Rhododendron News

Newsletter of the Portland Chapter - Volume LII, No. 10 - November, 2008

November

20 Chapter Meeting 20 am PDX Garden Club: Flower Power TBS Board meeting

December

6 am PDX Garden Club: Market Basket 18 Christmas Pot Luck and Chapter meeting TBS Board meeting

January

15 Chapter Meeting 15 am PDX Garden Club: Plants that Thrive TBS Board meeting

Meeting Info

Regular meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month (except in June, July, and August). Meetings start at 7 p.m. with a social half-hour preceding the main meeting at 7:30 p.m. We wrap up around 9-9:30 p.m.

Location

All Saints Episcopal Church - At the corner of SE 40th and Woodstock
Portland, Oregon

Please feel free to join us at the Deli across the street for dinner before the meeting – several members routinely meet there.

COLOR: A color version of the newsletter will be posted on the chapter's website: www.rhodies.org. **November Program...**

"Ergonomic Gardening"

By Mike Domaschofsky

November's Meeting promises to be practical and entertaining. **Brenda Knobloch** from De Santis Landscapes will be here to share with us her passion for ergonomic gardening. She has a vast experience in dealing with all the aches and pains of gardening. She is very dedicated to helping those who want to garden but find conventional ways difficult. She has a wonderful 'can do' attitude and is part of the solution.

Brenda is currently working for De Santis Landscapes. This is an award winning company on the cutting edge of environmentally friendly systems and is known for the program they created. This is program is called EARTHSENSE.

EARTHSENSE is designed to provide a long -term health benefits and to cleanse your property of fertilizers and herbicides. They are certified under the EcoLogical Business Program. We can learn a lot from Brenda and take home some tips to make our gardens easier to maintain and more Eco-friendly.

October Program in Review

As you might expect Mike Stewart gave us a fabulous program that featured five different garden collections in Scotland. He took us through tours of three Royal Botanic Gardens (RBG): Edinburgh, Logan, and Bracklyn, plus the Logan House garden (next to the Logan RBG) and Glendoick (the Cox garden). Mike and Maria visited several gardens, not all of which were included in this program (we would have needed to bring sleeping bags to view them all!).



R. cinnabarinum (Photo by Peter Cox on the ARS Plant Description page www.rhododendron.org/descriptionS_new.asp?ID=41])

Mike talked about how the collections were created and are being maintained today. Many of the plants are well over 50-100 years old and are gigantic compared to plants that we typically see in the U.S. Imagine standing next to a *R. augustinii* that is as large as a cottage! Mike showed several slides where Maria was dwarfed by a single plant—truly amazing!

Many chapter members have visited these gardens in the past. It was very interesting to see how the gardens have developed and matured over the years. As gardeners, we have a particular appreciation for the level of maintenance required to keep these gardens in an exquisite state. At one of the gardens, Mike had asked one of the 'workers' for information. Not only did the 'worker' know the answer, but he was working on his doctorate thesis... some gardener!

Some of the plants featured in Mike's presentation included species such as: *R. erosum* (fabulous bark!), *R. orbiculare* (rounded leaves), *R. cinnabarinum* (with its aromatic foliage and tubular flowers), *R. augustinii* (cheery blue flowers), *R. concatenans* (blue green foliage), *R. roxieanum* (lanceolate leaves), and a wide variety of hybrids such as 'Ever Red' and 'Wine and Roses' (everyone wanted these new crosses with the dark, almost black leaves!!!).

Bidding Wars

Did you miss the October meeting auction? There were some pretty special and unusual plants in the auction that got members very excited...at times there were bidding wars between members for some of these choice and hard to find plants. Several members brought in plants for the sale and as door prizes. Mike Stewart brought in plants that were featured in his presentation. Door prize plants were brought in from Bovees Nursery.

Many thanks to all that brought and bought plants! The bidding wars for 30 plants generated a total of \$547.00. This money will be used to help offset the increasing meeting hall rent.

You may want to mark your calendar (and bring a friend who likes to collect rare and unusual plants) for the next Chapter auctions which are scheduled for February and April of next year.

Looking for something?

Surplus copies of past journals and bulletins are available for FREE from Kathy Van Veen (503) 777-1734 (or vanveennursery@hotmail.com).

