

Rhododendron News

Newsletter of the Portland Chapter – Volume LIII, No. 7 – August, 2009

SUMMER CALENDAR
August
August – No Chapter meeting August 20 - Smith Garden Soiree picnic potluck -
September
Regular chapter meetings begin

Meeting Info

Regular chapter meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month (**except in June, July, and August** which have other events). Meetings start at 7 pm with a social half-hour preceding the main meeting. We clean up and exit no later than 9:30 pm.

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

Please feel free to join us at the Woodstock Wine & Deli (across the street) for dinner or beverage before the meeting – several members routinely meet there.

Changing your address?

If you are changing your physical or electronic mail address, be sure to let **Ray Girton**, Membership Chair, know so that we can continue to get the newsletter to you!

NOTE: An expanded color version of the newsletter typically containing more photos (at the end) is posted on the chapter's website: www.rhodies.org.

Dog Days of Summer

Summer is here and the activities at the chapter and gardens change to accommodate the increased workloads needed to keep the gardens watered and looking great. It also gives us a chance to celebrate!

This month there will be a Soiree at the Smith Garden on August 20. The Soiree is not only a fun event, but always includes great company as members from the Willamette and Tualatin Chapters will be joining in. The potluck always features a wealth of fabulous finger foods and stunning walks through the garden. Festivities start at 6 p.m. For additional information, please contact: **Ginny Mapes, 503-312-2879**

We also take a bit of a break on the newsletter – no news in July and just a splash of reminders in August. So here is your splash of newsy, news, and reminders. Next month we will continue with our regular features, program news, etc.

Surfing the Board

Web Subcommittee Activities—A group of folks met this summer to discuss ways to make our website more useful and interesting. **Steve Kaminski** is our new lead webmaster and will be assisting with the three web content components (Chapter and general information, and Smith Garden and Crystal Springs Garden focus areas). The board approved the purchase of computer software that will greatly assist Steve. Additional work on content is also underway by several individuals.

Classification workgroup meeting - How can we improve our shows? A small group began discussing the show schedules used for the Mother's Day and Early shows. Our primary tool for organizing these shows is the show schedule. The team began by converting the schedule to an easy to edit format earlier this summer. At the meeting, the

team looked at streamlining and simplifying the classification process, adding new hybrids to the plant key listing, and evaluating the way that the various classes were split up. There was also some discussion regarding the judging process, how to help novices through the entry gauntlet, and how to give out more trophies and ribbons!!! Additional work is needed and the team hopes to meet again soon.

Position Descriptions—there has been an ongoing effort to update or create job descriptions for all of the various jobs that occur in the Chapter and gardens. The descriptions not only help during transitions, but also help create a check list for the current incumbents. **Mike Stewart** has been coordinating this effort and it is bearing fruit. Several new job descriptions were added to his collection this summer.

Bi-Annual Accomplishment Report—The bi-annual accomplishment reports are finally done. This task may not be something that you are familiar with. You may have not seen the report. The report is really a way for us to tell our stories about that good things that we do in our gardens and with our chapter. I will be asking **Steve Kaminski** to post the final report on our website for your information. There are a lot of folks doing a bang up job for our Chapter and gardens and I'm sure you will want to read about it! **Kath**

CSRG NEEDS YOU!

Work parties at the Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden meet every Wednesday at 9 a.m. beginning in February and wrapping up in November.

If you have a few hours to spare, we could use your help both in the garden and in the gate house. **Bob MacArthur** will be directing the efforts in the garden and **Rose Kress** in the gatehouse.

For more information, contact Bob at **360-256-2522** or Rose at **503-654-4318**.

HAIKU

Peter Kendall

*Coming together
the tortoise shell butterfly
--its summer shadow*

*Drifting summer clouds
through gaps in the gnarled
pine
and beyond*

Terminology Help...

Canopy to root ratio—This ratio would compare the amount of stems and foliage to the amount of roots. Larger canopies weigh more and put greater stress on the root ball.

Drip line—The drip line is, typically, slightly smaller than the diameter of the plant. A drip line for a tree is easy to see after a light rain. Inside the drip line, the soil may be dry, while outside the line will be wetter. The shape and angle of the leaves transport moisture where the greatest amount of root growth occurs which is right at the tip of the root. The bulk of the roots are just slightly smaller than the drip line.

Transpiration—The process of water movement through the plant. In this case, the plant loses more water than it can take up once the roots have been disturbed (and perhaps pruned).

ARS Western Regional Convention

Date: September 18-20, 2009

Location: Federal Way, Washington

Limits: This convention has 160 spaces so early registration is important since we expect a capacity crowd.

Payments: Make checks payable to "ARS 2009 Western Regional Convention"

Send Check with completed registration form to: Bill Miller, 806 S Proctor, Tacoma, WA 98405 USA

Note: All checks must be drawn on a U.S. bank.

Questions? Email smile4bill@hotmail.com with the Subject: Western Regional

In the garden 101...

Tipping Point

by Kath Collier

This winter, several large rhododendrons tipped over. In July, another large *R. Loderi* 'Venus' tipped over at Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden. Why does this happen and what can you do about it?

