

MID-ATLANTIC RHODODENDRON NEWS AND NOTES

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Rhododendron Society

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May 2016

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MEETINGS

September 9-11, 2016

Pipestem Resort, West Virginia

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Rhododendron Blog	www.rhododendron.org/blog/
Friends of the National Arboretum	http://savetheazaleas.org/
FONA's Save the Azaleas and Boxwood site	

MAY BUSINESS MEETING AND FALL MEETING 2016

At our brief MAC meeting at 9a.m. April 24 in Williamsburg, President Jay Gillenwater announced that our Fall Meeting is being planned for September 9-11 at Pipestem Resort in West Virginia. Jeanne Hammer and Doug Jolley have been working on the meeting.



An election of directors for 3- year terms took place. The new directors are Sharon Horn, Dave Banks, Jim Brant, and Barbara Hall.

JMU WORKDAY



Sharon Horn.

Sharon Horn scheduled a workday at the JMU Arboretum for May 23 to work on the MAC Native Azalea Garden, the Glenn Dale Azalea Collections, the McDonald Garden, and the Wheelon Rhododendron Garden, mostly on pruning out dead and damaged branches,

clearing packed leaves from the base of plants, and some general weeding. Holly Tone fertilizer will be put down. More evergreen native species are needed for the MAC garden there because it is now mostly deciduous azaleas and there needs to be more kinds of material to give more form and contrast to the garden, especially in the winter.

WILLIAMSBURG ARS/ASA CONVENTION

The Convention Committee worked very hard and put on a very successful convention with ARS and ASA board meetings, a gigantic plant sale, four days of tours, talks by well-known speakers, and a flower



Seated Marjene and ARS President Bob MacIntyre, standing Pam Brant and Ken McDonald at dinner. Photo S. McDonald.

show and photography show in addition to auctions, the dinners and programs. Many workers helped out

the committee of co-chairs Don Hyatt and Rick Bauer. Paul and Carolyn Beck, Dave Banks, and George McLellan did a tremendous amount of work. Mary Reiley did the Flower Show with help from Sharon Horn. Carol Segree's spray of *Rhododendron serpyllifolium* was the flower show winner.

Susan Bauer organized the lunches. Sonny Coble and Ray Smith organized a lot of plant propagation by several people. Carolyn Beck and Jay Gillenwater grew a lot of plants for the Plant Sale and Ron Brown donated a large number of tree peonies for the sale. Others grew some plants, too. The Mohrs did the photo show. Paul Beck did computer programming and work in the Plant Sale to make the event go smoothly.



Meeting Co-chair Don Hyatt. Photo by S. McDonald.

Bus captains were Bill Bedwell, Debby Sauer, Karel Bernady and Phyllis Rittman. Phyllis had also worked very hard at registration. Virginia Banks worked on registration and Dave Banks was Registrar. Many of the people mentioned helped out in more than one area, and there are others who are not mentioned who should be thanked, too.

The gardens were lovely. MAC members Barbara and Alton Hall, and Pam and Jim Brant worked very hard to get



Kirk Brown in costume as John Bartram. Photo by S. McDonald.

their gardens into beautiful shape for the garden tours. The gardens of non-members Sue and Bill Perrin, Cam and Dean Williams, Brent and Becky Heath, Bill and Linda Pinkham, Junko and Joe Liesfeld, and ASA members Elisabeth and Roy Cosby were also on tour.



The very hard late freeze had damaged the azaleas in the Richmond garden that was visited, but most of the other gardens on the tours escaped frost damage. Your editor was only able to

Barbara Hall welcoming visitors to the garden. Photo by S. McDonald.



Paul Beck at the Plant Sale. Photo by S. McDonald.

go on the Gloucester tour, but was told several times that the plants in Norfolk at the Norfolk Botanical Garden were very nice. There may have been some damage in Gloucester, but it was not noticeable.