With a Little Help from our Friends...

The Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden depends heavily upon the contributions of the 'Friends' organization. This group not only helps keep the garden in tip top shape, but also brings in around \$50,000 in donations and memberships each year.

The Master Plan for the garden mentions the Friends organization but really does not give a very clear idea of how this organization came to be. **Bill Ferguson** originated the idea of a 'Friends' group and discussed it with **Bruce Winston.** Together, these two pioneers brought up the idea to then Garden Chairman, **Ted Van Veen**.

"I doubt very much that the organization would have gotten off the ground if it hadn't been for the enthusiasm and drive of Bruce Winston," Bill said in a recent email. "Bruce arranged several neighborhood meetings to seek support for the Friends. There was some interest but no one was willing to assume any leadership in getting the group organized."

"After several unsuccessful efforts it was decided that we should simply become an auxiliary of the Chapter. That arrangement has its shortcomings but has functioned reasonably well over the years" he continued.

Bill indicated that they wanted to interest new people in the Garden and raise enough money to help finance Garden improvement. "Looking back on what we've accomplished," he said "we've been more successful than we dared to hope for at the beginning."

Bill indicated that they wanted to recruit volunteers. An article regarding volunteer opportunities has appeared regularly in the Friends newsletter. This method, however, has not proven to be a successful way to recruit. "That effort, as far as I know," Bill continued "has not produced one volunteer. That has been a disappointment."



Waterfalls at Crystal Springs Rhododen-dron Garden (Photo by K.Collier, used with permission).

To get the organization going, Bill agreed to do the clerical work. "Now, at age 88, I'm questioning the wisdom of that open ended decision," he chuckled.

Bill emphasized the importance of the leadership of **Bruce Winston** and **Ted Van Veen** in managing this volunteer organization. All of the income (except that needed for printing, postage, etc.) is used for Garden improvements, and there have been a significant number of garden improvements over the years.

Next month's issue will recap some of those garden improvements and begin the discussion of what are our next steps in the garden and how can we get them implemented? Stay Tuned!

Hindsdale Garden Featured on PBS

During the October Chapter meeting, the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) aired a segment on the Hinsdale Estate Garden on Oregon Field Guide. The segment was filmed late last spring and it is highly likely that it will be re-run in the future. It is highly unlikely that we will have much notice for the presentation (like this time)—so keep your eyes open!

The Hinsdale garden and its history were featured in articles in the ARS Journal during the past year. Restoration of the garden will be a joint effort by the Bureau of Land Management (USDI, BLM) and District 4 members.

Vacancy Advertisements

Newsletter Editor. Do you have about 8-10 hours a month to spare? The chapter needs to a new newsletter editor to work with a small team of folks. Average computer skills and strong word processsing skills will make the job easy and interesting. Some writing and photography possible. Those who want to develop stronger writing or computer skills may also find this an enjoyable task (editing, consultation, and technical assistance will be provided). Depending on your skill level, the process may take 8-10 hours or more per month.

If you are interested, please contact **Kathy Van Veen**, 503-777-1734 (vanveennursery@hotmail. com) or **Kath Collier**, 503-663-7917 (talk2write2@wildblue.net).

R. Cynthia Wood

Jerry Harris, a member of the Pacific Northwest Woodturning Guild, will be bringing products to the November chapter meeting that were made from the 90-year-old R. Cynthia that was removed from Crystal Springs. Ray Girton reports that the items that Jerry has made are fabulous... There may e something there that could be a perfect Christmas present for the hard to satisfy Rhodoholic in your family...

Smith Garden Fall Work Party

We have been blessed with fabulous fall weather. The Work Party at the Smith Garden got lucky this year both with the weather and with finishing all of the vital projects. "We had a very successful day," Herb Spady said in a recent email. It also looks like they had a great time!

Renewal Time!

It is not too late to send in your ARS membership renewals. Most members should have their envelopes by now. You will want to check the information in the envelope for updates and changes, and return it with your check as soon as you can. Membership envelopes can also be given to **Ray Girton** at the Chapter meeting as well.