A plant can be tipped over by strong winds, ice storms, fallen branches from other trees, and even from people (kids and adults) climbing or hanging on them. Tipping accidents can happen even though a plant has been able to happily survive in the same spot for years.

Some plants are just more prone to tipping, and sometimes our pruning practices will increase the potential for a plant to tip. When you examine the downed plant, take note of the shape. Has it been pruned in a 'tree shape'? I would guess that plants that have a greater **canopy to root ratio** are more apt to tip over. Why? The roots...

You have probably noticed that most rhododendrons and azaleas create shallow root mats that include a tangle of both old and new roots. The bulk of the root mat typically extends out to the plant's **drip line**. The bulk of the roots will also be found in the top foot of soil.

Root pruning may be needed not only to help save a tipped over plant (dried out roots are 'gonners') but also when moving large plants. The process for



Attempts are being made to save this *R. Loderi* 'Venus' after it tipped over at CSRG in July. The plant was propped up using a strong branch. Some branches were retained to help provide food for the plant. Others were heavily pruned to minimize the potential for a repeat tip. New growth should begin sprouting in a few weeks most likely near the base of the plant.

moving large plants ideally starts a year before the actual move date. **Ed Reiley** in his book "**Success with Rhododendrons and Azaleas**" recommended cutting a circle around a plant approximately six inches smaller than the root ball diameter a year in advance of the move. The depth of the cut should be about the length of a spade blade. If the circle is small enough, the area will be saturated with old and new roots that will help hold the root ball together when moving the plant the following year.

Recovering a plant that has tipped may include major pruning of some limbs and roots (as shown in the picture above), working up the soil and tucking the roots back in, staking the plant in an upright position, and extra watering of both the leaves and roots during the warm months (because there are less roots, there will be less **transpiration** and plants can dry out).

Member Book Benefits!

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

- email – oregon1853@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)

“A weed is a plant whose virtues have not yet been discovered.” Emerson



Fuzzy Wuzzy

Some *Rhododendrons* just like to steal the show even when they are not blooming! This one which was labeled as *R. pachysanthum* ‘Britt Smith form’ (but is really a yak of some kind) took a blue ribbon and brought on several giggles at a July flower show sponsored by the Portland Judges Council (which is part of the National Garden Clubs, Inc.). Many of the participants (including the judges) had never seen indumentum (hair on the underside of a leaf) or tomentum (hair on the top of the leaf) on a *Rhododendron* before and were rather shy about touching the plant, however you can see where some of it was finally rubbed off of a leaf.

Smith Garden NEEDS YOU!

Work parties at the Cecil and Molly Smith Garden meet at 9 a.m. on most Mondays beginning in February and wrapping up in November. The special all-day work parties in February and in October kick off the season and close the garden for the winter.

If you have a few hours to spare, we could use your help. For more information contact **Ginny Mapes** at 503-647-2896.

September Program Sneak Peak...

SEEDS OF ADVENTURE

My program in September is from the recent book—“*Seeds of Adventure*” by Peter Cox and Peter Hutchinson. From 1962 to 2002, two acclaimed adventurers of contemporary stripe retraced in 16 separate expeditions those paths delved by the renowned plant explorers of the 19th and early to mid-20th centuries. Share their adventures in word and photograph from their wanderings into the most productive realms of the plant world.

Peter Kendall

HELP WANTED!

Do you dream of being a writer? We’ve got just the job for you! We need a Newsletter Editor.

Qualifications: Depending on your skill level, the process may take as little as 8-10 hours per month. Average computer and word processing skills will make the job easy and interesting. You will need to provide your own computer and printer; some writing and photography possible.

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

Post Master: Time sensitive mail; please deliver before August 15, 2009

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CHAPTER OFFICERS

President: *Kath Collier* Past President: *Irv Snyder*

Vice President: *Mike Domaschofsky*

Secretary: *Carol McCarthy*

Treasurer: *Dick Cavender*

BOARD MEMBERS (Thru June 30, 2009) *Steve*

Hopkins, Brenda Ziegler, Steve Kaminski, Donna Sell, Ray Clack

(Thru June 30, 2010) *Kathy Van Veen, Dave*

Collier, Ray Girton, Maria Stewart, Mike Stewart,

GARDEN INFO:

Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden Chair:

Bob MacArthur and *Beverly Watkins*

Ticket booth: *Rose Kress*, (503) 654-4318

Friends: *Kathy Van Veen* (503) 777-1734

Cecil & Molly Smith Garden Chair: *Ginny Mapes*

Newsletter, membership, and ownership: *Ray*

Girton, Membership Chair, (503) 659-7275. The

Portland Chapter is a local Chapter of the

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annual dues to both the national society and local

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hotmial.com or via mail to: 4201 SE Franklin, PO

Box 86424, Portland, Oregon 97286, or to *Kath*

Collier at: talk2write2@wildblue.net, or via mail

to: *Kath Collier*, newsletter production, 37235 SE

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Delivery: Questions should be directed to: *Maria*

Stewart at (503) 668-7565.

Website: www.rhodies.org – web technical support: *Steve Kaminski*