

MID-ATLANTIC RHODODENDRON NEWS AND NOTES

A Publication of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American
Rhododendron Society

Vol. XXXX No.3

September 2013

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MAC MEETINGS

October 4-6, 2013	Eastern Regional, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
October 25-27, 2013	MAC meeting in Virginia Beach, VA
November 2, 2013	Potomac Valley Banquet, Normandy Farms
May 2-4, 2014	MAC at Days Hotel and Flatwoods Conference Center, Flatwoods, WV
Spring 2016	National Convention, Williamsburg, VA

Rhododendron Web Site Addresses:

American Rhododendron Society	http://www.rhododendron.org/
MAC Website (UPDATED REGULARLY)	http://www.macars.org/
U VA Science & Engineering Libraries	http://www.lib.virginia.edu/science/guides/s-rhodo.htm
UVA Special Collections	http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/
Henry Skinner Website	http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/collections/projects/rhodo/skinner/
Old Quarterly Bulletins ARS	http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/
Rhododendron Blog	www.rhododendron.org/blog/
Friends of the National Arboretum	http://savetheazaleas.org/
FONA's Save the Azaleas and Boxwood site	

FALL MEETING TO BE OCTOBER 25-27 IN VIRGINIA BEACH

Mark your calendars now for our upcoming meeting in Virginia Beach, Oct 25-27. We will have as one of our speakers J. Christopher Ludwig, the lead author of the new book *Flora of Virginia*, a monumental work just published in 2012. Sharon Horn has other interesting items lined up for us, too. A recently retired professor from the University of Minnesota will be speaking on ancient trees. We will also have more up-to-date information about a new pest, the emerald ash borer, and invasive species from Virginia experts. We will have a demonstration of leaf castings and have a tour of the Hampton Roads Agricultural Research and Extension Center in Virginia Beach.

Watch your mail or check our website MACARS.org for the more meeting details. The meeting information will be posted on our website when our webmaster receives it.

DEATHS

Sybil Przypek

Longtime MAC member Sybil Przypek passed away on July 25, 2013. She was originally from North Carolina and had lived in Yorktown, Virginia, since 1976 where she had retired from Fort Eustis



Sybil Przypek receiving Bronze Medal from Bill Bedwell in June 2008. Photo S. McDonald.

after 25 years of service. Sybil was very active in many plant groups over the years. She became a

York County Master Gardener in 1996 and as such had developed the York County Learning Garden and Arboretum where she had planted many azaleas and rhododendrons. She was a charter member of the Colonial Virginia Chapter of the Holly Society of America, and had been an active member of the Hampton Roads Horticultural Society and the Azalea Society of America, as well as an active MAC member for many years. She served in most of these organizations as an officer or president and also enjoyed being a plant auctioneer for some of the groups..

She was on the MAC board for many years and served as president from 2005 to 2007. She received a Certificate of Appreciation in 1991 and the Bronze Medal in 1998.

She was active in the early days of the MAC Species Study Group and went on some of the groups' trips to the mountains of North Carolina. She often helped with MAC plant sales, auctions, and other activities at meetings and conventions. She and her husband Walter also attended many ASA conventions.

William Constable, M.D.

MAC member Dr. William Constable passed away at his home in Troy, Virginia on July 7, 2013.



Bill and Kathy Constable. Photo S. McDonald.

He was Director of Radiation Oncology at the University of Virginia Medical School. He has served on the MAC Board of Directors prior to his illness. He was born in Scotland and was a graduate of the University of Edinburgh Medical School. He

and his wife Katherine and son William, Jr. attended many MAC meetings.

Gretchen Johnson

MAC member Gretchen Johnson passed away on May 29, 2013. She was a member of several plant organizations and quilting societies. She and her husband Robert had been living in Hampton, Virginia, until they moved to Midlothian, Virginia a number of years ago.

MEMBERS IN THE NEWS

Doug Jolley has another article in the September 2013 issue of *Wonderful West Virginia, The Magazine*. The title is "Autumn Orchids Ladies' Tresses" with photos also by Doug

IN THE CROZET GARDEN by Lloyd Willis

Sometime in June I heard the voice of the lovely Mrs. Willis (Margaret) with a minor suggestion for me. The suggestion, "You are to buy no new plants until the current ones in pots are planted." The suggestion certainly sounded reasonable to me – I quickly did a plant count of the ones in quarts to the three gallon plant sizes and found there were only 145 plants needing planting.

