



# Rhododendron News

Newsletter of the Portland Chapter – Volume LIII, No. 9 – October, 2009

## SUMMER CALENDAR

### October

15 – Regular Chapter Meeting  
Party and cutting exchange!  
20 – Board Meeting

### November

19 – Regular chapter meeting,  
SPECIES AUCTION  
24 – Board Meeting  
TBS - CSRG Show Judging &  
Classification Committee mtg

## 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 40<sup>th</sup> 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.

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](http://www.rhodies.org).

## Also In This Issue...

- >>CSRG Master Plan, Partnerships
- >>Surfing the Board
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- >>September in Review— what you missed!
- >>Regional events of interest
- >>Auctions!
- >>In The Garden 101: Fall Color!!!

## October's Meeting

### Trick or Treat!

To get in the spirit of the month we are going to have a Trick or Treat party. All members are asked to bring their favorite snacks, either bought or homemade, to the meeting. There will be a costume contest, for those who want to dress up, with prizes. Also, rumor has it that **Kathy Van Veen** is going to show up in a dress. Now if that is not worth the price of admission I don't know what is.

We are lucky to have **Zack Perry** from Reed College coming to speak to us about Refurbishing the Crystal Spring Watershed. He is an Oregon State University graduate with degrees in Botany and Horticulture. Zack has been at Reed College since 1999 working to restore Reed Canyon. He propagates and starts all his native plants for his project and is going to show us how he does it.

So let all come and enjoy a great program from a local neighbor who appreciates what we all do at Crystal Springs Garden.

## WE FORGOT BIG CHANGE

Last month our program director, me Mr. Beaver, forgot to remind everyone that the September meeting was our annual cutting exchange. Due to the low turn out at the last meeting and hot daily temperatures (good excuses), I have decided to move the **species auction to November's meeting** so we can still have our cutting exchange. **Kathy Van Veen** will be showing us a short program on how to turn cuttings in to starts. So if there is a special rhody you want to start, let one of us know so we can bring your cuttings in. And if you have any ones you would like to share, please bring those as well. Remember that the **NOVEMBERS MEETING WILL BE THE SPECIES AUCTION.**

## Smith Garden Update— HELP October 17

You would be surprised at the light in areas of the Smith Garden. Considerable tree removal has been done. One half of the large Big Leaf Maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) has been cut down. The removed portion was very rotted inside. The other half may be in doubt and considered for later removal. Several fir trees adjacent to the lower path have been removed.

In order to save money none of the debris has been removed. That means we will need a lot of help for the fall work party on **Saturday, Oct. 17**. We will have the usual format with work beginning about 8 am and lunch served. Come and see the changes in the garden and enjoy the company.

There is interesting observation about increasing light in the garden. Several plants suffering from rhododendron mildew (*Microsphaera azalae*) have shown improvement.

## President's Message

### Meeting Hall Blues, part 2

Kath Collier

After several discussions, meetings, and negotiations the decision regarding the meeting hall has been made. We are staying put (yippee!) and should be able to continue meeting at the church for some time.

It sometimes amazes me how much energy it takes to get things going but it is always nice when issues like this can be resolved. So, be sure to put pants on your plants (plastic bag the pots so that the dirt doesn't drip out), and get prepared for a whale of a good time, great programs, and more exciting adventures(?). Maybe adventure is not really the work I'm looking for...

## Surfing the Board

### HAIKU

by Peter Kendall

*Barely visible  
through a shroud of mist, the  
moon  
and Venus to boot*

*The immensity  
of the autumn moon scaling  
the distant ridgeline*

*The shadow of night  
the trilling cricket—can it  
be fall already?*

*An October sun  
My unshakable shadow  
has found its zenith*

*The autumn garden  
Once more, muffled voices  
and dampened footsteps*

### HELP WANTED!

Do you dream of being a writer? We've got just the job for you! Time is running out and we need a replacement!