Why renew? There are many exciting programs and social activities that lay ahead of us this year. Other membership benefits include this newsletter, the national journal, multiple websites (including a 'soon to be' updated chapter website that will feature back issues of the newsletter as well as many tips and techniques), and links to the Smith Garden and the Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden sites. Your membership also entitles you to significant book discounts, garden admission, social events, etc. Sometimes members can get special deals like the free fire wood offered by Herb Spady from the Smith Garden.

Information in the renewal envelope becomes your listing in the annual Portland Chapter Roster booklet. If there is a change or additional information you want in the Roster for 2009, include it in your renewal envelope or contact **Ray Girton** (503-659-7275) membership chair. **Thank you.**





All of the vital projects were completed at the Smith Garden work party in October.



A moment to ponder and discuss the garden and progress.



Helpers relaxing after a busy day at the garden.



This Sunset Maple captures stunning autumn colors (photo by K. Collier, used with permission).

Want to expand your horizons? Sign up to be a District Director or Alternate

You can expand your rhododendron horizons by participating as a District Director or Alternate. This position gives you a chance to see what is going on in our District as well as others. This three yearterm advisory position is nominated by District Chapter Presidents and we are looking for a few good candidates! Nominations for the District 4 (that's us) District Director and Alternate District Director are due by November 15. Information about the nominees will be published in the winter. 2009 issue of the Journal. Ballots will be mailed and votes tallied in April. If you are interested in expanding your horizons, please submit your name to Kath Collier, 503-663-7917 (talk2write2@wildblue.net

President's Message Kath Collier

Fall is one of my favorite times of the year. I really enjoy the color and have been known to request certain plants as birthday presents (you guessed it... the maple above was one of them). Ah yes, just another sign of the truly addicted plantaholic.

The other day a member apologized to me for being a member of a different plant society. I (as a member of several other plant societies myself) didn't see anything wrong with belonging to several organizations. Actually there are benefits to being a part of several. For instance, the National Garden Club, Inc. (NGC) judging manual now includes a small segment on rhododendrons and azaleas (I didn't write it, but was just glad to see it). Who knows--this may get more of 500,000 or so NGC club members interested in attending a rhododendron show or visiting one of our gardens.

There can be a dark side of belonging to more than one organization... you can become a **SPY!** Many organizations are testing out several different ideas on how to recruit and retain their membership. Going undercover allows one to observe and bring back ideas on what worked and what we should probably avoid.

At this last meeting, I shared an Iris judging handbook with Linda Rumgay (our Show Chairman). The American Iris Society has a fairly rigorous training program for show judges which includes lectures and written exams. Many judges are expert, commercial growers, but many are not. These comprehensive courses ensure that iris judges are familiar with not only what they grow, but all of the other types of irises that they don't grow, and provides judges with a handy reference manual. Courses are typically scheduled as part of conventions or other broad meetings so more members can participate. Pretty neato.

This idea might be interesting for the American Rhododendron Society to consider. I'm not sure what might be included in a handbook, but it might be an interesting topic to discuss. I would like to take the Show handbook that **Eleanor Stubbs** created several years

ago and make it available online with photos. She had collected several good ideas related to implementing a show that are worth revisiting and perhaps using as a start. What do you think?

Surfing the Board...

Chapter board members met twice in October to catch up on several activities and decisions.

Irv Snyder is negotiating the rent for the current meeting site. The maintenance costs for the church are going up and it was suggested that we make sure to put 'pants on our plants' (slipping a plastic bag over the pots) to keep the room cleaner.

Committee membership was reviewed and there may be some changes in participants for a few of the committees. This information will also be used to update the website listings.

Dick Cavender presented an updated financial reports for the Chapter, CSRG and Smith Gardens . The recent market changes will impact our investments but not significantly.

The national ARS is moving towards a universal insurance program. More information has been requested (**Dave Collier**) at this point the Portland Chapter has declined to participate pending additional information on costs.

There was discussion regarding the continued use of the bulk mailing permit for the distribution of the newsletter (Ray Girton and Maria Stewart). The permit is used by CSRG and Smith Gardens, as well as the Chapter. Because of this, the permit will be retained. A motion was made to distribute the newsletter to regular volunteers at CSRG. There are and will be regular articles about the garden which should be of interest.

