now we understand what Bob meant. Wow! What a spectacular garden!



The McWhorter home is nestled among tall trees



Azaleas and wildflowers spill over the rock wall

The McWhorter's home sits down from the road and the property is shaded by tall tulip poplar trees. They have kept the branches trimmed high so there is plenty of light for the rhododendrons, azaleas, and dogwoods to flourish under that high canopy.

Sloping to a ravine and small stream at the back of the property, the undulating topography has inspired the McWhorters to take advantage of those slopes to create interesting trails that wind among the beds of rhododendrons and azaleas. Rosa has carefully placed choice wildflower accents along the trails so visitors need to look carefully for the details in addition to the bold landscape features.



Rosa among the rhododendrons



Bob (left) with Jon Wallenmeyer

Near the deck, a mass of the deep pink and white bicolor azalea 'Carrie Amada' was a real eye catcher. 'Admiral Semmes', tall yellow deciduous azaleas on the far side of the yard, were stunning. 'Blaney's Blue' still had a few blue-purple flowers.

Bob is a hybridizer and made certain I saw a plant called 'Lily of Ring' that he had used before. It came from one of our original chapter members and local seed exchange chair, George Ring. I have many of George's hybrids but I had not heard of it. It was gorgeous with large white tubular flowers and very fragrant. Joe Gable's 'Madonna' had white, lily like flowers. That plant bloomed for Gable in 1953 and he crossed it with *fortunei* several times and shared seed. The cross produced many spectacular whites so it might be the parentage of 'Lily of Ring'.



One of the trails in the backyard



'Lily of Ring' – Fragrant Hybrid

Bob had some other seedlings in bloom. I liked the cross of 'Scintillation' with 'Apritan' which had fragrant light pink flowers. Another excellent plant!

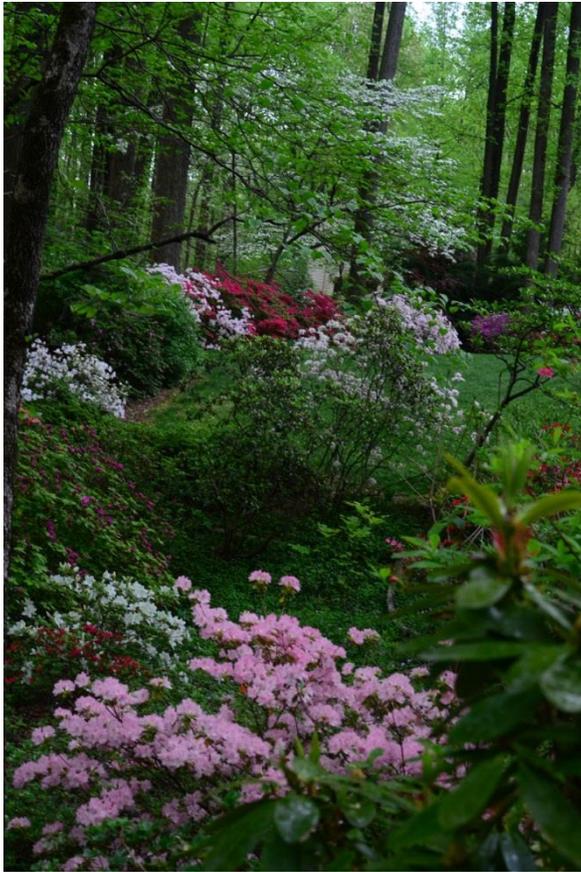
Thanks again to our garden hosts. We appreciate your sharing those beautiful gardens with us.