#### 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 access to a 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)

*The September Chapter Board meeting was a doozie!* It offered a time for the group to catch up after a busy summer and begin addressing several issues related to the chapter and gardens. Some of the issues that the board discussed include:

-- **Meeting hall** rent limits, and getting the situation resolved.

-- Sharing updated (some were draft) **position descriptions** for four positions at Crystal Springs.

-- Updates on the **CSRG restroom** remodel for this winter.

-- A recommendation to plan for a display at next year's **Home and Garden Show** which netted the Chapter around \$700 last year was made. **Mike Domaschofsky** will be looking for some volunteers to help with this display.

-- Ideas for **membership recruiting and retention** such as creating a telephone call list for quickly letting folks know if a meeting gets canceled due to inclement weather, sending meeting reminders to existing members via electronic mail, sending invitations to non-members who have purchased plants at our sales, video taping presenters, door prizes, and how we can best help get the word out on our events and do effective outreach.

-- We also discussed a proposal for a **replacement co-chair** at Crystal Springs and reinvigorating the garden committee. An active volunteer in the garden has been identified as a great candidate and is interested in helping. A more detailed job description may be the only thing holding us back from getting some more help! An active garden committee could be particularly helpful in identifying key information needed on the website, addressing more day-to-day decisions related to garden maintenance, and begin discussions and recruiting help to updating the garden map (using a GPS system), discussing water system locations, working on shows, etc.

-- It was mentioned that **Tom Gressler** is really doing a bang-up job at the Smith Garden. Many thanks for his extra efforts.

-- We will be on the look out for a 'Sunshine Coordinator' to help follow-up on members. **Karen Cavender** has agreed to help us provide a bit of TLC and keep in touch. THANK YOU Karen!

-- There was also a request to put our bi-annual Chapter **accomplishment reports**

on the website under the chapter activities.

-- We also talked about the need for a new **newsletter editor**. Dave and I have purchased nearly 12 acres just north of Bandon, Oregon and plan to build a new house and move our nursery there. It will take a bit of time, but it also takes time to find a willing victim, I mean volunteer, and help them get going.

-- And finally, we talked about how we might be able to send ideas and suggestions to some of the **national committees**. More discussion is needed here.

#### Some topics were postponed such as:

-- Offering advertising in the newsletter and on the website (to drum up extra funds to pay the rent!?!).

-- Developing an online store on the website to make products (such as our cool vests, bags, etc.) more readily available.

--Review of the web progress (thanks to **Steve Kaminski** it is looking great!)

--Proposals for improving our shows coming from the classification work-group. (We're trying to schedule a follow-up meeting).

#### September Meeting in Review

### Seeds of Adventure, In Search of Plants

*Seeds of Adventure, In Search of Plants*, is a **Peter Kendall**

For those of you that did not make last month's meeting, you missed a wonderful book review by long-time member **Peter Kendall**. Peter presented slides taken from the book "Seeds of Adventure, In Search of Plants" by Peter Cox and Peter Hutchinson.

Peter told of the two Scotsman's 16 expeditions over four decades. Their travels through China, Tibet, India, Turkey, and Bhutan showed incredible rhododendrons in their native habitat. Diverse flora and breathtaking scenery was a constant theme in the photos. Peter stated that to get a copy of this exciting book all you have to do is get hold of the Species Foundation.

*Thanks Peter for an excellent program.*

## Sunshine Coordinator

**Karen Cavender** graciously accepted the new role as the Chapter's 'Sunshine Coordinator.' Karen will help us keep track of members, and provide the tender loving care that they deserve. If you know of a member that is ill or unable to attend our meetings for any reason, please let Karen know (503-625-6331).