There was some discussion regarding how to best continue the electronic distribution if the newsletter and how to get things posted on the website. A small web team has been established including: Brenda Ziegler, Donna Sell, Steve Kaminski, Ray Girton, Dick Cavender, Dave and Kath Collier.

Mike Stewart has been working on the Policies of the Board which will (Continued on page 5)

BOOKS-BOOKS BOOKS-BOOKS

Order your books through the ARS Portland Chapter and receive 10-25 percent discount off the list price. The Chapter receives 5 percent of each book. Contact **Loni Welsh** via:

- email <u>oregon1853@</u> yahoo.com
- phone 503-663-6987
- ARS Chapter meetings

The following publishers and book sellers offer discounts to us:

- Princeton University Press - 25% discount (http://press.princeton. edu /catalogs. html)
- Storey Publishing 25% discount (http://www.storey.com)
- Timber Press Publishing
 25% discount (http://www.timberpress.com)
- Workman Publishing -25% discount (http:// www.workman.com)
- Southern Oregon book dealer 10% discount (catalog listing available on request)
- Rain or Shine 10% discount (any other books they have in their store)



Az. 'Orange Flare' (photo by K. Collier, used with permission).

In the garden...101

Got Color?

If you were present at the October Chapter meeting, you might have left with a big smile on your face... the auction plants were fabulous! When asked, several members indicated that November is the perfect time for planting and weeding. You may also want to take stock of your fall color.

Many rhododendrons and azaleas can play a part in enhancing your fall color. Some plants will sprinkle a few blooms around. Many will surprise you with a wealth of leaf colors that range from orange (Az. 'Orange Flare', for instance), to a dark burgundy (Az. 'Johanna', for instance), to bronze (*R. schlippenbachii*, for instance), to everything in between.

The Board discussed the idea of collecting photographs of colorful fall colored rhododendrons and azaleas. The idea was that we could compile a collection of these for a fall program. If you like this idea and have some pictures to share, please send them to **Mike Domaschofsky** (email: domo2603 @hotmail.com).

If you do not have rhododendrons and azaleas in your garden that provide fall color, you may want to do a little research this winter. With a little work you can find varieties that will help fill the color need and still work well within even the smallest garden. You may also be able to find these plants at the sales this spring. Also, feel free to send in a "WANTED" request to the newsletter editors and we will post a notice for you. See masthead for contact info.

Haiku By Peter Kendall

In an ebbing light
Riffle of the brook before
The moon has shown its face

The trilling cricket
The first leaf breaking earthward
And summer?

Scattered cloud at daybreak
Fullness of the autumn moon
In the western sky



Many rhododendrons and azaleas flaunt a wonderful autumn show like this *R. schlippenbachii* (photo by K.Collier, used with permission).

Surfing (Continued)

include job descriptions for the various positions in the chapter and gardens.

Carol McCarthy will be following up on a City of Portland grant to improve the restrooms at CSRG. She is also researching requirements for replacing the exhibit house. Kath Collier has been working on an update to the Master Plan.

Several members are interested in locating someone experienced in making digital videos. There is an interest in capturing some how-to kinds of interviews. If you know of someone please contact **Donna Sell** (503-670-1728).

Western Regional Conference

Christmas *Already?*

You might want to take advantage of the special **Christmas sale** of:

"The Pacific Coast Rhododendron Story... the Hybridizers, Collectors and Gardens"

This fabulous book was created by the Portland Chapter (with the help of Sonja Nelson) is now on sale! Soft bound copies - regularly \$29.95 - are on sale for just \$19.95! Hard bound copies – regularly \$38.95 – are on sale for just \$29.95. Get your shopping done early by contacting Loni Welsh for copies of this fabulous book (see Books-Books article for contact info).

Additional photos from the western regional conference will be included in the online newsletter version. See chapter website: www.rhodies.org

Just Another Day in Paradise...

By Dick Cavender

Karen and I departed Portland on September 23 and met **Anne Gross** and **Steve Krasik** on our flight. Our hotel was on the beach of Hilo Bay. One of the first things we noticed was that most restaurants and bars closed at 9 pm and the streets roll up by 10. Things were expensive! A dinner for two with a couple of drinks ran about \$100 plus tip. Gas was about \$4.25 a gallon and diesel over \$5.