View across the Backyard



'Admiral Semmes' and other Azaleas



Vista from a Trail



Backyard and Deck



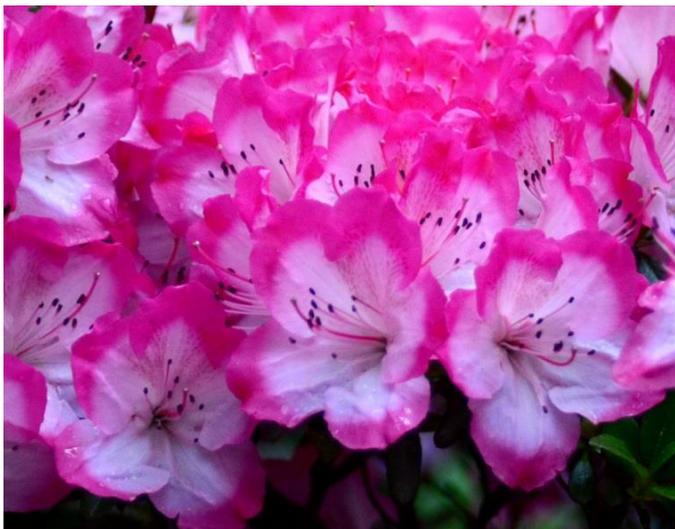
'Blaney's Blue'

**Bob and Rosa
McWhorter
Garden**



Tree Peony

**Additional
Images**



'Carrie Amanda'



View from the Deck

The 2018 ARS/DRG Convention

By Don Hyatt

There is not room in this newsletter nor do I have time to do a thorough report on the Convention in Bremen, Germany. I will provide brief commentary and some pictures in this newsletter and will include other articles in future issues.

This was a joint meeting of our American Rhododendron Society (ARS) and the German Rhododendron Society, or officially the Deutsche Rhododendron Gesellschaft (DRG). It was truly a spectacular event and extremely well organized, thanks to Dr. Hartwig Schepker who is the Director of the Bremen Rhododendron Park and his staff who hosted the event. Having chaired a couple of conventions, I know how much work that takes.

The weather was great. That part of Germany is known for its cool, rainy weather so they gave everyone an umbrella in our convention bags. Naturally that meant the weather would be dry and sunny the entire time. The days were warm, in the upper 70's to low 80's, and although some people from northern climes felt that was too hot, the humidity was low. Here in the DC area, we can get temperatures like that in February and March. We saw some spectacular plants and gorgeous gardens!

I was impressed with some species we saw like *Rhododendron insigne* that had tight trusses of white



Rhododendron insigne in Bremen's Species Garden

flowers brushed with pink. It has spectacular foliage and is about as perfect as a rhododendron can be. I probably killed that plant before but I must try again.

The German Rhododendron Society celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2010 and the ARS will celebrate its 75th anniversary in Portland in 2020. There are old plants in Bremen and it is amazing to see giant Ironclad hybrids everywhere towering 20 to 30 ft.



Huge Rhododendrons in the Bremen Rhododendron Park

high and spreading 50 to 60 ft. wide. They were in full bloom, covered with trusses from top to bottom.

They also had new hybrids and species on display. Most of the evergreen azaleas were through blooming and the masses of fragrant yellow *R. luteum* that grow everywhere were nearing their end. Other deciduous azaleas including many native azaleas from the U.S. like *R. calendulaceum*, *R. atlanticum*, and *R. eastmanii* were beautiful.

At Bruns Nursery, I marveled at a large bed of deciduous azalea seedlings from the cross of the double yellow Ghent azalea 'Narcissiflora' with the ruffled West Coast *R. occidentale* hybrid called 'Washington State Centennial'. It was a spectacular display of both single and double azaleas, many quite ruffled, in pastel shades of yellow, pink, and white. I must try a cross similar to that myself!



Deciduous Azalea seedlings at Bruns Nursery

Photographers! If you took some pretty pictures this year, please consider entering the ARS Photo Contest. The deadline is July 31, 2018. Look on page 103 of your Spring 2018 Journal for details. Send entries by email to our Editor, Glen Jamieson, at ars.editor@gmail.com.

ARS Awards in Bremen

At the ARS Banquet in Bremen, the society did present some well-deserved awards. Usually the number of Gold Medals is limited to two per year but due to the unique nature of this international joint meeting, a decision was made to present some extra commendations. There were two Gold Medals people in the United States, and two Gold Medals awarded to people in Europe.

In the US, one Gold Medal went to our own Dave Banks who was involved with the restructuring of the ARS and making sure that we were no longer in financial difficulty. The other went to June Walsh who has been ARS Secretary for many years and helped chair the 2017 ARS Convention in Eureka.

Dave Banks - ARS Gold Medal



District 9 Director Bill Meyers and ARS President Ann Mangels congratulate Dave Banks (center) on his Gold Medal

Your tireless efforts on behalf of the ARS at Chapter, District and Society level, have been an inspiration to those of us having had the pleasure to work with you.