The plants in pots were from two MAC Plants for Members Sales, one trip to North Carolina, and at least 10 visits to various nurseries for end of the fall season plant sales. These were great looking plants all grouped together in a shaded area near our driveway. Some visitors to the house were quite impressed with the display and other visitors were wondering why the plants were not planted.

Two weeks after the suggestion from Margaret, I had planted 135 plants with the last 10 plants being all in the three gallon size. We have at least eleven new or modified plant beds.

And joy of all joys, Margaret recently said would you like to stop at nurseries on the way home from our beach trip? On the way home I purchased 20 one gallon size hostas and would have purchased more if I had remembered the floor space on the passenger side of the car was only being filled with the two small shoes of Mrs. Willis.

I'm pleased to report most of the 29 hostas are planted and I can hardly wait for the next MAC Plants for Members Sale.

**WINDBEAM WAY
WANDERINGS,
SUMMER 2013** by Doug
Jolley

Our outstanding spring season was followed by an equally outstanding summer. Plants, both woody and herbaceous bloomed heavily and on schedule. We escaped damage from light frosts in both early May and on Memorial Day Weekend. One disappointment resulted when the flowers of a new population of *R. calendulaceum* encountered last June were totally ruined by the Memorial Day weekend freeze. The stand of flame azaleas is on the West Virginia – Virginia border and an early June visit was met with brown flower trusses. I had hoped to make this a seed source this fall.

A highlight of the summer was a visit to the garden of MAC member Eva Neumaier. Her garden is in Monroe County, West Virginia. It contains every type of garden situation imaginable.



Clethra and butterfly. Photo by Doug Jolley

There is a small arboretum, kitchen garden, areas of rhodos and azaleas (with more waiting to be planted), unmowed grassy areas with summer wildflowers, a spring house and wetlands, dry shale banks and more. The showcase at the time of my visit was stands of Bottle-brush Buckeye which were approaching prime bloom. A discussion of the grounds would require an article of its own.

The ericaceous *Clethra* ‘Ruby Spice’ and ‘Hummingbird’ were especially floriferous much to the delight of butterflies and hummingbirds. The summer blooming native azaleas were timely and the *R. arborescens* in particular were outstanding. We have one which just begins to bloom as the others fade. Only with the approach of the last week of August have the *R. prunifolium* finally lost all hints of color. Fall garden chores are not far off.



Doug Jolley

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Austin, James, Midlothian, VA
23113

Davis, Glenn, Mays Landing,
NJ 08330

Miles MD., Robert M,
Lynchburg, VA 24503

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

Allender, Sharon, & John Trezise,
Lane, Henrico, VA 23233

**MY WALK IN THE WOODS or WE HAVE
LOST GEORGE** - by George McLellan

As part of our June 2013 MAC Species Study Group trip to study native azaleas, Karel Bernady, J Jackson, Don Hyatt, and I traveled to north Georgia