There were several interesting evening speakers. Kirk Brown performed as John Bartram in keeping with the Convention theme of "Legends and Legacies". He was followed by modern-day plant explorer Steve Hootman. The ASA had its Annual Meeting on Friday evening which featured keynote speaker Rick Lewandowski. On Saturday evening the ARS banquet had ARS past-president Mike



Garden path at Barbara & Alton Hall's. Photo by Debby Sauer.



Garden vignette at Hall's. Photo by D Sauer



Rhododendron periclymenoides in Brant garden. Photo by S. McDonald.



Gordon & Linda Wylie with Jay Gillenwater at the Hall's. Photo by S. McDonald.



The Hall's garden. Photo by S. McDonald.



Lady Banksia rose on windmill in Sue Perrin's garden. Photo S. McDonald.



Garden host Bill Pinkham in the Pinkham garden. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Rhododendron 'John C. White'. Photo D. Sauer.



'Venus' Baby'. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Michael Mills and Robert Ramik with 'Venus' Baby'. Photo by Don Hyatt.



'Dream Sherbet' photo by Don Hyatt.



McDonald Garden- 'Rosy Frills' and "George L. Tabor" Photo by Don Hyatt.



Pinkham Garden, water vista. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Linda Pinkham in blue in the garden. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Sculptures and water view in Pinkham garden. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Pinkham drive. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Sue Perrin in her garden. Photo by S. McDonald.



Rhododendron austrinum in Cam Williams garden. Photo by S. McDonald.



Laura Grant during lunch break at Beaverdam Park. Photo by S. McDonald.

Stewart as keynote speaker. He spoke mainly about West Coast plant explorers.

Bill Mangels and Norman Beaudry received Gold Medals at the ARS banquet. Dan Krabill and Paul and Carolyn Beck received Exceptional Service Awards at the ASA awards ceremony.

CHANGES IN THE SOCIETY

There have been some major changes at ARS. Long time Executive Director Laura Grant retired after the Annual Spring Meeting. ARS will no longer have an Executive Director, but rather will have an Office Administrator with fewer duties than Laura had. The new Office Administrator is Katherine Sterner of Great River, NY. Email contact is member@arsoffice.org.

Samuel Burd has stepped down as ARS Treasurer and MAC's own David Banks is the new ARS Treasurer.

The next issue of the *Journal* should have the new names and contact information in it on the inside front cover.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBER

Donald Showalter, Broadway, VA
22815

JUNE 2016 MOUNTAIN TRIPS - MAC & POTOMAC VALLEY CHAPTER - by Don Hyatt: (703) 975-0409 (cell), (703) 241-5421 (home) & George McLellan: (804) 824-1012 (cell) (Tentative Plans as of 5/10/2016)

With late freezes and heavy rains, the weather has certainly damaged many spring garden displays. It must have affected the native azaleas and rhododendrons in the mountains but we have no idea what to expect. The following itinerary is our best bet for what hope to see and when that will be. Feel free to join us on all or part of our trip, but **keep in touch as we may change locations and focus on the trip** depending upon the weather forecast and what seems to be in flower.

1. Mount Rogers and Grayson Highlands - Saturday, June 11:

Drive to Grayson Highlands State Park to admire *R. calendulaceum*. If there is time, take moderate hike out to Rhododendron Gap along the Appalachian Trail to see the *R. catawbiense*.

Hotel - Probably the Econo Lodge in Marion, 1420 N Main St, Marion, VA 24354 Phone:(276) 783-603

6/11 – Explore Grayson Highlands State Park for much of the day and head to Marion, VA, for the evening.

6/12 – Check out Black Mountain in southwest Virginia and eastern Kentucky. Head to either Mountain City or Elizabethton, TN for the evening.

2. Roan Mountain - Sunday through Tuesday, June 12 - 14:

This is probably the most scenic hike on our trip, so we want to hike Roan on the day that promises to have the best weather and good views. It is a moderate hike with majestic views with *R. calendulaceum* and *R. catawbiense*. NASCAR has scheduled big racing weekends in Bristol for 6/17 – 6/19 and 6/23-6/26 which usually swamps all hotels in the region so we avoid those dates. The Southern Appalachians Highlands Conservancy (<http://www.appalachian.org>) has shifted their annual June Jamboree back to 6/11. They also arrange hikes in the Roan Mountain area so some may prefer to join them instead of going to Grayson Highlands.