### Outback Adventure

## Rhododendrons in Australia

Golden Jubilee Conference  
October 17-20, 2010

in the Dandeong Ranges one  
of Victoria's top tourist  
attractions

To learn more about the world  
class national rhododendron  
garden (featuring a 15,000  
collection), the international  
and local speakers, and other  
attractions see  
[www.vicrhodo.org.au](http://www.vicrhodo.org.au)

## Rhododendron Species Foundation Tour

Irv Snyder

As a part of the ARS Western Regional Meeting on Sept. 18-19, 2009, **Steve Hootman** conducted a tour of the 22 acres at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden in Federal Way, Washington. A tour through these gardens with Steve is worth the trip to Federal Way. Steve personally knows every plant in the garden. He knows it by name, he knows where it came from, and he explains why this particular species has a greater tolerance to cold than the same species that was collected further west in Asia, for example. I have never seen such passion for plants, for knowledge, for geography, for history, for information, and for sharing all this background with a group of visitors to the gardens.

We went through greenhouses filled with thousands of plants. Steve walked up to one tray and picked up a plant and held it up. No one could identify the plant, and then Steve told us this was the only plant like this in the world. It was a very unusual blueberry species. He did this again with another unique plant from a different area in the greenhouse. Steve is amazing for he personally knows all the plants in the garden, and in addition he seems to be on a first name basis with all the little potted plants in the myriad of greenhouses.

We learned that some of the species collected recently from Vietnam are hardier than the same species collected further west from China. Why is this? The plants from China grow in an area that is protected by the massive mountain chain that extends from west to east along the southern side of China. This mountain chain protects this region from frigid air blasts that blow down out or the arctic in the winter. The chain does not extend all the way east to Vietnam, so plants in this region must be hardier to withstand the occasional arctic air.

Steve seems to have a rather passionate dislike of cedar trees. Cedar trees

develop a thick, dense root mass near the surface of the ground, thus chocking off other plants like rhododendrons that are growing under the cedars. I gasped a little bit for I have several cedar trees that are getting quite large, and I had hoped to trim them up so the rhododendrons could enjoy the shade beneath them.

The new fern garden was dedicated on the Sunday following the ARS meeting. This area is very interesting for it is filled with massive stumps. There are several ferns planted now together with a few rhododendrons. In a few years this area will be spectacular with moss and ferns and some epiphytic rhododendrons growing out of the stumps.

During the tour I pestered **Steve Hootman** with questions, the answers to which may be helpful to others. For example:

### *How do you control root weevils?*

**Steve** – We have stopped spraying the gardens for weevils. Orthene, which was used previously, kills some of the organisms in the soil which control root weevils. When the spraying is stopped, these organisms will prosper and will control the weevils. If plants are stressed, the weevils will sense this and will attack the plant. Plants in pots are stressed, and they may require some treatment for weevils.

### *What kind of soil mixture do you use to construct rhododendron beds?*

**Steve** – Originally the beds here were filled with sawdust, which was readily available from Weyerhaeuser. This worked fine for a few years, but as the saw dust broke down, the soil became like a sponge and the bed became like a bog. The material in these beds is being taken out now, and the beds are being built up with a foot to 18 inches of a mixture of coarse, angular sand mixed with medium bark mulch.

### *What do you use when you fertilize the plants?*

**Steve** – Species planted in the ground require little or no fertilizer. If the bed is new and there is little nutrition in the new soil, a little fertilized may be necessary. However, once the bed is established, the species plants can make it on their own.

(Continued on page 6)

# CSRG Master Plan Partnerships

Kath Collier

Goal -> Partnership Agreements

## CSRG Work Party Schedule

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**.



**Azaleas blooming cheerfully along lagoon path in May.**

This is the eighth article related to building a updated master plan for the Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden (CSRG). In the past, extensive planning documents were created and there was the goal of creating updates on a cyclic basis. These plans described many projects and budgetary issues in great detail. These plans also include agreements between the City and the Chapter that address roles and responsibilities, expectations, and ongoing support.

The tool used among most governmental agencies to establish such an agreement is a memorandum of understanding (MOU or MU) or memorandum of agreement (MOA or MA—old timers have a tendency to use the O in

the acronym. Somehow saying MU or MA just never sounded right to me...). Both basically serve the same purpose. You might recall that an MOU was created for the Hinsdale Garden recently between the ARS and the BLM.