You have served as District 9 Director and functioned simultaneously as Chair of the Society's Budget and Finance Committee and ARS Treasurer.

You played a major role in the search effort for an Executive Director replacement and the restructuring of those duties, the training of a replacement and your continued role as prime mentor.

You have committed tremendous time and effort to the organization of this international Convention, developing creative and efficient solutions to a myriad of challenges.

Your commitment to the continued viability of the ARS has materially strengthened the Society. For your outstanding service the ARS is proud to award the Gold Medal to Dave Banks.

One of the Gold Medals in Europe went to Dr. Hartwig Schepker who is the Director of the Bremen Rhododendron Park and chaired the Bremen convention. He is a member of our chapter. The other went to geneticist Dr. Hans Eiberg who has been involved with the Danish Chapter and mirror of the ARS Seed Exchange. He used DNA analysis techniques to help explain relationships between species. Jim Barlup had previously received the Pioneer Achievement Award for his hybridizing.

Since Dave and Hartwig are Potomac Valley Chapter members, I have posted below photos I took at the ARS Awards Banquet and the citations they received. Congratulations to all!

Hartwig Schepker - ARS Gold Medal



Steve Hootman and ARS President Ann Mangels congratulate Hartwig Schepker (center) on his Gold Medal

You are universally admired as an ambassador for the genus Rhododendron. You have shared your enthusiasm and expertise through keynote addresses at international conferences. You have hosted innovative and highly successful rhododendron conventions in Germany.

Your guidance as Director of the Rhododendron-Park Bremen has been exemplary. You have rejuvenated and expanded garden collections. You have promoted education and awareness of rhododendron diversity through the botanika Science Center, the German Rhododendron Gene Bank project, and your role as Secretary of the Deutsch Rhododendron-Gesellschaft. All are lasting legacies.

You are a research scientist, a plant explorer, a prolific author, and an honored friend. For your many outstanding achievements, the American Rhododendron Society is proud to award to you, Dr. Hartwig Schepker, its highest honor, the Gold Medal.

Mountain Hikes 2018 and Hooper Bald

After returning from Germany, the next excursion was our annual trip to the mountains to see the native azaleas and rhododendrons. I will have more on that in a later issue but please visit Sarah Strickler's blog about "Rhododendrons in the Mist" where she recounts her trip with us to see Roan Mountain. Sarah is a new member in our chapter and joined us for the first part of the mountain trip to Grayson Highlands and Roan. Many of us know her through PVC-NARGS (the Potomac Valley Chapter of the American Rock Garden Society). As you will see, she is an excellent writer and photographer:

<https://ofleafandlimb.blogspot.com/2018/06/rhododendrons-in-mist-hiking-roan.html>

We did focus this trip around Hooper Bald spending several days in Robbinsville, NC. That town was just designated as an "Azalea City" by the ASA. They held their First Annual Azalea Festival on June 15-16, 2018, so we wanted to participate.

Revonda Williams who is a descendent of the Hoopers of Hooper Bald has worked with the bald's restoration for a number of years. She coordinated activities at the Azalea Festival and the repair of the ¼-mile trail to the bald. They solved erosion problems and used over 60 tons of gravel in the project. It is not yet wheelchair accessible but close!



New Trail to Hooper Bald

On Friday, they arranged tours to Hooper Bald so people could walk along the new trail and see the azaleas in bloom. I will say that Hooper really was doing its thing. We have been going down there since the late 1990's and it was the best bloom we

Plants For Members. Unfortunately, we don't know what happened to the cuttings we sent to Kathy Van Veen after she passed away. In her will, she did give her nursery to the ARS but things are not settled yet. We need to start rooting our own cuttings from now on so if you are a good propagator and want to help, please let us know!



Guided Tours to see azaleas like 'Hooper's Copper'

have seen on *R. calendulaceum*. It was spectacular!

George McLellan and others who have been heavily involved with Hooper's restoration served as guides on Friday. They escorted small groups of visitors around the bald, pointing out specific plants and talking about the project. After taking some pictures, I went back to town to update a PowerPoint presentation I was supposed to give that evening.