Americourt Hotel Elizabethton

1515 19E Bypass, Elizabethton, TN 37643

Phone: (423) 542-4466

or

Americourt Hotel Mountain City

450 Dotson Lane, Mountain City, TN 37683

Phone: (423) 727-7311

6/12 – If time allows, consider a quick trip to Roan Mt. or Snake Mt. in late afternoon. Possibly visit J. Jackson & Lindy Johnson but call first: (423)-571-2227

6/13 – Spend the day on Roan Mt., weather permitting. Pack lunch.

6/14 – Alternative hike date for Roan. Second option is to get on Parkway at Boone and see Linville Falls and other spots on the upper Parkway. Stop by Mount Mitchell if weather is clear. Possibly visit Red Max. Return to the hotel for the evening.

3. Lower Blue Ridge Parkway to Wayah Bald - Wednesday, June 15:

This lower section is one of the prettiest sections of the entire Blue Ridge Parkway, so we will spend

much of our travel time enjoying vistas, native azaleas, rhododendrons, and wildflowers.

Microtel Inn Franklin

81 Allman Dr, Franklin, NC 28734

Phone: (828) 349-9000

6/15 – Leave early in the morning and travel south to I-26 to Asheville. Get on the Blue Ridge Parkway heading south and end up in Franklin by the evening.

6/16 – Drive to Wayah and Wine Spring Bald in the AM. Explore the area looking at *R. arborescens* and *R. calendulaceum* forms. Drive to Robbinsville, NC, for the evening.

4. Hooper Bald - Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, June 16 - 18:

This is an easy hike to see *R. calendulaceum* and the Hooper Bald renovation project. We hope to spend one day doing some clearing but there are possible side trips to other locations.

Microtel Inn, Robbinsville, NC

111 Rodney Orr Bypass, Robbinsville, NC

Phone: (828) 479-6772

6/16 – Check into the Microtel Inn and go to Hooper Bald in the evening if there is time.

6/17 – Spend the day on Hooper Bald. Cut back weeds, check plantings. Admire azaleas.

6/18 – Possibly do some exploring for *R. cumberlandense* on Cherohala Skyway, or head south of Robbinsville to Murphy and check out places like Slaughter Mountain.

5. Gregory Bald & the Smokies - Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, June 19 - 21:

This is a strenuous hike to see native azaleas on top of Gregory Bald. Trip takes 3 or more hours each way, unless you are old and fat. Then allow 4 to 5 hours each way. We want to hike when weather conditions are promising so we will choose the most promising day for the long hike.

Best Western Cades Cove Inn

7824 E Lamar Alexander Pkwy, Townsend, TN 37882

Phone: (865) 448-9000

6/19 – Buy food for hike and breakfast. Get to bed early in preparation for Gregory Hike.

6/20 – Hike Gregory Bald, weather permitting. Very early rise... Leave motel at 6:00 AM!

6/21 – Alternative date for Gregory hike. If hike was successful on Monday, we can visit other places in Smokies, such as the Jump Off or even Mount LeConte to see “Smokianum.” That assumes that people can still walk since the Gregory trip is usually quite taxing.

6. On Your Own - Wednesday, June 22 -23:

6/22 Head for home, tour the Parkway looking for *R. maximum* forms, or visit nurseries to buy plants. Possibly spend the night in Mountain City and dine at Suba’s Restaurant.

Americourt Hotel Mountain City

450 Dotson Lane, Mountain City, TN 37683

Phone: (423) 727-7311

East Fork Nursery – Vivian Abney (native azaleas)
2769 Bethel Church Road, Sevierville, TN 37876

Phone: (865) 453-6108

IN THE CROZET GARDEN by Lloyd Willis

This spring in Central Virginia has been interesting and frustrating. The last frost date is usually given as May 15 so the two killing frosts we had this spring could not really be called highly unexpected. The early buds on the planted azaleas and rhodos were unexpected and were frozen.