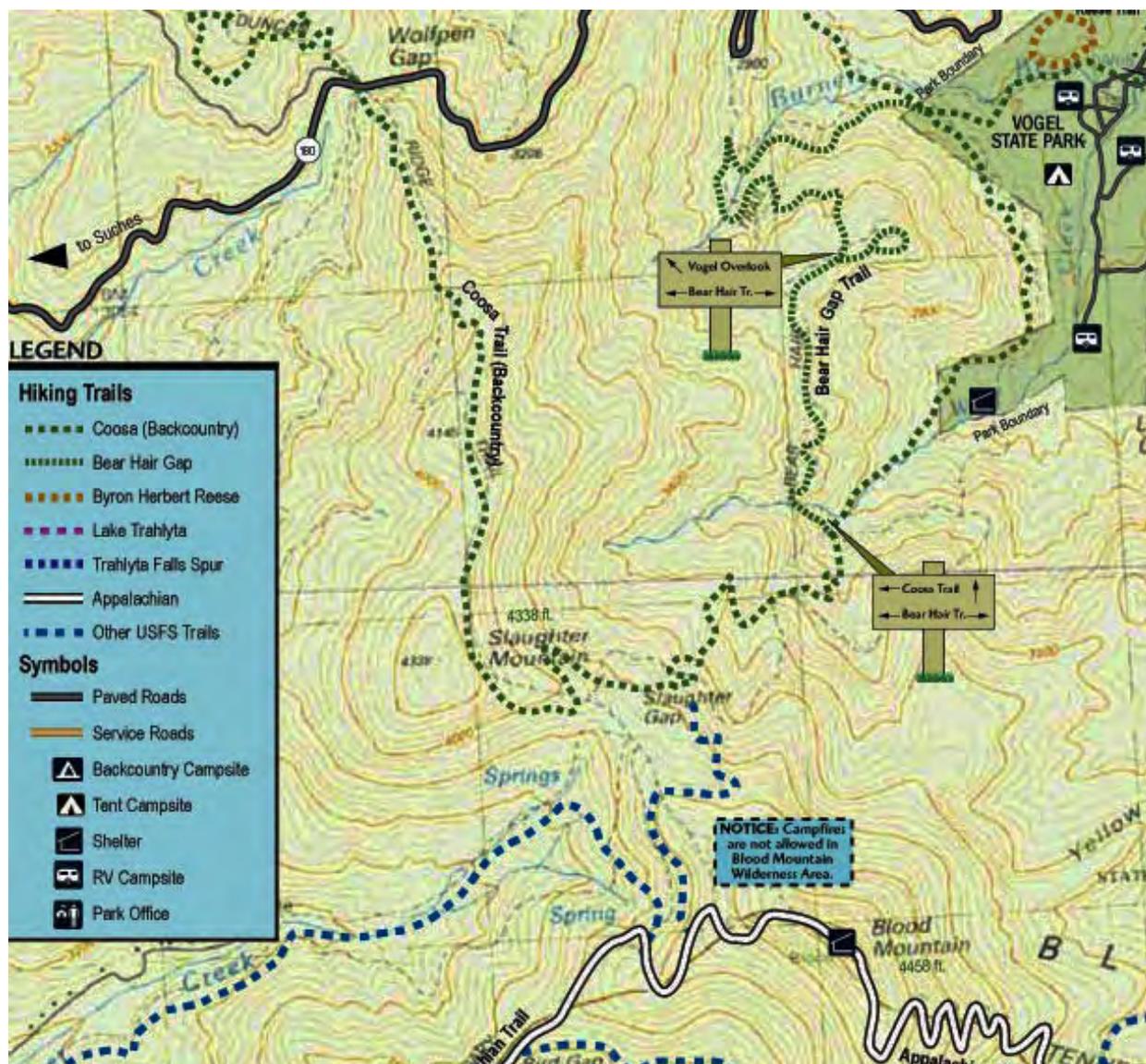
A wet and muddy George McLellan after the hike. Photo by Don Hyatt.

to explore for *Rhododendron cumberlandense* and some of its hybrids with *R. arborescens* on the slope of Slaughter Mountain in the Blood Mountain Wilderness. I especially wanted to see a hybrid I had found and named ‘Bloody Mary’, a large flowered

rose-pink with a gold blotch that formed a running patch only 30 inches high by five or six yards wide.

We started up the Coosa Backcountry Trail to

going downhill to intercept the trail in what I thought was a southeasterly direction. But because of the rain, and encased in a plastic rain poncho which



Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites Map.

the upper part of Slaughter Mountain and found that *R. cumberlandense* was in full bloom and saw more bloom than ever. We even found a very good yellow-gold. After exploring a while, the rain began to descend, and Karel, J and Don decided to head back to the car at Wolf Pen Gap, and I went on to see 'Bloody Mary' on the western slope of Blood Mountain by taking what I thought was a short cut.

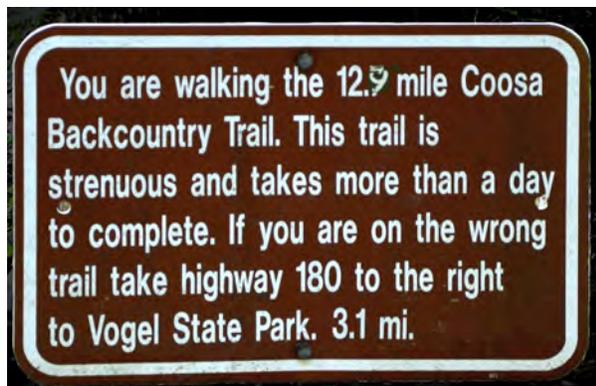
Thus began 'My Walk in the Woods'¹ or as Don Hyatt said where 'We Have Lost George!' I began

created poor lighting conditions, I ended up wandering toward the southwest and west. After bushwhacking my way down slope for about a mile with a descent of over 1000 feet, slipping and sliding because of the sloppy conditions, and not finding the trail, I decided I had better return to the top where I had begun.