Hilo is on the 'wet' side of the Big Island and can get up to 150-inches of rain a year. Many areas have no public water supply and residents collect their own in 8 foot high 'swimming pools'. Some areas have no power supply as well.

The 24th was occupied by tours to several interesting gardens and nurseries. One of the first things we learned about gardening on the *Big Island* is that there is not much 'soil.' The first thing you do with a 'wild' lot is bulldoze out the invasives such as Tibouchina and Strawberry guava, and grind up what you can for mulch. Mulch is in high demand and many gardens are planted in a mixture of it and volcanic cinders. Drainage is fast and fertilizer needs to be applied fairly often.

First stop was White Cloud Nursery (www.whitecloudnursery.com), home of **Pete** and **Jane Adams**. They have about five acres with several greenhouses full of good looking plants. They currently offer around 300 varieties of vireyas and maddeniis, plus other tropical plants. Theirs is a young garden, but very nicely designed with a display garden that will only improve with age. A number of wallets were lighter when we departed.

Next stop was Josanna's Organics (josannasgarden.com) which is a retain/wholesale store that features a wide range of exotic tropical fruits and roots. We saw many interesting fruits that are not common in our local stores, all grown organically. The free samples

were great! They have an interesting method of 'hiring' help, they are all volunteers! The volunteers get room, board, and education in exchange for labor. More info is available on their website.

Our third stop was Lundkvist's Palm Garden (www.lundkvistpalmgarden.com/web). This five acre garden has 5,000 palms that represent some 625 species! The garden is nicely laid out with bridges and a deep gully (formed by a lava tube) with a nice creek. Numerous trails lead to beds organized by the origin and species of the various palms. You thought Oregon was wet? They average some 150-inches of rain a year. Many of the trees were quite large considering that the first planting was made in 1996.

Lunch was at on the coast at Isaac Hale Park. There is an easy walk that leads to a black sandy beach formed again after Pele destroyed it several years ago. The steam plume where lava flows into the sea was visible in the distance. The evening was spent consuming a nice variety of Pupus (appetizers) and renewing old acquaintances and the Taiko drummers provided entertainment.

On Thursday we were off for a tour on Volcanoes National Park which is probably the prime tourist location on the Big Island. The views are spectacular (see www.nps.gov/havo/ for more info). We also visited a large, very commercial, orchid nursery.

Friday was another full day of garden tours. Our first stop was **Chuck Martin's** garden. Started in 2002, the collection consists of some 11 beds containing a huge selection of tropical plants. Many Vireyas were in flower and this was the first place I saw self sown seedlings growing on living tree ferns and logs.

The home of the **Schimpfs** was our next stop. Ray and Cindy have been at this location for just a few years but the garden is taking shape nicely. Again, lots of blooming Vireyas. They are completely 'off grid' and produce all their power with solar cells and collect all their water from rainfall.

Our third stop was very interesting. Owned by a boy of about 15 and his mother, it was somewhat of a jungle but very interesting. Jurahame Leyva

PDX Garden Club Events

All presentations are free and open to the public and held at the Portland Garden Club, 1132 SW Vista, Portland. Coffee served at 9:30 a.m. For additional info call: 503-222-2845 or www.portlandgardenclub. org.

Thursday, November 20, 10:15 a.m.: Judge's Choice: Flower Power. Lee LaPointe of Florida brings us her Garden Clubs of America award-winning flower arranging secrets.

Saturday, December 6, 2008, 10 am to 2 pm: Market Basket – annual holiday floral decoration sale with the theme "Making Spirits Bright." has been growing and hybridizing orchids since he was 8 and is now into growing and hybridizing Vireyas. Many rhodies were in bloom and again there were self-sown seedlings growing on tree ferns and logs bordering the beds. A good-sized greenhouse was full of flasks and pots of seedlings.

Our last stop was the home of **Pat & Don Albrecht.** Another nice garden full of flowering Rhodies. Don is a wood turner, and had a great selection of bowls and other items that he makes on site. I managed to keep my wallet in my pocket but it was hard!

Friday evening we took a shuttle to the nearby Honolulu Park for a potluck dinner provided by chapter members. There are a lot of great cooks in the society and this evening was no exception! This was another good opportunity to make new and renew friendships.