Some agencies require specific for-mats for these agreements, while others are more flexible. The specific format makes it easy to check to make sure all of

the required topics (like contact information, funding, records management, etc.) are addressed. There is no limit to what can be in an MOU beyond those basics. I've written MOUs that changed the way monies are transferred between agencies, set up interagency records management guidelines, set up how committees or mixed groups might work together, etc. The possibilities are endless.

In this case, the City uses an MOU to **summarize the key agreements and information**. Any time someone needs to find some key information about say CSRG, they can pull this relatively short document (usually they are fairly short) and find the basic facts quickly. However there is a downside. I've noticed a few agreements from the State that seem to be set up on a 'forever' basis rather than a more limited term, such as five years. While the 'forever' strategy limits the amount of work of all partners in-

involved it also guarantees that the information (such as current contact details) is totally out of date and it may be difficult or time consuming to track this information down. Assigning a limited life-time can be beneficial not only for maintaining good relationships but also saving time in an emergency or even in just day to day coordination.

An MOU is somewhat of a legal document because typically do not have the same power as a contract. There can be consequences (depending on the issues and mix of partners) to non-compliance. For instance, in our case the City could withhold building permits or funding support. It is in our best interest to keep our Master Plan and MOUs up to date... less barriers to getting improvements made in the garden!

In both versions of the previous **master plans** you will find an appendix (A in the 1995 version) that addresses roles and responsibilities. Based on the wording, this section was a precursor to the more recent MOU requirements. In this section you will find information on the purpose, terms of the agreement, general descriptions, funding responsibilities, and tasks. Updated versions would undoubtedly be longer than the version in the 1995 plan.

Following the basic MOU is a list of **responsibilities** that compares what the Parks Bureau versus the Portland Chapter would do. This includes a few notations off to the side as well. This is the piece that we will need to pay detailed attention to and negotiate with the City. For instance, in the Utilities section under repairs it indicates that the chapter is responsible for "repair telephone lines and alarm systems." This doesn't mean we actually have to learn how to be linemen and climb utility poles but we would initiate and pay for any repairs related to telephone lines and alarm systems.

To be effective in this review, we would need to look at the online guidelines that the City has related to the kinds of functions they provide for gardens in Portland and ensure that we are not doing something that they are already committed to do. We would also need to ensure that a responsible entity is identified for things that need to get done—we need to know who to go to get things done.

Negotiating this list would be something that a **garden committee** or folks who are intimately involved with the garden would need to do to complete the

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## Regional Events of Interest!

Ted Hewitt, Don Smart, and others!

### 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](mailto: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)

### 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!

We have a number of upcoming events that may interest you:

As many of you know, **Nolan and Cindy Blansit** have moved to Missouri after quite a number of years of hybridizing rhododendrons at their home near Cottage Grove. Nolan had oriented his hybridizing efforts toward creating smaller plants that would fit smaller gardens, ones with nice foliage, plants that would bloom within three years, and finally, those with interesting flower color.

We now have a wonderful chance to purchase some of his beautiful creations as he will be returning to the garden for a few days in October. He has some 1,500 three and a half-year-old plants priced at \$10; 1,000 two and a half-year-old plants priced at \$5; and several hundred cutting grown plants available (not sure of the price).

**Jack Olson** will be assisting Nolan from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, **October 8, 9, and 10**. If you have questions, please contact Jack by phone at (541) 988-9133 or by e-mail at [rhodyjack@msn.com](mailto:rhodyjack@msn.com).

When you come to the garden, please bring a shovel and plastic bags or containers in which to take home your new plants. Cash or check only. Please do not bother the new residents of the house. Here are directions to get to the garden:

1. Drive south from Eugene on I-5 for about 20 miles. Take the second Cottage Grove exit (Exit 172), 6th Street Exit.
2. Turn left onto South 6th Street which will then become London Road.
3. Stay on London Road for about 10 miles passing Cottage Grove Lake.
4. In the community of London, turn right onto Shoestring Road.
5. In about 100 feet turn right onto the first gravel lane / driveway and go to the end (maybe half a mile).
6. Nolan's house and garden will be on the left. Park off of the circular driveway to allow for other cars.

