



P.O. Box 715 Southeastern, PA 19399-0715

*Web site: [www.ValleyForgeARS.org](http://www.ValleyForgeARS.org)*

## ***NEWSLETTER***

***March/April 2013***

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Unless specified otherwise, meetings are at Jenkins Arboretum in Devon

### ***Calendar at a Glance***

- March 21 (Thu.) 7:30 pm, Karl Bernady, "Novel Technique for Grafting Rhododendrons"  
April 18 (Thu.) 7:30 pm, Herb Johns from Point Phillip Perennials, "Companion Plants"  
May 3-5 (Fri-Sun) **Valley Forge Chapter's Plant Sale at Jenkins Arboretum**  
May 4-7 (Fri-Mon) American Rhododendron Society's Annual Convention in Seattle, WA  
May 12 (Sun.) Joint Greater Philadelphia/Valley Forge Flower Show at Jenkins Arboretum  
June 30 (Sun.) Annual Chapter Meeting and Picnic at Sylvia & Dallas Green  
August 18 (Sun.) Valley Forge-organized District 8 Cuttings Exchange and Auction

### ***President's Message***

We've had two great meetings since I last wrote. Both were hybridizers from the DC area. Joe Klimavicz told us how he could get a seedling to flower in less than three years, sometimes 18 months. Norm Beaudry took us through the history and products of several hybridizers.

The spring meetings will revert to the Thursday 7:30 time at Jenkins. See details on Karel Bernady and Herb Johns elsewhere in this newsletter.

Our biggest event of the year occurs May 3-5. We'll need volunteers during the week leading up to the sale to help unload, categorize, and price plants. Contact Chris Smetana [cpsmetana@yahoo.com](mailto:cpsmetana@yahoo.com) if you wish to help. The proceeds from this event fund our donations for the entire year so we need all of your support.

The plant sale and flower show committees will be providing details at the next few meetings regarding those events. Additional volunteers are always welcome.

Don't forget to go to our website [www.ValleyForgeARS.org](http://www.ValleyForgeARS.org) for details on these upcoming events.

See you in March.

Bob Smetana (610) 688-5249, [vfarssmetana@yahoo.com](mailto:vfarssmetana@yahoo.com)

*Chapter's web site: [www.ValleyForgeARS.org](http://www.ValleyForgeARS.org)*

**On March 21 (Thursday) at 7:30 pm:**

**Karel Bernady: "Novel Technique of Grafting Rhododendrons"**

Karel will share his personal experiences with a new grafting approach. Karel co-chairs the Greater Philadelphia Chapters Plants and Propagation Committee with responsibility for the Chapter's Plants for Members Program. The Greater Philadelphia Chapter began its Plants for Members Program in 1986. When Karel was appointed to manage the program in 2003, he documented the propagation performance of the various cultivars attempted.

Experience over the last eight years with poor rootability of some plants and death of successfully rooted varieties during summer's heat caused Karel to consider grafting as a possible solution to these difficulties. In May 2010 Karel attended the International Rhododendron



Symposium in Bremen, Germany. At the Fredo Schröder Nursery, Timo Schröder

demonstrated in detail the grafting method used for elepidote rhododendrons, i.e. the simultaneous grafting and rooting of a scion/unrooted understock unit.

The nursery propagates 1.5 million elepidotes per year by the technique. Armed with information

Timo provided, Karel tried the method in November 2010 on thirty-one elepidote cultivars. The results were gratifying and he has further refined his technique. He will share the information learned and encourage us to try the technique to propagate troublesome elepidote rhododendrons.

He serves as Chairman of the Trustees of the Research Foundation and co-chairs the Research Committee of the ARS.

**Refreshments:** Those whose names start with R to Z are asked to please bring a finger-food.

**On April 18 (Thursday), 7:30 pm:**

**Herb Johns: "Companion Plants for Rhododendrons"**

This informative presentation will take a look at plants that function well in the same conditions as rhododendrons and azaleas, that can be used to provide shade for rhododendrons and azaleas, can be intermingled with them, and can be planted under and



around them. Herb will bring about 30 perennials and woody plants that make good companions for rhododendrons and azaleas and discuss each of them. He also has a handout about these plants.