The climb up was the worst hiking I have ever done. It was very steep and every step a never ending battle. Ten to fifteen feet up and stop to rest and catch my breath, i rcb onto a small tree and pull myself up and forward, etc. It seemed endless. Finally, I could see the top and pushed my way through a

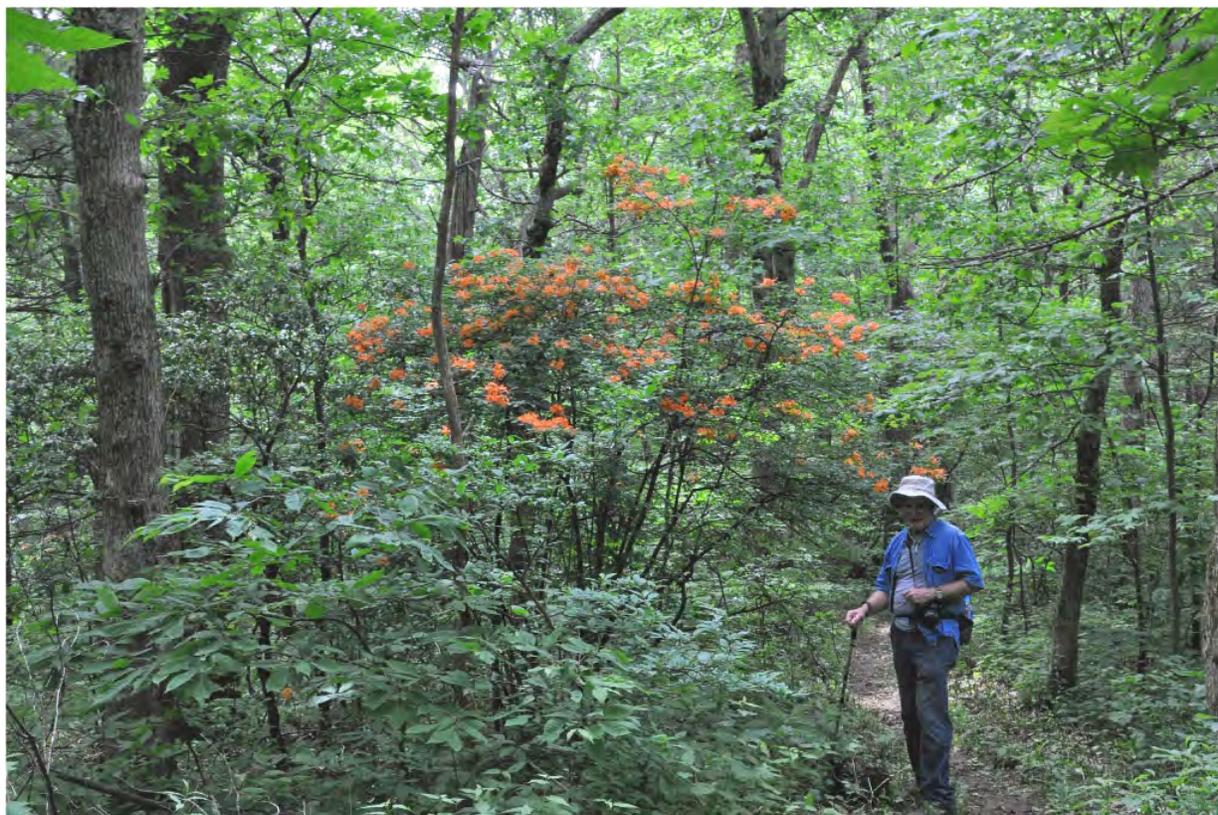
¹See *A Walk in the Woods* by Bill Bryson.

border of mountain laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*). To my astonishment I found not the wooded top I had left, but a large dome of pure rock surrounded by *Kalmia*. (After seeing a more detailed topo map I notice Slaughter Ridge seems to have two high spots.)



The warning. Photo by Don Hyatt.

and follow it out. I crossed the rock dome and plunged through what I thought was a fringe of *Kalmia*. I now know the true definition of a “Laurel Hell!” One thousand feet plus down a steeper and rockier slope than I had come up, on my hands and knees, crawling under the *Kalmia* and finally on my butt because of the steepness and small rock cliffs², and while holding on to the *Kalmia* trunks, I worked my way down. Almost at the bottom I was confronted by a cliff of about 7 feet deep by over 200 yards wide. I saw a fallen tree that gave me a quick way down to the gently sloping woods. There was even a small spot in the rock covered with dirt to place my foot. So onward. The dirt turned out to be old leaves covering a hole. A tumble, a strained calf muscle, a broken hiking pole, a loud curse, and a startled black bear last seen hightailing away through the ferns were the results.