The address is 72794 Shoestring Road, though I am not sure that is marked.

One of the Cascade Chapter members, **Milt Strasburg**, is moving out of the area. He has collected a number of rhododendrons over the years – he

always wins something at our raffles! He would like to see them go to people who would appreciate them and not new home owners that would see them as too many plants in the landscape – let's get rid of them!

Prices, trade or other deals are negotiable. Milt has already moved, but is back in town every couple of weeks as the old house is being remodeled. He can be reached on his cell phone – no matter where he is – at 425-518-3690.

## Plants Wanted for the Smith Garden

The Cecil and Molly Smith Garden Committee would like to add the following list of early to mid blooming plants to update the Smith Garden. Please let me know if you have any of these plants:

Abe Arnott	Blue Lagoon
Cherry Cheesecake	Ebony Pearl
Elsie Watson	Eruption
Frank Mossman	Honey Butter
Horizon Lakeside	Horizon Monarch
Horizon Wildfire	Jonathan Shaw
Laramie	Mango Tango
Many Moons	Nancy Evans
Nelda Peach	Olin O. Dobbs
Orange Cameo	Pacific Sunset
Peach Charm	Perfume
Peter Alan	Peter Bee
Point Defiance	Red Gold
Rubicon	Rusty Nails
Seaview Sunset	Starbright Champagne
Teacher's Pet	Wee Bee
Wings of Gold	

**Ginny Mapes**  
25185 NW Svea Drive  
Hillsboro, OR 97124  
503-647-2896

## Smith Garden NEEDS YOU!

**Smith Garden Fall Work Party Day is Saturday, October 17th.** Come in the morning help with general clean-up and collecting branches for chipping (we will be doing the chipping in the spring.) There are some sit-down jobs like adding stickers to flyers. Bring your gloves and favorite tools to use. Lunch provided. See you there! For more information contact **Ginny Mapes** at 503-647-2896.

## Species Foundation (Continued)

*Do you prefer regular depth pots or extra deep pots?*

**Steve** – We prefer deeper pots because they allow the water to drain away from the roots of the rhododendron.

All in all it was a most stimulating tour.

**Irv Snyder**

## Hinsdale Work Party

The impressive O. Howard Hinsdale woodland garden on the lower Umpqua River near Reedsport, with rhododendrons dating back perhaps a century, is well on its way to reclaiming the glory and public attention experienced for two to three decades beginning in the 1950s. This has come about through joint efforts of ARS District 4 members, the ARS Endowment Fund, and the garden's owner, the US Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management.

So, here's a chance to participate in one of the best aspects of the 'fun factor' in gardening.

A dozen historically correct hybrids will be planted on Monday, November 9, 2009. Member expertise and a little muscle are needed to complete the work. The BLM has already done much of the heavy lifting by staging soil amendments and mulch in the planting area, locations for each plant are staked, and the replacement plants will be at or near their final location. Our task is to dig planting holes, to settle and mulch the plants in place... and then stand back to contemplate their display in the months and years ahead.

A hot meal is planned as part of the work party and, of course, the always great camaraderie of fellow rhododendron enthusiasts. With many willing hands, time will be left over to stroll around the garden to see first hand the impressive effort going into its creation. Wheelbarrows and all other tools will be furnished by the BLM, but feel free to bring a favorite shovel.

**WHAT: Hinsdale Planting Party**

**WHEN:** Monday, November 9, 2009

**TIME:** Begin 9 – 10am until ? (Later arrivals welcome!)

**MEET:** Parking lot east of garden

**QUESTIONS/DETAILS:** Call **Gordon Wylie**, 541 895-2864, email

[lgwone@gmail.com](mailto:lgwone@gmail.com), or 307 Ironwood Loop, Creswell, OR 97426

## CSRG Master Plan

(Continued from page 4)

Master Plan update. In the September board meeting the idea of reinvigorating the CSRG garden committee was discussed. Looks like there is interest by several of the principal garden coordinators to get this committee back up on its feet. I'm looking forward to these discussions!

