

P.O. Box 715 Southeastern, PA 19399-0715

Web site: www.ValleyForgeARS.org

NEWSLETTER

August/September 2014

Unless specified otherwise, meetings are at Jenkins Arboretum in Devon

Calendar at a Glance

August 17 (Sun.) Valley Forge-organized District 8 Cuttings Exchange and Auction
September 18 (Thu.) 6:30 pm Plants-For-Members; 7:30 pm Harold Sweetman "Now What Do I Do?"
October 16 (Thu.) 7:30 pm Bob Stamper "Shade Gardening"
November 9 (Sun.) 2:00 pm Annual Banquet at St. Davids, Speaker is Bruce Feller, ARS President
(social hour starts at 1:00 pm)

President's Message

We had a good turnout at Joan and Reid Warren's beautiful gardens for the annual picnic and election. Most dishes were fully consumed as were the Victory growers. No one proposed any alternate candidates so the nominating committee's slate passed unanimously.

Our next summer event is the District 8 fundraiser on Aug 17 at the gardens of Debby and John Schmidt. Bring cuttings of your favorite plants so other members can replicate them over the winter. Also, bring your favorite adult plants to be sold at auction. All proceeds benefit the ARS Endowment Fund and ARS Species Foundation. Details are on page 2. Bring friends and family.

Your board is working on some new venues for chapter meetings. Since Scott Arboretum will not allow their experts to speak at meetings like ours, we are working to take our chapter meeting to them, hopefully in April. We have other ideas we're investigating and would welcome your ideas for consideration.

Our first chapter meeting of the 2014-15 year will be held September 18 at Jenkins. At 6:30 our bi-annual Plants for Members (P4M) sale will start. In fact, this is the Bacales/Warren P4M as all the cuttings came from their gardens one year ago. All plants will be priced at cost and are the best deal going. Harold Sweetman will address the group at 7:30 and discuss what to do with these yearling plants now that you own them.

See you in August,

Bob Smetana (610) 688-5249, vfarssmetana@yahoo.com

Chapter's web site: www.ValleyForgeARS.org

Members of ALL area chapters are invited to the
**RHODODENDRON & AZALEA CUTTINGS EXCHANGE
AND PLANT AUCTION**
(Auctioneer: Karel Bernady)
at Debby Schmidt's, 51 Blue Stone Drive
Chadds Ford, PA 19317
(610) 388-8573

Sunday, August 17, starting at 2:00 p.m., rain or shine

Proceeds benefit the ARS Endowment Fund and the Research Foundation

Arrive early with cuttings.

Cut 3 or 4 large-leaf (elepidote) or 4-6 small-leaf (lepidote) cuttings, preferably early in the morning and low on the plants. Place in a plastic bag with a few drops of water. Named varieties only, please! Please label the bags with a waterproof marker or pencil and add, if possible, info about characteristics or parentage.

2:00 pm: Cuttings exchange/sale.

Cuttings are 25 cents a bag for everyone and are an easy and inexpensive way to increase one's collection of azaleas and rhododendrons.

2:30 pm: Plant Auction: Karel Bernady

Please **donate rhodies and azaleas**, as well as other garden-worthy plants that you feel others would like.

Important: It will help the auctioneer and the bidder if you write a description of plants that you donate for auction. Having such info will make for lively bidding, especially for one-of-a-kind or special plants.

3:00 pm: Propagation.

Frank Brouse will expertly demonstrate how to propagate from cuttings.

About 3:30 pm: Dessert.

Please bring a dessert to share. (You also may bring a box lunch and eat it any time.)

Beverages will be provided.

Please bring your own chair(s).

If possible, **RSVP to Ellin Hlebik by August 10** or contact her for questions at 610/584-9764 or leftwall@yahoo.com

Here are the directions to the Schmidt's:

Going south from the Chadds Ford Post Office on Route 1.

Go west 1.9 miles and turn right on Chandler Rd.

[1st street after stop light at Pennsbury Way and Ponds Edge Dr.]

Go 0.6 mi & take the 3rd right on Fox Run Dr.

Go 0.2 mi and turn left on Blue Stone Dr.

Go 0.1 mi to "51 Blue Stone Dr." on left.