Herb and his wife Kay have operated [Point Phillip](#)

**Perennials** since 1996. It is about 15 miles north of Bethlehem, approximately 1 hour from Valley Forge.

Herb & Kay have been selling plants since 1996 - their oldest garden is 23 years old. The gardens at Point Phillip are predominately herbaceous perennials. They also use a variety of vines, shrubs, trees and ornamental grasses to help form the backbone of the gardens in which they display their perennials. Their pleasure in growing perennials is derived from the ongoing succession of bloom - from the earliest Euphorbia polychroma (Cushion Spurge) to the splendor of the fall grasses and mums.

They do much of their own propagation. They grow a large variety of plants from seed every year and make cuttings from many of the plants in our gardens. They maintain two acres of display gardens at the nursery. In addition to providing other gardeners with ideas, these gardens are also used as a source of both seed and cutting material. The gardens are also used to display new plants that are being offered in the nursery. The gardens are their best sales tool. When a customer asks, "What does that look like?" We can often answer, "Would you like to see it in the garden?" Although they have been selling plants since 1996, they have been selling honey and related products since 1975.

**Refreshments:** Those whose names start with A to G are asked to please bring a finger-food.

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## Valley Forge Chapter Annual Plant Sale at Jenkins Arboretum May 3 to 5, 2012

- May 3 (Friday):** 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.: Party and Presale  
(by reservation, \$30/person. Check to Chris Smetana or  
ARS, P.O. Box 715, Southeastern, PA 19399-715)
- May 4 (Saturday):** 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Public Sale
- May 5 (Sunday):** 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.: Public Sale

**Chair:** Chris Smetana (610) 688-5249 [cpsmetana@yahoo.com](mailto:cpsmetana@yahoo.com)

**This is the big event of the year! As always, we will have a fine selection of rhododendrons, azaleas, and "companion plants", such as other shrubs, small trees, including Japanese Maple, and choice perennials.**

**Publicity.** You should receive in the mail this year's plant sale flyer. Using this flyer or copies of it, please inform your gardening friends, neighbors, and colleagues and post a flyer, if possible, at your workplace or other locations, such as a local library or stores. Any publicity is appreciated.

**Help is needed and appreciated.** Expert or novice, please sign up at the April meeting or commit yourself when called, or just show up on workdays (Monday to Thursday preceding sale) or on public sale days (May 4 and 5). There are all kinds of chores to be done. Snacks/food and beverages will be provided.

**Plant donation also is welcome.** Please pot up your surplus garden gems as soon as possible, so they look good at the time of the sale, label them with their Latin or common names, if possible, and bring them by **Thursday May 2**. Many customers head first to the donations, which can add tremendously to the success of the sale, the proceeds of which benefit a number of horticultural, conservation, and educational efforts

## Rhododendron and Azalea Flower Show at Jenkins Arboretum Sunday, May 12 (Mother's Day)

**Chair:** Debby Schmidt (610) 388-8573

We're looking forward to our 5th year of the joint Greater Philadelphia and Valley Forge Chapters combined flower/truss show competition and the 21st year of VF chapter's show. To make this the stunning and highly educational juried display that it has been in previous years, members of all area chapters are again encouraged to bring entries. We will begin accepting entries at 7:30 am on the upper

level of the education center at Jenkins. Entries must be in by 10:15am, and judging will begin at 10:30. The show will be open to the public from 1-5pm that day.

Help will be available, especially to those who haven't entered before—so don't be hesitant. Classification lists will be available on the VFARS website [www.valleyforgears.org](http://www.valleyforgears.org) and at the April 21 VF chapter meeting.

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### Plant Labels are still available for Chapter Members

In cooperation with Jenkins Arboretum, plant labels are made for VF ARS members from January through March. If you have any questions, please contact Eva Jackson ([noelevajackson@comcast.net](mailto:noelevajackson@comcast.net)). Labels will be made **only** for members and only for their **own use**. The sequence of orders processed will give priority to active members.

**Quantity:** 96 labels maximum per order/member.

**Cost:** \$20.00 for 1 to 96 labels, with check made out to Valley Forge Chapter, ARS, and money passed on to Jenkins.

#### Writing the information for labels:

Each line of a WP document becomes one plant label of one or two lines (your choice, depending also on how much info you want to have listed). If you want two lines, the lines must be separated by a semicolon (;) and no spaces. The lines must be single-spaced (for a total of 96 lines maximum).