Saturday was devoted to lectures. Fred Renick from the Los Angeles area led off with a tour of his garden. Kaye **Hagen** showed us Vireyas growing in Tasmania. Erick Nilsen (Phd Virginia Tech.) showed us his work on the cells of Vireya leaves. Vireyas contain a type of cells, idioblasts, that are not found in any of the hardy Rhodies. While found in other plants, their purpose in Vireyas is undetermined. After lunch, Richard Marques, co-owner of Pacific Island Nursery, discussed growing Vireyas in Hawaii. His major point being that they are epiphytes and do NOT like growing in soil. Sherla Bertelman presented a visual tour of Mitch & Sandy Mitchell's garden soon to become Kimalia Vireya Garden & Sanctuary. The Mitchells are donating the garden to the State as a botanical preserve.

Saturday evening was the Aloha Banquet. The food was varied and interesting and I pigged out again. We were entertained by a group of lovely young Hula dancers and a raffle. Karen was successful on one item. Several members gathered after the days events on both Friday and Saturday evenings to discuss the problems of the world and growing rhodies. These small gatherings are one of the best parts of any conference.

Sunday was an optional tour day that started at the Panaewa Rainforest Zoo and Gardens near Hilo. The Chapter

developed several beds of Vireyas there and many were blooming. The large arbor of Red Jade Vine in full flower really stood out (think of a Wisteria on steroids with flame red flowers).

Next stop was Mitch and Sandy Mitchell's. They are near the village of Volcano at about the highest settled place on the Island. We previously visited Mitch's garden in 1996, when the Chapter was organized. Mitch had been trying to grow hardy rhodies but with poor results (the plants do not get a 'cool' period). Then he discovered Vireyas and became the driving force in starting the Hawaii Chapter, now some 80 members. The garden contains a great collection of Vireyas (many from Bovee's Nursery) and other plants, and will eventually go into the public trust when the Mitchells leave.

Our last stop was the home of **Charles & Marina Trommer**. Located on a bluff over the Pacific the garden and view are spectacular! We visited in 1996 and they were just getting started. My how things have grown!! Charles has a great collection of Vireyas and many other spectacular plants. Formerly a sugarcane field, it is now a paradise of tropical beauty with a steep gully, and a stream and waterfall framed by a lush canopy of trees at the end of the property. I would move in!

On Monday, September 29 we flew to Kauai for five days. We put 500 miles on a brand new PT Cruiser touring gardens, canyons and beaches. A standout garden on the North Shore was Na 'Aina Kai (www.naainakai.org) which incorporates some 240 acres and features 90 bronze statues and several distinct gardens. You will be overwhelmed. The three hour Stroll & Ride tour is well worth the \$40 cost. We also visited the Allerton Garden (ntbg.org/gardens/ allerton.php) on the south shore which is one of the National Tropical Botanical Gardens. The 2.5-hour ride and stroll are again worth the \$40 fee.

All in all, we had a good trip. The Conference was well done and the members of the Hawaii Chapter deserve high praise for their efforts. I heard that only about 40 off island people registered which is too bad as it was well worth the trip.

Post Master: Time sensitive mail; please deliver before November 20, 2008

Portland Chapter American Rhododendron Society PO Box 86424 Portland OR 97286-0424

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American Rhododendron Society - Portland Chapter - Rhododendron News - October 2008 Brenda Knobloch, De Santis Landscapes, Environmentally Friendly Landscape Systems and Design - "Ergonomic Gardening" - Details inside!

Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden Chair:

Bob MacArthur and Beverly Watkins

Friends: Kathy Van Veen (503) 777-1734 Ticket booth: Rose Kress, (503) 654-4318 GARDEN INFO

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Stewart (503) 668-7565

Delivery: Questions should be directed to: **Maria**

Stewart, Kathy Van Veen, Dave Collier, Ray Sell, Ray Clack Secretary: **Carol McCarthy** Vice President: **Mike Domaschofsky** Treasurer: **Dick Cavender**

(Thru June 30, 2010) Maria Stewart, Mike Hopkins, Brenda Ziegler, Steve Kaminski, Donna **BOARD MEMBERS** (Thru June 30, 2009) *Steve* President: Kath Collier Past President: Irv Snydei

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