

Portland Chapter, American Rhododendron Society

## Calendar

- **October 15th, 2015**  
**Regular meeting**  
**Social time 7:00 PM**  
**Meeting 7:30 PM**  
**Speaker: Don Wallace on “Hybridizing Rhododendrons for Beginners”**  
**Species Auction!**
- **October 20th, 2015**  
**Board Meeting**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Van Veen Nursery**

## 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 by 9:30 pm.

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



## October Program and Species Auction

By Dennis O'Malley

Our featured speaker for October will be Don Wallace, whose program is entitled “Hybridizing Rhododendrons for Beginners.” Don is the owner of Singing Tree Gardens, a small retail nursery in McKinleyville, California. He is the past president of the Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society and was one of the Show Chairmen of the Western Regional Conference in Eureka in 1999.

Don has been propagating and hybridizing rhododendrons for more than 20 years. His current interests include hybridizing rhododendrons for fragrance and for new and exciting colors.

Mike and Maria Stewart also credit Don’s hybridizing program for producing rhododendrons with great foliage, some of which exhibit red, bronze, and orange new growth on plants with compact growth and bright combinations of colorful blooms. Among the hybrids Don has developed are R. ‘Delta Dawn’, R. ‘Elegant Dancer’, R. ‘Candycorn’, R. ‘Briceland’, R. ‘Candy Red Apple’, R. ‘Cartwheels’, R. ‘Dow’s Prairie’, R. ‘Gilbert Grape’, R. ‘Carnelian Candy’, R. ‘Shining Sea’, R. ‘Persuasion’, R. ‘Icon’ and many others.

Don’s program will discuss how to set hybridizing goals that are valuable and achievable, including hybridizing for foliage, flower and fragrance. He will then describe how to search for potential parents to use in reaching those goals. Don has also been involved in photography for more than 25 years. His program will include photographs of the actual outcomes of some crosses after describing the theory and reasons for making them.

Don will be bringing several flats of small plants to be purchased at the meeting. The meeting will also include the annual auction of species rhododendrons sponsored by the Chapter.

This is a great opportunity to donate species rhododendrons for the auction to benefit the Chapter. Please bring your species plants to the meeting and don’t forget to bring your checkbook!

## Purpose

To encourage interest in and disseminate information and knowledge about the genus *Rhododendron*.

To provide a medium through which all persons interested in the genus may communicate with others through education, scientific studies, meetings, publications, and other similar activities.

The Portland Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society is registered in Oregon as a 501 (C)(3) non-profit organization. Dues and donations are qualified charitable tax deductions.

## Meeting Calendar through December, 2015:

**October 10th, 2015**  
**'Parke Diem' at Crystal Springs**  
**Rhododendron Garden**  
**9:00 AM to Noon**

**October 15th, 2015**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Social time 7:00 PM**  
**Meeting 7:30 PM**  
**Speaker: Don Wallace**  
**Topic: "Hybridizing Rhododendrons for Beginners"**  
**Species Auction!**

**October 17th, 2015**  
**Smith Garden Fall Work Party**  
**Start: 8:00 AM**  
**Lunch: Noon**

**October 20th, 2015**  
**Board Meeting**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Van Veen Nursery**

**November 19th, 2015**  
**Regular meeting**  
**Social time 7:00 PM**  
**Meeting 7:30 PM**  
**Speaker: Karol Bernady**

**November 24th, 2015**  
**Board Meeting**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Van Veen Nursery**

**December 17th, 2015**  
**Holiday Party and Potluck Dinner**  
**with Decorated Tables and Lots of Food!**  
**Set-up 6:30 PM, Dining 7:00 PM**  
**Program: Traditional Showing of Member's Slides & Digital Images**

## Haiku

By Peter Kendall

Thunder and lightning  
wind and rain -- summer's long drought  
-- consumed in one night

Racing summer clouds  
shadows and debris flying  
every which way

The intensity  
of a late summer sunset --  
the golds, the oranges

A late summer's dusk  
The set of the clouds evokes  
a true symphony

A high rippled cloud  
An orchestra of color  
at summer's sundown

A measured stillness  
A summer's cloud dappled sky  
ablaze at dusk

## Calendar, continued:

**No December Board Meeting -  
Happy Holidays!**

## Highlights of the September Meeting

By Tom Hoffman

Our season got off to a great start with our September meeting, with Dennis Bottemiller from the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden giving us an informative, very interesting talk on propagating rhododendrons from cuttings, and our cuttings exchange covering several large tables with plastic bags full of rhododendron cuttings fresh from our gardens and greenhouses, all carefully labeled.