#### Examples:

P.J.M.:(Weston) = 2 lines on plant label, no spaces before or after semicolon

Girard's Pleasant White = 1 line on plant label

#### Notes:

1) No line on the plant label can be longer than 26 characters (including spaces). If you have 2 lines, neither line can be longer than 26 characters (including spaces).

2) The format is yours, i.e., it may be 'P.J.M.' or just P.J.M. Plant names should not be

abbreviated.

3) Species names cannot be italicized by the engraving machine.

**Checking label information:** After you have prepared your list (as outlined above) and thoroughly checked/rechecked your own resources, you are encouraged, but not required, to send or e-mail your copy to Eva Jackson ([noelevajackson@comcast.net](mailto:noelevajackson@comcast.net)) for a final check of spelling and other errors (yes they do creep in!). The copy will be returned to you promptly, with suggestions, if necessary, but you have the final say. However, it cannot be emphasized enough how important it is to check for accuracy of labels that cannot be corrected once engraved and that may pass on false information on numerous occasions (plant sales, flower/truss shows, cuttings exchanges, garden tours).

**Engraving label information:** The final plant list should be emailed to Harold Sweetman at: [Harold@jenkinsarboretum.org](mailto:Harold@jenkinsarboretum.org), with 'metal plant labels' in the subject line. Labels are machine-engraved by a Jenkins Arboretum staff member onto large sheets.

**Finishing labels:** The engraved label sheets must be cut into individual labels, their corners rounded, and a hole punched for wiring. **This job needs to be done by you** at Jenkins Arboretum (with tools provided and as instructed). Wire for attaching label to plant is **not** provided.

## 2013 Rhododendrons of the Year Mid-Atlantic Region

### Elepidote Rhododendron: **Taurus**



This is a spectacular early blooming red rhododendron. It is identical in parentage to 'Grace Seabrook' and they bloom a few days apart. Eventually becomes a large sized plant with pointed dark green leaves and dark maroon flower buds that make the plant a year-round asset. The 3.5 inch flowers are a spectacular dark red with black spotting. Few others rival its bloom in the early season. Afternoon sun protection is preferred. Grows to a typical height of about 6 ft. in 10 yrs. Cold hardy to -5°F (-21°C). Hybridized by Mossman. RHS Award of Garden Merit 1993.

### Lepidote Rh.: **R. mucronulatum 'Cornell Pink'**



Unlike most other lepidotes, *R. mucronulatum* is fully deciduous, but compensates by being

one of the most cold-hardy. Very early April bloom, it covers itself with clear pink blooms before any leaves appear. Typical height: 5 ft. in 10 yrs. Plant is cold hardy to -20°F (-29°C). Raised by Skinner. RHS Award of Garden Merit 1993.

### Evergreen Azalea: **'Rose Greeley'**



Flower white with a yellowish-green blotch, hose-in-hose, widely funnel-shaped, wavy edged, 2-1/2" across, fragrant. Blooms early mid season. Plant has a dense, spreading habit. Grows to a height of 4 ft. in 10 yrs. Bud hardy to 5°F (-15°C). Hybridized by Gable.

### Deciduous Azalea: **R. schlippenbachii**



'Royal' is an appropriate name for what many consider to be among the finest of deciduous azaleas. The distinctive, thin foliage will not tolerate excessive sun exposure. The dark green leaves turn crimson, orange or yellow in autumn. Grows to a height of about 4 ft. in 10

years. Plant and bud hardy to -20°F (-29°C). Native to Korea, North East Manchuria and Eastern Russia.

The above 4 rhododendrons selected for their adaptability in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States have been awarded Rhododendron of the Year (ROY) honors for 2013. The purpose of the awards is to educate the public about the wide range of rhododendrons that can be grown successfully in people's gardens. To be selected for a ROY award a plant must have excellent foliage and flowers, have an attractive plant habit, prove itself hardy for the specific region and be pest and disease resistant.