In the next issue we will look at some additional issues related to the CSRG planning update and master planning progress. *Stay tuned!*

*In memory of...*

## Hank Schannen

**Hank Schannen**, well known rhododendron enthusiast and founder of RareFind Nursery in Jackson, NJ collapsed and died on Sept. 16. He was a long-time member of the Princeton Chapter, chairman of the Rhododendron Research Foundation, board member of the Rhododendron Species Foundation, and recipient of the ARS bronze and gold medals.

He is known for his plant 'Solidarity' which he wanted to name for his mother. She said a rhododendron with a difficult Polish name would never sell, so they settled on 'Solidarity' after the Polish labor union.

His connection with the Portland Chapter is through **Alfred Martin**, Crystal Springs benefactor. They were great friends and for a time were partners in Wynterset Nursery. He always promised to put in a good word for us with the Martin Foundation.

All of the above are the facts. What made him beloved was his outgoing personality, his sharp wit, his generosity, his friendliness to everyone. He was interested in people and knew so much about the ARS and its members. He had a boundless love and curiosity about rhododendrons. When the RHS International Rhododendron Register came out he was so excited about it. He told me he kept it by his bed and just loved to pour over all the plant information in there. So much information was in his head. He was going to write it down so it wouldn't be lost. *Someday*. There was plenty of time for that. After all he was only 71. **Kathy Van Veen**

## Hinsdale Cuttings

Do you own or have access to any of the rhododendrons named below? If so, your help is needed in restoring the historic O. Howard Hinsdale Garden by taking cuttings from them this fall.

- Canary
- Carita Golden Dream, aka Golden Dream
- Countess of Athlone
- Day Dream, Biscuit Form
- Erebus
- Fabia Roman Pottery
- Fabia Tower Court
- Glory of Littleworth
- Golden West
- Goldsworth Yellow
- Jade
- Karkov
- King of Shrubs
- Lady Rosebery
- Mrs. W. C. Slocock
- Naomi A.M.
- Rosy Morn

We hope to obtain at least three to as many as six or eight cuttings of each plant, and have arranged for propagation by **Kathy Van Veen**. Cuttings should be taken and packaged in the usual manner and mailed directly to her at Van Veen Nursery, PO Box 86424, Portland, OR 97286-0424.

To avoid an oversupply of any given cultivar, please check first with **Gordon Wylie**, [lgwone@gmail.com](mailto:lgwone@gmail.com), 541-895-2864 or 307 Ironwood Loop, Creswell, OR 97426.

The ARS is supporting plant replacement at Hinsdale through an Endowment Fund Grant approved by its Board of Directors. Many thanks for everyone's added support.

## Fall Plant Auction—Tualatin Valley ARS

Ron Mapes

The Tualatin Valley Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society is holding their Annual Fall Plant Auction at their regularly scheduled meeting on October 12th at 7:00pm.

Club members donate rhododendrons they have grown in their gardens or nurseries. While the focus is on rare, hard to find, special species and hybrids, a wide range of companion plants and trees share the auction stage. Remember, the rhododendron is Hillsboro's City Flower.

This event is one of TVARS's major sources of funding to plant and maintain the rhododendron garden at The Jenkins Estate and the Lloyd Baron Rhododendron Garden at Hillsboro's Rood Bridge Park.

All garden club members as well as members of the general public who would enjoy adding interesting plants (at reasonable prices) to their landscape are invited to participate in our annual Fall garden sale. We have found that fall planting gives new additions to our gardens a strong start for next spring. Refreshments and door prizes are included in the evening of fun!