One highlight of the evening came when our President, Brenda Ziegler, presented the ARS Portland Chapter Bronze Award to Caroline Enns for her long service to the Chapter. Thank you, Caroline!

Propagating rhododendrons with cuttings turns out to be applied science on the one hand, and also very much an art on the other. Dennis repeatedly stressed the importance of observation and paying attention to detail throughout the process. He also pointed out the very practical value of keeping records noting the when (age of the cutting), what (procedure, treatment) we did when (date) to what, which. A computer with a spreadsheet is one answer; a humble clipboard log is another. Dennis brought a handout which summarized his experience and knowledge, divided into “Constants”, such as Observation, Cleanliness, Record Keeping and Really Sharp Tools, and “Variables”, everything pertinent to rhododendron cuttings and the propagation process. Simplicity in the Constants, complexity of living plant material in the Variables.

One unexpected bit of information: experience teaches it is far easier to propagate big-leaf rhododendrons from seed than by cuttings, owing to the space requirements and physiology of such big cuttings - which the majority of our members promptly confirmed from their own experience. It gave us a good laugh; “Been there, done that”.

Dennis shared his knowledge of rhododendron physiology to help explain the how and why of the procedures he outlined, and also recipes for propagating mix and transplanting mix. Currently, the RSBG uses 1 part ‘Just Coir’ to 3 parts perlite in their propagating flats, having switched to coir when their source of coarse peat moss ran out. The RSBG transplanting mix for growing on rooted cuttings is 65% bark and 35% red cinder rock; the bark is broken down into 25% bark nuggets, such as orchid bark and 75% ‘Beauty Bark’ which is finer. The RSBG also uses horticultural rock wool for very small cuttings.

Our evening wound up with the cuttings exchange. The selection on display was impressive; there was even a separate table for Vireya cuttings. The majority of material found ready takers; we will look forward to hearing how all those cuttings have fared in the months to come.

## **You are invited to the Annual Smith Garden Fall Work Party!**

**When: October 17th, 2015**

**Where: Cecil and Molly Smith Garden , 5055 Raybell Road NE, St. Paul, OR**

**Start: 8:00 AM. Come any time after 8:00 AM. Lunch will be served around noon.**

**Please bring appropriate hand tools you may want to use. Remember, many hands will speed up the work - please lend your hands!**

**Members from the Portland, Tualatin Valley and Willamette Chapters of the ARS and their friends are all welcome.**

Directions:

From Portland:

I-5 south to Exit 278 -Donald/Ehlen Rd. exit.

Right at the exit onto Ehlen Rd for 7 miles ( Ehlen becomes Yerger then McKay.)

Turn right onto Hwy 219 for 3/4 mile - look for blue Heirloom Roses sign.

Turn left onto Champoeg Road NE.

Go straight ahead on Raybell Road at the 'Y' ( Champoeg Road NE bears right.)

Garden is at 5055 Raybell Road NE about 1/4 mile on right.

Parking and entrance are just past the house.

From the south via I-5:

I-5 north to Exit 278 - Donald/Ehlen road exit.

Turn left onto Ehlen Road, pass under I-5 and continue on Ehlen Road for 7 miles ( Ehlen becomes Yerger then McKay.)

Turn right onto Hwy 219 for 3/4 mile - look for blue Heirloom Roses sign.

Turn left onto Champoeg Road

Go straight ahead onto Raybell Road at the 'Y' ( Champoeg Road NE bears to the right.)

Garden is at 5055 Raybell Road NE, about 1/4 mile on right.

Parking and entrance are just past the house.

From 99W:

South on 99W to Newberg.

Turn left (south) at light onto Springbrook Road.

Turn left at the intersection with Hwy 219.

Drive south for 3 miles, over the Willamette River bridge.

Watch for a blue Heirloom Roses sign.

Turn right onto Champoeg Road; go straight ahead onto Raybell road at the 'Y' ( Champoeg Road NE bears right.) Garden is at 5055 Raybell Road NE, about 1/4 mile on right. Parking and entrance are just past the house.

## A Perfectly Rounded Plant with Beautiful Foliage: *R. williamsianum*

By Maria Stewart

So many hybrids have benefitted from the genes and chromosomes of *R. williamsianum*, that it is easy to overlook the species as an outstanding rhododendron in itself. The list is very long of hybrids such as *R. 'Kimberly'*, *R. 'April Glow'*, *R. 'Bow Bells'*, *R. 'Gartendirektor Glocker'* and *R. 'Moonstone'* that have nicely rounded foliage and excellent mounding growth habits. When you see the species growing where it has well-drained soil and a little bit of shade from the hottest sun, you know why hybridizers have used it so extensively. The best forms of *R. williamsianum* are several times wider than they are tall and the leaves cover the plant right down to the ground. It really likes to grow into a mound.