Cape with pinkish-tan shutters.

Going north from Longwood Gardens on Route 1.

Go east 2.5 miles and turn left on Chandler Rd. [just before stop light]

Go 0.6 mi & take the 3rd right on Fox Run Dr.

Go 0.2 mi and turn left on Blue Stone Dr.

Go 0.1 mi to "51 Blue Stone Dr." on left.

Cape with pinkish-tan shutters.

Lots of on-street parking.

Also see our website:

www.ValleyForgeARS.org

On September 18 (Thursday), P4M at 6:30 pm and Program at 7:30 pm:

Plants for Members (P4M):

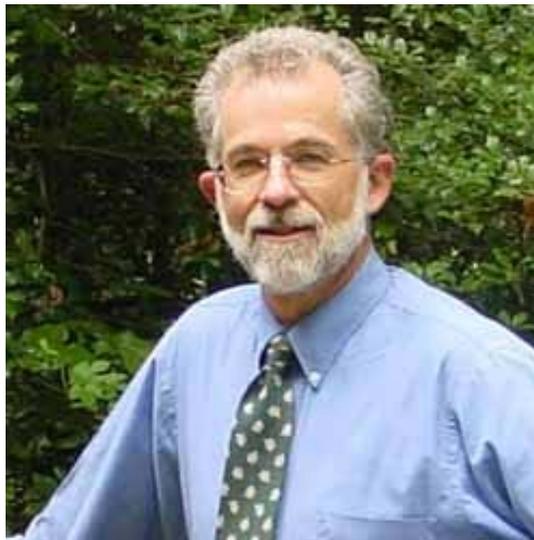
Hybrid Rhododendrons from the Warren and Becales gardens.

We will have a selection of rooted cuttings of hybrid rhododendrons from Reid and Joan Warren's garden and the garden of the late Joe Becales available to members at very reasonable prices. All plants will be priced at cost and are the best deal going. This is a unique opportunity.

Program:

Harold Sweetman: "What do we do now?"

These rooted cuttings are a great bargain and include a tremendous selection of hybrids that do well in Southeastern Pennsylvania, but what do we do with them? Fall is a great time for planting. The heat of summer has passed but there is still time for newly planted roots to settle in before the winter freeze.



The Executive Director of Jenkins Arboretum, Harold Sweetman, has agreed to address us on this issue. He will tell us how to take precautions with these young plants, but also, how we can easily take care of them so they grow into healthy full size plants to enjoy in our gardens.

Most of us know Harold. Dr. Sweetman has been Executive Director of the Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens for the past 28 years and traveled extensively in the pursuit of expanding Arboretum plant collections. The Arboretum's naturalistic landscape design showcasing native plants is an ideal setting for an extensive ericaceous plant collection of species and hybrid rhododendrons. He has a Ph.D. in Biology from Boston University and chairs the Research Committee of the American Rhododendron Society Research Foundation.

Refreshments: Those whose names start with letters A to G are asked to please bring fingerfood treats.

On October 16 (Thursday), P4M at 6:30 pm and Program at 7:30 pm:

Bob Stamper: "Shade Gardening"

Dr. Robert Stamper will discuss the opportunities and challenges of shade gardening. Shade gardens need not be boring. Where sunny borders use vivid colors to add interest to the landscape, the shade gardener uses a palette of textures, leaf shapes and subtle colors to invite the visitor to explore further. Planning a shade garden requires understanding the impact of shade on plant selection, plant disease and insects. There will be a section on shade and its effects on rhododendrons.

Robert Stamper, Ph.D. is a Lecturer in the Biology Department at Muhlenberg College and has lectured frequently at Jenkins as an active member of the Valley Forge ARS. Bob is one of the gardening experts at the annual chapter Plant Sale held each spring at Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens. He is also active in the Lehigh Valley ARS Chapter.

On November 9 (Sunday), Banquet at St. Davids GC at 2:00 , Social Hour at 1:00 pm:

Bruce Feller, ARS President: "Conifers in the Rhododendron Garden"

2014 Joint Philadelphia-Valley Forge ARS Flower Show -- May 10, 2014

A hard winter and late spring had a major effect on this year's competition. The competition usually draws 250 or more entries. This year there were only 86. Varieties that normally bloom right at truss show time were tight as could be, and many of the delayed early bloomers produced partial trusses.