George before the rain. Photo by Karel Bernady.

Decision Time! I was lost in the 7,800 acreage Blood Mountain Wilderness. I knew I was surrounded by trails: Coosa Backcountry Trail, Appalachian Trail, and GA 180, etc. My best move would be to hike down slope, find a water course

I was now in the woods at the foot of the mountain beside a spring which I followed to a stream, which took me to a faint trail. I had stumbled

²Alteration of cliff perhaps by cleft in Old Middle English

upon the Slaughter Creek Trail and followed it to a gravel road which I followed to a Forest Service Recreation Area (Lake Winfield Scott). A kind gentleman and his nephew gave me a ride up to Wolf Pen Gap where Karel, J and Don were waiting.

My odyssey taught me several lessons about bushwhacking. Don't go alone; have a compass; if possible go back the way you came; and if lost follow a water course. Also, I learned more about our native azaleas. There are a great many in the deep woods. I saw many large *R. cumberlandense* (some very good reds), and whenever I was approaching a spring on the mountain I would perceive the marvelous heliotrope fragrance of *R. arborescens* and find a large shrub by the spring. All in all, it was a pleasant experience in the even if Karel admonished me for not getting GPS readings for the locations of the azaleas.

ANOTHER AZALEA PLANTING SCHEDULED

Another native azalea planting is planned for October 12 and 13 at Hooper Bald and Huckleberry Ridge. The 700 plants put in previously did not fare well with only a small percentage surviving. Those plants were tiny clumps and were likely overgrown by grass and weeds.

This year 200 ten inch azaleas from J and Lindy Jackson's Appalachian Native Plants Nursery will be planted on Huckleberry Ridge and 25 on Hooper Bald. The plants were grown from seed from plants on Hooper Bald.

Grass cutting in the planting areas and placing and planting of azaleas is scheduled for October 12, and planting, cutting and pruning on Hooper on the morning of October 13 with a tour of Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest in the afternoon.

Bring water and snacks or food. Contact Jim Brant for further information: jandpbrant@verizon.net or call cell: 804-832-0879 or home: 804-693-7556

WILLIAMSBURG 2016: CONVENTION IDEAS: by Don Hyatt

Yes, our District 9 has taken on the task of hosting a Joint ARS/ASA Convention in Williamsburg from April 20 - 24, 2016. We have established a core committee with at least two representatives from each of the participating chapters. Those members are:

- **Mason Dixon Chapter ARS**
Ray Smith: Insras@gmail.com
Sonny Coble: (no email)

- **Middle Atlantic Chapter ARS**
Dave Banks (Registrar): dfbanks@earthlink.net
George McLellan: gmclellan38@gmail.com
- **Potomac Valley Chapter ARS**
Don Hyatt (Co-chair): don@donaldhyatt.com
Phyllis Rittman: prittman@erols.com
- **Northern Virginia Chapter ASA**
Rick Bauer (Co-chair): rickbauer@cox.net
Carolyn Beck: carolyn.f.beck@gmail.com
Paul Beck (Treasurer): pabeck@gmail.com

We currently plan to offer a tour of Williamsburg prior to the opening of the meeting on Thursday, April 20. The schedules for Friday and Saturday will be very similar with workshops offered in the morning followed by tours with a box lunch in the afternoon. In the evenings, there will be a banquet each night with keynote speaker, one night featuring the ARS and the other the ASA. Sunday will have a few minor activities before people head home. Anyone unable to take the Thursday tour to Williamsburg could visit at that time.

As for tours, we will have a lot of flexibility due to the location. We do expect to showcase local projects



Governor's Palace in Colonial Williamsburg.

at the Norfolk Botanical Garden including the McDonald Azalea Garden that features the hybrids of Dr. Sandra McDonald. The Northern Virginia Chapter ASA also has a project with the NBG enhancing their other azalea collections. We intend to tour gardens in Gloucester, VA, and probably Richmond, too. If you have some suggestions for outstanding gardens or attractions in the region, please let our committee know.

The plant sale will be the key to success. In 2006, we raised 900 rhododendrons and sold most of those, but we raised 2000 azaleas and had half of them left over. We will use those figures for planning purposes. We want to emphasize the legacies of our local hybridizers at this meeting. We want to offer other rare varieties, too, so if you can share some cuttings, please

let us know. If there are plants you anxious to get, tell us that as well. We are also seeking suggestions for speakers that people want to hear, either keynote address or workshop. Have you heard a great presentation recently?