Meeting Location:

First Baptist Church  
177 NE Lincoln Street  
Hillsboro, OR 97123  
Phone: 503-312-2879  
e-mail: [ronsrhody@coho.net](mailto:ronsrhody@coho.net)

In the garden 101...

### Fall Color

by Kath Collier

*Get ready! It's almost time! Wait...* how come it is so green? The trees and shrubs are usually well into their fall colors by now. But an amazing thing is going on (OK, it *is* a bit subtle). Our normal fall color seems to be a bit delayed this year, with several trees just beginning to show color. This holds true for several rhododendrons and azaleas as well which also seem to be running a bit late this year as well.

There are several theories about this. I heard that the plants know that we will have another wild winter and are thus keeping their leaves on a bit longer (could this possibly be?). While I hope this is not true (both in the sense that we will have another terrible winter and in the sense that somehow a plant can predict the weather months in advance), this type of seasonal variation is just par for the course.

My guess is that the amount of sunlight is higher than normal for this time of year and the plants are getting what they need to remain green just a little bit longer. You might want to start looking closely at your rhododendrons and azaleas to see which ones begin flaunting their fall/winter foliage. This may convince you to move the plant this winter to an area which you can more easily enjoy it, or signal that it is time to reducing the watering and fertilizing and let the plant slumber off through the winter.

There are several rhodos and azaleas that have fabulous fall color, and a few that will even either re-bloom or throw out a few incidental blooms. It is the leaf color that takes center stage. You will notice that the azalea leaves are starting to look different than the leaves pushed out in early spring. Evergreen azaleas have two different sets of leaves each year and often the winter leaves that sport a leathery texture and often rich colors.

I have placed a few rhodos and companion plants along the drive just for the fall color impact that they have. A fabulous fall leaf show can stand out and knock your socks off just as easily as a spring show.

I'm also thinking about adding more companion plants such as fuchsias, dahlias, and hydrangeas. I purchased several fuchsias recently and they are just stunning (and still blooming!) particularly against the back-drop of dark green rhododendron leaves. A few more hydrangeas and dahlias would also be a good bet at extending the garden color too. I am *SO* glad that we don't have to dig up rhododendrons (like we do dahlias) every year!

If you see rhodos that you don't know, bring in a cutting to the meeting. There's a good chance that someone there just might be able to name it for you!

Post Master: Time sensitive mail; please deliver before October 13, 2009

**Portland Chapter  
American Rhododendron Society  
PO Box 86424  
Portland OR 97286-0424  
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

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**American Rhododendron Society – Portland Chapter – Rhododendron News – October 2009**  
***Trick or Treat Party! Zack Perry, Crystal Springs Watershed***

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**GARDEN INFO:**

Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden Chairs:  
**Bob MacArthur** and **Donna Giguere**

Tours: **Barbara Keller**, 503-775-5205

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

Friends: **Kathy Van Veen**, 503-777-1734

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**Newsletter, membership, and ownership:** **Ray Girtton**, Membership Chair, (503) 659-7275. The Portland Chapter is a local Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. Combined annual dues to both the national society and local chapter are \$40. Membership benefits include nine or more newsletters. Rhododendron news is mailed by non-profit class postage (permit #1134, Portland). Photographs and images may only be reproduced with permission from the creator or owner.

**Articles:** Deadline is the chapter meeting. Send materials to either: **Kathy Van Veen**, Interim Managing Editor, at: (email) [vanveenursery@hotmail.com](mailto:vanveenursery@hotmail.com) or via mail to: 4201 SE Franklin, PO Box 86424, Portland, Oregon 97286, or to Kath Collier at: [talk2write2@wildblue.net](mailto:talk2write2@wildblue.net) or via mail to: **Kath Collier**, newsletter editor, 37235 SE Lusted Road, Boring, OR 97009. Portland Chapter Delivery: Questions should be directed to: **Maria Stewart** at (503) 668-7565.

**Website:** [www.rhodies.org](http://www.rhodies.org); web master: **Steve Kaminski**