Number of Ribbons Awarded	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	HM
Michael Mills & Randy Dalton	15	6	6	5
Sue & Marc Thomson	8	8	5	0
Bud & Marilyn Gressman	5	4	0	0
Tom Lloyd	3	3	1	1
Joe Minahan	2	1	0	0
Bob Smetana	1	3	0	1



The winning R. 'Mary K'

R. 'Mary K' from the garden of Randy Dalton and Michael Mills took Best In Show. This cultivar is a

Joe Gable hybrid, named for Mary Katherine Gable, his daughter-in-law. Mary Katherine's husband, James Gable, was the son of Joseph B. and Mary Dalton Gable, making Randy and Mary Katherine cousins-in-law.

Trophies:

Joe Becaes Hybridizer's Trophy (Best New Hybrid): John Paul II X Orange Ruffly (2006-24-001) – Joe Minahan

Dan and Betts Layman Trophy (Best Foliage): R. schlippenbachii – Michael Mills & Randy Dalton

Francis Sholomskas Trophy (Best Species): R. austrinum 'Millie Mac' – Susan & Marc Thomson

Maxine West Trophy (Best Evergreen Azalea): Coral Bells – Michael Mills & Randy Dalton

Walter Kern Trophy (Best Deciduous Azalea): Firecracker – Susan & Marc Thomson

Ross Davis Trophy (Best Rhododendron Hybrid): Mary K – Michael Mills & Randy Dalton

John Wister Trophy (Best in Show): Mary K – Michael Mills & Randy Dalton

Judi Meade Trophy (Sweepstakes): Michael Mills & Randy Dalton

Best in Class:

Rhododendron Hybrids, Elepidote: Unknown williamsianum hybrid – Tom Lloyd

Rhododendron Hybrids, Lepidote: Rhein's Luna – Tom Lloyd

Azalea Species: R. austrinum 'Millie Mac' – Susan & Marc Thomson

Azalea Hybrids, Deciduous: White Lights – Susan & Marc Thomson

Azalea Hybrids, Evergreen: Coral Bells – Michael Mills & Randy Dalton

New Hybrids (by hybridizer): John Paul II X Orange Ruffly (2006-24-001) – Joe Minahan

Other New Hybrids: Mary K -- Michael Mills & Randy Dalton

Foliage: R. schlippenbachii – Michael Mills & Randy Dalton

Judges: Judges this year were Judy Allison, Malcolm Boyd, Frank Brouse, Peg van Patton, Tom Schuetz – all seasoned veterans – and, in his maiden outing with our truss show, Harold Sweetman, director of Jenkins Arboretum. The trophies were presented at the chapter picnic at Chanticleer in Wayne, Pa.

Book Review:

Compendium of Rhododendron & Azalea Diseases & Pests, 2nd Ed.

The American Phytopathological Society (APS) released a major update on July 1, 2014, of their 1986 book *Compendium of Rhododendron and Azalea Diseases and Pests*, a venerable reference.

What makes this book even more special to ARS members is that the APS is offering a **\$20 discount** for orders through **ARSSore.org**, the American Rhododendron Society's on-line store.

Besides covering more diseases and pests, the 2nd edition covers new work that was completed in the past 28 years in the understanding and identification of new Rhododendron & Azalea problems.

Disease and Pest Identification

173 color photos assist in identifying the damage as well as the cause.

This new edition has twice as many color photos and they are located with the appropriate text. Before they were relegated to a *Color Plates* section. With 144 pages, the 2nd edition also has twice as many pages.

It covers specific algal diseases, bacterial diseases, fungal diseases, nematodes, parasites, virus diseases, witches-brooms, weevils, borers, scale, aphids, mealybugs, whiteflies, lace bugs, midge, rootworms, thrips, mites, caterpillars, cutworms, and leafminers. It also covers problems caused by moisture stress, heat, winter weather, nutrient deficiencies and toxicities, air pollution, pesticides and genetic problems.