### Previous Mid-Atlantic ROY winners

#### Elepidote Rhododendron:

- 2012: 'Janet Blair'
- 2011: 'Brown Eyes'
- 2010: 'Scintillation'
- 2009: 'Wheatley'
- 2008: 'Mist Maiden'
- 2007: 'Caroline'
- 2006: 'Bellringer'
- 2005: 'Calsap'
- 2004: 'Gigi'

#### Lepidote Rhododendron:

- 2012: 'Windbeam'
- 2011: 'Molly Fordham'
- 2010: 'Mary Fleming'
- 2009: 'Landmark'
- 2008: 'Weston's Aglo'
- 2007: 'Olga Mezitt'
- 2006: 'PJM Elite'
- 2005: 'Dora Amateis'
- 2004: 'April Pink'

#### Evergreen Azaleas:

- 2012: 'Sandra's Green Ice'
- 2011: 'Tina's Whorled'
- 2010: 'Carrie Amamda'
- 2009: 'Koromo-shikibu'
- 2008: 'Dream'
- 2007: 'Fairfax'
- 2006: 'Elsie Lee'
- 2005: 'Nancy of Robin Hill'
- 2004: 'Girard's Fuchsia'

#### Deciduous Azaleas:

- 2012: 'Aromi Sunny-side-up'
- 2011: R. prunifolium
- 2010: 'Klondyke'
- 2009: 'Old Gold'
- 2008: 'White Lightning'
- 2007: (none)
- 2006: 'Homebush'
- 2005: 'Gibraltar'
- 2004: 'Crimson Tide'

For more photos and descriptions look up: [2013](#), [2012](#), [2011](#), [2010](#), [2009](#), [2008](#), [2007](#), [2006](#), [2005](#), [2004](#).

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### New USDA Plant Hardiness Map

The 2012 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map is the standard by which gardeners and growers can determine which plants are most likely to survive and thrive at a location. The map is based on the average annual minimum winter temperature, divided into 10-degree F zones.

For the first time, the map is available as an interactive online map. Users may also simply type in a ZIP Code and find the hardiness zone for that area or view an entire state and use the color codes for the zones. The link is:

<http://planthardiness.ars.usda.gov/PHZMWeb/#>

The previous USDA Hardiness map was published in [1990](#). On the 2012 map, areas in Pennsylvania are rated between ½ zone (5°F) to a full zone (10°F) warmer than on the 1990 map.

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#### Utilize our website:

<http://ValleyForgeARS.org>

The main sections of our website are:

- [Join Us](#): Membership Application
- [Links](#): Information, Gardens & Sources
- [Events](#): Our Events Calendar
- [News](#): Flower Show Results & Newsletters
- [Contact Us](#): Our Mailing Address
- [Members Area](#): Chapter History Pages
- [Gallery](#): Photo Gallery for Members



American Rhododendron Society  
 Valley Forge Chapter  
 P.O. Box 715  
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**FIRST-CLASS MAIL**



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***March/April 2013***

<b>In This Issue</b>	<b>Officers and Committees:</b>
Page 2 March 21, 7:30 pm, Jenkins April 18, 7:30 pm, Jenkins	President: Bob Smetana (610) 688-5249
Page 3 May 3-5, VF ARS Plant Sale	Vice President: Alice Horton (610) 430-0196
Page 4 May 12 Flower Show Plant Labels	Treasurer: Chris Smetana (610) 688-5249
Page 5 2013 ROY Winners	Secretary: Joan Warren (610) 913-0005
Page 6 Previous ROY Winners New USDA Hardiness Map Utilize our Website	Directors: Steve Henning ('10-'13) (610) 987-6184 Darlene Henning ('10-'13) (610) 987-6184 Debby Schmidt ('11-'14) (610) 388-8573 John Ryan ('11-'14) (610) 971-2368 Ellin Hlebik ('12-'15) (610) 584-9764 Kathy Woehl ('12-'15) (610) 644-6249
Page 7 New Registrar is Local 2013 ARS Convention Fran Raughley's Rice Pudding	Membership: Darlene Henning (610) 987-6184 Newsletter Editor: Steve Henning (610) 987-6184 Plant Sale: Chris Smetana (610) 688-5249 Plants-for-Members: Jim Willhite (484) 887-0232 Programs: Alice Horton (610) 430-0196 Truss Show (V.F.): Debby Schmidt (610) 388-8573 Webmaster: Jim Willhite (484) 887-0232
<b>Chapter's web site: <a href="http://www.ValleyForgeARS.org">www.ValleyForgeARS.org</a></b>	

Please contact us of any email changes or if you receive this **newsletter** by letter carrier rather than email, even though you have e-mail. Please inform Steve Henning of any changes ([rhodyman@earthlink.net](mailto:rhodyman@earthlink.net)).