The evening reception was held at a local arts center and many restaurants provided "heavy hors d'oeuvres" but it was a feast. Then ASA President Rick Bauer presented the Azalea City designation to Mayor Steve Hooper of Robbinsville and Graham County Commissioner Connie Orr.

Rick and Buddy Lee gave ASA's Distinguished Service Award to George McLellan, Jim Brant, and J. Jackson and Lindy Johnson. They have done much to promote azaleas and help to restore Hooper Bald. I do not have copies of their citations but those should appear in the *Azalean*. All of them are members or associates of our chapter and we share that same admiration. Congratulations to all!

On Saturday, activities shifted to Main Street in Robbinsville where they held an Azalea Festival. They had live music and vendors set up booths to sell crafts, food items, and plants including some native azaleas. The azaleas were gone in the first hour! There were information booths including one for the ARS and ASA manned by Rick, Charlie Andrews, and others.

Revonda told me that they appreciated our support and were very pleased with Azalea Festival. They hope it will grow each year. Bakersville, NC, holds a Roan Rhododendron Festival each June so maybe Robbinsville will be doing the same thing with flame azaleas from now on. Join us next time!

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



Kiosk Explains the Hooper Bald Project



R. calendulaceum on Hooper Bald – June 15, 2018

The Hooper Bald Project



2008



2011



2012



2013

Recovery of same azalea over 5 years



Renovated Trail to the Bald



Right Side of Stage: Jim Brant, Rick Bauer, George McLellan, and Buddy Lee

2018 Azalea Festival Robbinsville, NC



Rick Bauer (right) presents Azalea City Honor to County Commissioner Connie Orr and Mayor Steve Hooper.



'Hooper's Copper'



'Hooper's Best Red'



Revonda Williams (right) honors local nursery owner Jean Taylor



Robbinsville closes Main Street for the Festival



Potomac Valley Chapter
of the
American Rhododendron Society

The Potomac Valley Chapter ARS is one of three American Rhododendron Society chapters located in District 9 which represents the Middle Atlantic region of the United States. Some of our chapter activities include:

- Regular Meetings with Speakers
- Annual Chapter Banquet
- Garden Tours
- Field Trips to Nurseries or to Wild Stands of Native Azaleas and Rhododendrons
- Local and National Seed Exchanges
- Plants for Members Program
- Flower Show
- Informative Chapter Newsletters
- Annual Photography Contest
- Access to Chapter Library Books

Our regular chapter meetings are usually held four times a year at the Potomac Community Center in Potomac, MD, on Sunday afternoons. However, we do hold occasional meetings at other locations in nearby Maryland, Virginia, or Washington, DC.

We encourage you to check out our chapter website which includes at least 16 years of previous newsletters that contain interesting articles, more color pictures, and examples of past activities:

www.arspvc.org

As a member of our local chapter you will also become a member at the national level of the American Rhododendron Society. This entitles you to a year's subscription of their outstanding quarterly **Journal** filled with information and many color pictures. You will also be invited to attend national conventions or regional conferences.

The cost of ARS membership is \$40 per year and includes membership in a chapter of your choice, such as our Potomac Valley Chapter. If you are already a member of another ARS Chapter, you may join the Potomac Valley Chapter as an Associate Member for only \$10 per year but you will need to identify your home chapter.

For more information about the American Rhododendron Society, check out their website:

www.rhododendron.org

Membership Application
American Rhododendron Society

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____

Zip/Country _____

Telephone _____

E-mail: _____

Memberships are on a calendar year basis and include the local chapter membership:

Individual/Family.....	\$40.00
Student (proof of age required).....	10.00
Commercial/Corporate.....	90.00
Sustaining	75.00
Sponsoring.....	150.00
Life, single	1,000.00
Life, family.....	1,500.00
Associate Membership*.....	10.00

**Associate Members must identify home chapter*

I would like my "home" chapter to be the Potomac Valley Chapter

To join our chapter, please contact our treasurer for mailing instructions:

Phyllis Rittman: prittman@erols.com

You may also send this form with US Funds payable to the national organization:

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
P.O. Box 214
Great River, NY 11739

To pay online by credit card, follow the link to "Membership" on the ARS website:

www.rhododendron.org

More ARS National Contact Points:

Phone (631) 533-0375, Fax (866) 883-8019

Email: member@arsoffice.org