No only is the book complete, but it provides an identification key to identifying specific problems, including those that are cultural

problems, disease problems, and pest problems. What I find amazing is that this key that guides you to all specific problems, the Quick Guide to Diagnosis, fits on one page. That is remarkable. It does not list lichens, although many people mistake these harmless organisms for a problem.

Also, the book covers the latest control measures, which have changed and improved in the past 28 years.

Disease and Pest Control

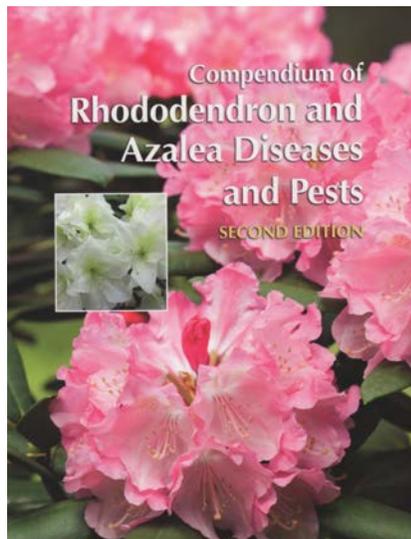
One very interesting point I had never read before is that conifer-bark media, often used in nurseries, is highly conducive to disease. However compost made from woody materials and organic nitrogen, and the tea made from this compost, greatly increases the resistance of the media to disease organisms. The book also

discusses biologic controls such as beneficial nematodes, beneficial bacteria such as BT, and other microbacterial agents.

The greatest value of this book to me is that it provides ways that I can avoid problems, rather than react to them. I attempt to avoid all toxic materials and this book gives me great insights on ways to do this. For example, it documented how just the use of a raised bed prevented root rot even when the raised bed was inoculated with phytophthora.

The book is written by scientists and does use correct biological terms, but its glossary should help with words that are new. One word I had to look up was abiotic, which means cultural, i.e. not caused by a biologic organism.

When the book recommends chemical control, the chemical names are used rather than band names. One chart lists insects and mites and



their geographic distribution and the damage they cause. Another chart lists various insecticides and miticides and lists which pests they can be used for and whether they act by contact, stomach poison, or if systemic whether they enter through the roots or the foliage. A third chart lists how effective the various insecticides and miticides are against each pest.

Disease and Pest Management

The book mentions ways to prevent problems including integrated pest management techniques. These include treatment of irrigation water, chemical control, biological control, soil selection, fertilization, cultural practices, sanitation, and resistant varieties. For example, the use of organic or nitrate fertilizers offer distinct advantages over ammonia fertilizers. It also discusses exclusion, eradication, and quarantine regulations used around the world.

The book discusses the association of mycorrhizae with plant nutrition and disease prevention. This means there is a tradeoff between sterile media and media enhanced with beneficial organisms. In scientific studies, mycorrhizae were even found to some extent on all rhododendron and azaleas, even on plants raised in the super-sterile environment of tissue culture. Higher acidity tends to reduce some disease problems and enhances the performance of mycorrhizae.

If I have any criticisms of this book, they are 1) the it doesn't treat deer as a pest, but there complete books that deal with deer, and 2) that it doesn't have as many lists of susceptible and

tolerant or resistant plants as I would like. It does mention some varieties related to ozone damage, cold tolerance, ringspot virus, dieback, gall, root rot, leaf spot, rust, powdery mildew, nematodes, blights, and thrips.

Is This Book For You?

This book will prove invaluable to nurseries and major gardens where they need a reference their employees can use to diagnose, solve, and prevent problems. It will also be of great importance to "rhodoholics" who have a great deal invested in their passion.

In conclusion, the new APS compendium delivers. It helps identify problems, their treatment, and how to prevent these problems. Since it is very complete, it may have more details than the casual reader can digest. However, for those that need the facts, this book is for you. This new 2nd edition is long overdue.

\$20 off at ARSStore.org

The publisher of the book has worked out a deal with ARSStore.org where you can get it for \$79, \$20 off the regular price. Click on the link at <http://arsstore.org>.

[For those looking for something simple and inexpensive, Washington State Univ. Ext. service has Bulletin 1229, "How to Identify Rhododendron and Azalea Problems" for \$6 or on-line for free. As the name indicates, this 28-page 1994 WSU bulletin only covers identification of some problems and not the treatment, and prevention. It does not have a key to identifying problems, but it does have a list of plant varieties resistant to weevils.]