Please share your thoughts and ideas with us. We hope you will volunteer to help us out, too!

CASES OF LYME DISEASE MAY BE 10 TIMES MORE THAN REPORTED

(Adapted from Science Daily August 19, 2013 and the CDC website.)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that the number of Americans diagnosed with Lyme disease every year is about 300,000. The estimate is based on three ongoing CDC studies. Each year, more than 30,000 cases of Lyme disease are reported to CDC. It is the most commonly reported tick-borne illness in the United States.

“We know that routine surveillance only gives us part of the picture, and that the true number of illnesses is much greater,” said Paul Mead, M.D., M.P.H, chief of epidemiology and surveillance for CDC’s Lyme disease program. “This new preliminary estimate confirms that Lyme disease is a tremendous public health problem in the United States, and clearly highlights the urgent need for prevention.”

Lyme disease is caused by the bacterium *Borrelia burgdorferi* and transmitted to humans through the bite of infected blacklegged ticks. Symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, and a skin rash known as erythema migrans. If untreated it can spread to joints, the nervous system, and the heart.

Rodents carry the bacteria and deer play a key role in the tick’s lifecycle. Steps that can help prevent the disease in blacklegged tick territory include wearing repellent, checking for ticks daily, showering soon after being outdoors, and consulting your doctor if you get a fever or rash.

96% of Lyme disease cases in 2011 were reported in 13 states: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Virginia, and Wisconsin. For more information check out:

<http://www.cdc.gov/lyme/>

MAC’S GREGORY BALD PROJECT RECOGNITION

The Middle Atlantic Chapter has contributed a total of \$15,000 over the last six fiscal years to fund an intern and maintenance to restore Gregory Bald through use of a mower donated by ARS Endowment

Fund and through other means. The checks for the maintenance on Gregory Bald were made out to “U.S. Dept. of the Interior - National Park Service.”

Below is the body of an August 19, 2013, letter from Kristine Johnson, Supervisory Forester, Great Smoky Mountains National Park that acknowledges the impact of our contributions and how the money has been used, including this summer. Previously we did not know that some of our contribution has been used for Andrews Bald. The MAC Board voted at the August 2013 Board meeting not to make a contribution for use next summer was because we need to provide up-front money for co-hosting the 2016 ARS-ASA joint convention to be held in Williamsburg. Other organizations mentioned in the following letter may be able to contribute to this project. Here is the body of Ms. Johnson’s letter:

“The Great Smokey Mountains National Park wishes to acknowledge the American Rhododendron Society’s interest in the preservation and restoration of two of the park’s grassy balds, Gregory’s and Andrew’s. As you are aware, each bald’s vast diversity of flora depends on labor intensive work. The Mid Atlantic Chapter’s \$2500 donation was used to support a summer intern to assist with the restoration project. Using the DR mower donated by American Rhododendron Society’s endowment fund we were able to exceed our expectations for Gregory’s this year. The mower has worked reliably with only minor repairs and is used during each of our three week-long work sessions.

“The Park has no dedicated funding for grassy bald restoration, so the support of ARS, Friends of the Smokies, and the Great Smoky Mountains Association is essential to continuing our work of maintaining the acres cleared over the past 25 years. Within the next few years we hope to reach our goal of removing encroaching trees and blackberries from the balds down to the original 1935 perimeter. We have great public support for our grassy bald restoration work, as seen in a recent Knoxville News Sentinel article and video.

“Please continue with your field trips to the balds and your relationship with the park. Thank you.”



Remember all photos can be seen in color and ENLARGED at MACARS.ORG. Click on ‘Newsletter on left panel.

GARDENS OPEN TO NEW MEMBERS - New members are encouraged to visit members' gardens in their area. The officers and board members have agreed to show new members through their gardens if the member will call ahead and arrange a convenient time. Telephone numbers and towns are listed below. **Memberships and renewals should be sent to our Membership Chairman Jeanne Hammer at 815 Porter St. Apt 301, Richmond, VA 23224.** Annual membership dues are \$40 per year. Miscellaneous inquiries may be sent to the editor (address below) for forwarding to proper individual.

Sandra McDonald, Ph.D., Editor
Mid-Atlantic Rhododendron News and Notes
4302 Chesapeake Ave
Hampton, VA 23669