Lloyd Willis.

Before the first frost, I moved about 15 three gallon potted Japanese maples onto the enclosed back porch along with over 50 one gallon size English boxwoods and over 50 gallon size hostas. All the plants were heavily watered before being placed on the back porch. The back porch was very humid but at least watering was not needed. There was a 12 inch wide pathway from the porch door to the house door. However, all the porch plants were saved from the two frosts.

The frosts damaged the new growth of the planted Japanese maples. Various shades of brown appeared

on that new growth. If you like multiple shades of brown provided by dead plant material, that could make this spring less painful. So where is the possible humor in this article? The possible humor was in seeing the last three to four inches of now dead new growth on the Japanese maples hanging straight down looking like three to four inches of brown string. Those strings in the right light look like what might be a new species of Spanish moss.

P.S. This last week has been a joy because the surviving azaleas and rhodos have been in full glorious bloom.

WINDBEAM WAY WANDERINGS, May 2016 by Doug Jolley

The report from our garden this edition could easily be issued in volumes or issued in a few sentences. I will select the latter choice.

Following a fall season in which a number of evergreen azaleas and a few rhododendrons decided to bloom, and a warm December and a sub-zero February and blizzard: the garden this season has been the best in memory. This is also our third year without deer.



Doug Jolley.

One part of MAC membership that is standing out



Doug Jolley hybrid azalea. Photo by D. Jolley.

now is the chapter's Plants For Members program. Much of our garden is now anchored by plants brought home from meetings twenty and thirty years ago. In recent years, these young P4M plants spend two or three seasons in planting beds to develop into sizes

which will survive on their own in a garden setting. For these two or three



Dexter's Champagne. Photo by D. Jolley.

years they receive fertilization and pest treatment if needed. Also the opportunity for plants not suited to our climate here in central West Virginia to fail.

One offering which has been particularly floriferous this May has been 'Dexter's Champagne.' We were not sure how some rhododendrons would do following sub-zero temperatures this winter and this and many others have produced flowers like crazy. Also, the native azalea selection 'Millie Mac' is a show piece sharing space with a bed of yellow lady slippers. 'Nestucca' and 'Henry Yates' are in full bloom at this writing. They were often used by our late member Harry Wise in his hybridizing. Again, the list of successful P4M plants can now go on and on. Importantly, I think it important to note that this program is chaired by Dr. Jay Gillenwater and the selection and the quality of the plants provided to our members is second to none.

Fall meeting attendees will visit Cole Nurseries in September. Norman Cole is President of the West Virginia Nursery and Landscape Association and will share with us his methods for the prevention of the spread of boxwood blight in his commercial shipping operations, propagation methods and we can walk through his sale area and small arboretum. His nursery is just a few minutes from our meeting destination at Pipestem State Park in south eastern West Virginia.

The profusion of rhododendron and azaleas has been and continues to be fantastic but the vegetable garden now needs attention!



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



Norfolk Botanical Garden. Photo by Don Hyatt.



McDonald garden area at Norfolk Botanical Garden. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Rhododendron in the Rhododendron Glade at Norfolk Botanical Garden. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Rhododendron Glade at Norfolk Botanical Garden. Photo by Don Hyatt.



'Formosa' azaleas at Norfolk Botanical Garden. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Intersectional Peony in the formal garden at the Pinkham's. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Pinkham drive. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Pinkham drive. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Pinkham formal garden. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Pinkham formal garden. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Pinkham front garden. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Pinkham front garden. Photo by Don Hyatt.



Alton Hall and Bill Miller in the Hall's garden. Photo S. McDonald.



Cam Williams in her garden. Photo S. McDonald.



Jay Gillenwater, Mr. Williams and two more attendees in the Williams garden. Photo S. McDonald.



Plant Sale with many of Ron Brown's tree peonies. Photo S. McDonald.



Photo contest entries. Photo McDonald.



Photo contest entries. Photo McDonald.

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.

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