About the reviewer:

Steve Henning, a member in the Valley Forge Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society since 1972, is the webmaster of Henning's Rhododendron & Azalea Pages, the District 8 ARS Director, and volunteers as manager of ARSStore.org, which he created.



The Winter of 2013-14, how our plants survived the Polar Vortex

Last winter was the worst we have had in a while. Unfortunately we had many plants in our gardens for years that were severely stressed this winter. At the Chapter Picnic at the Warren's, our members were asked to write a short description of problems and successes they had in their gardens this past winter. Thanks to those that participated.

The first reply was from Bill Dennis:

"I live in the southernmost tier of PA, right where PA, DE and MD come together, at an altitude of 360 ft. above sea level, so I probably had a milder winter than most. At a guess, I would say the lowest temperature we experienced this winter was 0 degrees Fahrenheit.

All rhodies and azaleas (evergreen and deciduous) came through well.

Our fig tree, 8 ft. tall, died to the ground.

Some hydrangea macrophyllas (Nikko Blue and another nola hybrid) did well and started into growth after late snow killed them to the ground.

Spring-blooming Japonica camellia hybrids had heavy flower bud damage, no foliage damage.

Flowering trees all came through well—crab apple, halesia, sourwood (oxydendrum arboretum), franklinia, cercis canadensis (red bud), amelanchier, magnolia virginiana, as well as mahonia aquifolium. Very large native white pines lost many large branches from snow.

Both tree and herbaceous peonies survived without damage.

Of three large rosemary bushes, several years old, two died and one lost half its top.

Long-established thyme plants were killed.

Tarragon is ok.

No other damage seems to have occurred."

Joan Warren wrote from Elverson, PA:

"I lost 4 or 5 azaleas which were under the snow for a month, My tree climbing hydrangea had no flowers on it, neither did my lace cap hydrangeas, but leaves are coming out at the bases.

I lost a Crape Myrtle, Camellias did not flower, Styrax trees did not bloom nor did Clethra barbinervis.

Some rhododendron buds died before opening, but other blooms were beautiful."

US National Arboretum in Washington, DC reported:

"The cold temperatures experienced in the mid-Atlantic region this winter put us back into a solid zone 7 [average night time low of 0-10 degrees F].

*Cultivars with **Rhododendron indicum**, [a zone 8 species used in breeding for evergreen foliage, large flowers and late blooming properties] as a parent are showing some damage to the foliage. Most of them survived and will grow out it.*

*Cultivars using **R. kaempferi** [a zone 5 species used to instill hardiness, early blooms, color ranges and height] as a parent are almost deciduous this year but their flower buds are intact and ready to bloom in just a few weeks. This includes many of our Glenn Dale azaleas.*

*Cultivars using **R. poukhanense** [a zone 6-7 species used for larger flowers, the lavender colors, foliage and lower growth habit] also appear to be deciduous this year.*

Rhododendrons with larger evergreen leaves may have winter burn in the form of leaf scorch. The damaged leaves will drop off in June as the new foliage emerges.

We are about 14 days behind our normal average for bloom."

***That Brazen White Winter* by
Rhody Jane (aka Kathy Woehl)**

That brazen white winter
that refused to go;
took a toll on my garden
with her heavy cold snow.

But that snow which caused havoc
above the ground;
also protected and insulated
roots below safe and sound.

Once towering majestically
up to the sky
now brown and lifeless
to the naked eye.

The loveliest of blossoms
once white and pink and red;
now sit on their branches
all curled up and dead.

But the earth warms again
as now comes July;
add rain and humidity
they refuse to die.

Crepe myrtle, mahonia
camellia, cryptomeria
sprout up from the root
oh, don't let it worry ya!

But my Cedrus atlantica
Glauca Pendula
having lost all her needles
is but a barking bendula!

Now gazing at lilies
once regally statuesque;
only half have returned
to their stately arabesque.

A very hungry mouse
or some other small rodent
gathered sustenance and courage
from the bulbs that I lent.

Fir trees and willow
and towering columnar;
will curtsy and bow
till the sun rights these cultivar!