Here is more about *R. williamsianum*:

Classification: section Hymenanthès, subsection Williamsia

Distribution in the wild: Szechwan. China at 8,000 to 10,000 feet

Flowers: 2 inches long, bell-shaped, in loose trusses of 2 or 3 corollas, in a range of pink colors.

Although the trusses are loose, the flowers cover the plant generously.

Foliage: The leaves are orbicular or ovate in shape and are green on top and blue-green on the undersides.

An attractive feature is the bronze new leaves as they first appear.

Structure: compact and low, wider than tall

Hardiness: - 5 degrees F.

Siting in your garden: well-drained soil and filtered sunlight to full sun if protected from the hottest sun.

Photograph courtesy of Jens Birck



## President's Message

From Brenda Ziegler

What a great September meeting! It was SO NICE to see all of you. There were a few "faces" missing, so, I hope those who were not there were off on a nice vacation and that you will return for our October meeting, Thursday , October 15th.

I really enjoyed listening to Dennis Bottemiller, and I hope you did also. I was lucky enough to have Dennis be my tour guide at the Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden last year at the 50th Anniversary RSF Celebration. In fact I think there were about 15 people following him around and listening to his every word. His heart and soul are really into Rhododendrons! Our cutting exchange was fantastic -- you filled so many tables with cuttings that it was like hitting the jackpot! I am taking the safe way with my cuttings and having Kathy Van Veen grow them for me this time.

**Side-note and question: Did you all see the Full Moon Lunar Eclipse/Super Blood Moon September 27th? Has it affected your rhododendrons?? If it has, bring your stories and/or pictures to the next meeting!**

**Our membership drive is still in process.** Please be sure to get your dues in to Dick Cavender, Treasurer. If you know of someone who is not a current member, please encourage them to join. You are all such a FANTASTIC group of individuals that no one could go wrong joining!

There are several potential projects going on at Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden. We will keep you informed when we get more details and the go-ahead for the work.

A couple of **fun events** that are coming up that you are welcome to join in on are:

**\*\*Parke Diem at Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden, October 10th.** You can sign up online at [www.portlandparks.org](http://www.portlandparks.org) or show up! The time is 9:00 a.m. to noon.

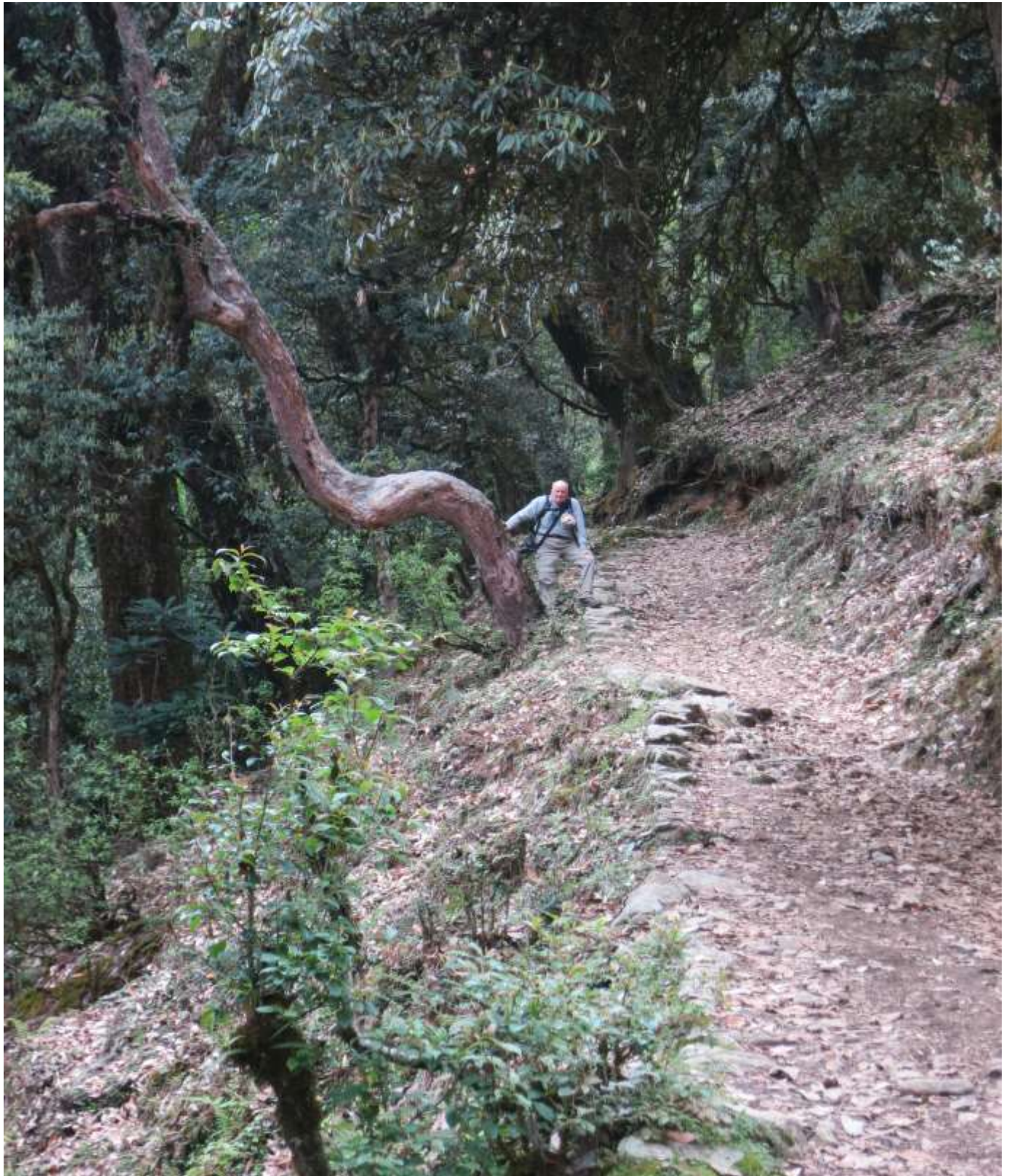
**\*\*Smith Garden Work Party, October 17th,** from 8:00 a.m. to noon. It truly seems like a party with all of the enthusiasm by the workers. Plus you get a free lunch -- and, time to catch up and visit with your co-workers! Let's try to set a record and have the most people ever.