That brazen white winter
that refused to go;
took a toll on my garden
with her heavy cold snow.

Steve & Darlene Henning in Fleetwood, PA report:

We lost a very old Lavender plant and a young Dove Tree (Davidia involucrata or Handkerchief Tree). Our Mahonia aquifolium (Oregon Grape) has died after living along the edge of the road tolerating road salt and plowed snow for many years.

The Buddleia (butterfly bush) and all of our different types of hydrangeas eventually came up from the roots.

Our rhododendrons and azaleas were about 2 weeks late this year, but bloomed beautifully. Our R. schlippenbachia azalea gave the best show ever this spring. Though they hadn't set flower buds yet, our new Southgate R. hyperythrum hybrids from Dr. Thornton (Brandi, Divine, Grace & Radiance) all survived and look healthy."



Winter desiccation can cause leaf scorch and winter burn injury on plants such as azalea, rhododendron, holly, Mahonia, boxwood, mountain laurel, Magnolia, Acuba japonica, Ligustrum lucidum and others.

2014 Fall Annual ARS Meeting

September 26-28, 2014, Everett, WA

Come to Everett, WA September 26-28, 2014 and enjoy the beautiful fall weather in Northwest Washington with your fellow rhodoholics. We have a great group of speakers scheduled to talk not only about rhododendrons, but garden companions like hardy fuchsias, trilliums, and Japanese maples. On Saturday evening, Steve Hootman will be taking us along on his first trip to Australia, including Tasmania. Come and enjoy good fellowship and food, too. Hosted by the ARS District 2 Chapters.



The conference takes place at the Holiday Inn, Downtown Everett.

For further details visit the [conference website](#).

Resources on our website:

<http://ValleyForgeARS.org>

The main sections of our website are:

- [Join Us](#): Membership Application
- [Links](#): Information, Gardens & Sources
- [Events](#): Our Events Calendar
- [News](#): Flower Show Results & Newsletters
- [Contact Us](#): Our Mailing Address
- [Members Area](#): Chapter History Pages
- [Gallery](#): Photo Gallery for Members

From A Guide for the Hungry Gardener:

Summer Squash (Zucchini) Casserole

2 lb. zucchini
½ cup chopped onion
1 can cream of mushroom soup
1 cup sour cream
1 lb. shredded carrots
1 pkg. herb stuffing mix
½ cup butter, melted (optional)

Cook zucchini (boil or microwave). Cool and cube. Pat dry with paper towels. Add chopped onions, mushroom soup, sour cream, and shredded carrots. Mix. In bottom of buttered 12 x 7-½ x 2 inch baking dish, spread ½ the stuffing mix. Spread vegetable mixture on top. Then rest of stuffing mix. Bake 350° for 25 to 30 minutes. Serves 6.

[ARS Online Store: ARSStore ...](#)

Your entry point for online shopping... where every purchase benefits the ARS at no extra cost. [ARSStore.org](#) features **ARS logo** caps, visors, shirts, jackets, & computer bags; & **nationally known merchants'** online stores.

Now featuring **Amazon.com; Best Buy; Harbor Freight; Harry & David; HP; iTunes Store; ix webhosing; Life is Good; Microsoft; Pendleton; Rodale; Rodale's; Sam's Club; Swiss Outpost, Tractor Supply Company; Wal-Mart.** To shop in stores, get a **gift card** online first.

Also, **chapter programs** can be downloaded.



ARSStore.org

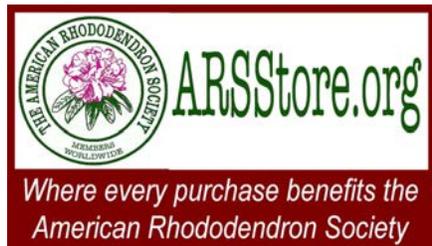
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American Rhododendron Society
 Valley Forge Chapter
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FIRST-CLASS MAIL



NEWSLETTER
August / September 2014



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	Webmaster: Jim Willhite (484) 887-0232
	VF Chapter's web site: ValleyForgeARS.org

Please contact us of any email changes or if you receive this **newsletter** by letter carrier rather than email, even though you have e-mail. Please inform Steve Henning of any changes (rhodyman@earthlink.net).