In between these events, we will have our October meeting on the 15th. It will be a **Halloween Potluck for Treats**. Costumes are welcome and encouraged. Our Chapter has the best POTLUCKS ever which is why it has become a tradition to have the **October TREAT POTLUCK**. Bring your favorite treats to share! There will also be a **Species Auction**.

If you ever have any questions or would like more information on getting more involved, please call me or email me. [bzgift@aol.com](mailto:bzgift@aol.com) or 503.314.5834

HAVE A FABULOUS MONTH!

Brenda



Sean Rafferty with a large *R. arboreum*, Sikkim. Photograph by Mike Stewart.

Portland Chapter of  
the American  
Rhododendron  
Society

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Phone: 503-777-1734 for  
meeting cancellations due  
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Web: [www.rhodies.org](http://www.rhodies.org)

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CHAPTER OFFICERS

President: **Brenda Ziegler**  
Vice President: **Dennis O'Malley**  
Past President: **Maria Stewart**  
Secretary: **Carol McCarthy**  
Treasurer: **Dick Cavender**

BOARD MEMBERS

(Through June 30, 2017) **Caroline  
Enns, Steve Hall, Steve Hopkins, Bill  
Zanze, Dave Collier**  
(Through June 30, 2016) **Bud Bowen,  
Ann Clack, Ray Clack, Mike Stew-  
art, Kathy Van Veen**

GARDEN INFO:

Crystal Springs Rhodo. Garden

Co--Chairs:

**Bob MacArthur**, 360-256-2522

**ltcmacret1@aol.com**

**Dan McLaughlin**,  
**dvmclau@comcast.net**

Tours/Volunteering:

**csrgvol@me.com**

Gatehouse:

**Tom Hoffman**, 503-452-0975

**Rose Kress**, 971-239-9016

Friends of Crystal Springs:

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

Events:

**Rachael Moloney**, 503-975-6743

Cecil & Molly Smith Garden  
Chair: **Herb Spady**, 503-874-1445

Newsletter, membership, and  
ownership: 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, discounts, and activities.

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Articles: Deadline is the chapter meeting. Send materials to either: **Kathy Van Veen**, veteran Proofreader, at: (email) **vanveennursery@hotmail.com** or via mail to: 4201 SE Franklin, PO Box 86424, Portland, Oregon 97286, or to Tom Hoffman, newsletter editor, at: **tjhoffman56@yahoo.com**, or via mail to: 4765 SW 38th Place, Portland, OR 97221

Delivery: Questions should be directed to: **Maria Stewart** at 503-668-7565.

Website: **www.rhodies.org**; web masters: **Steve Hall and Caroline Enns**

Membership Updates: John Welsh, Membership Chair, email: **jlwelsh26@yahoo.com**; 503-663-6987