

American Rhododendron Society

Valley Forge Chapter

P.O. Box 715, Southeastern, PA 19399-0715
www.ValleyForgeARS.org

NEWSLETTER

June/July 2004

President's Message

2004 Plant Sale

The plant sale was successful again this year, and was well attended. The party especially was a hit and about 80 people came to wine and dine while browsing among the plants. We made many large sales at it, and watched in amazement as carts full of plants made their way up the driveway all evening.

I want to thank all of those who came out to help us, without whom, we couldn't put the sale on. We were a little short of help on the set up, and would like to see more there in future.

Thanks to those who did help including Bill Dennis, Mary Alice Snyder, Win Howe, Joe Bellanca, Chris and Bob Smetana, Margaret Rue, Eva and Noel Jackson, Charles Odenweller, Bonnie Bennett, Peter Heaton, Beth Ehland, Bob Stamper, Jim Gears, Margaret Fawcett, Ruth Butterfield, Howard Kline, Dennis MacMullan, Fred Winter, Steve Cooper, Bill Perry, Judy and John Edinger, Tony and Penny D'Alessandro, Reid Warren, and Michelle Hawk.

Thanks also to the staff and volunteers at Jenkins who did a great job – Harold, Maggie, Hope, Amy and Brian.

I hope that I have thanked everyone, if not please accept my apologies and pat yourself on the back, but we appreciate all those who helped. Thank you all, again.

I would also like to thank everyone who brought plant donations, especially Sylvia Green.

The winner of the wheelbarrow of plants which we raffled off was Maggie Knapp.

Our next get together will be at Chris and Bob Smetana's in June for the annual meeting and picnic, so hope to see you all then.

Joan Warren, President

Welcome, New Members!

Jim and Sally Sorber

Sarah Christmyer

Valley Forge ARS Calendar of Events

2004 MEETINGS SCHEDULE:

June 9, 2004: 7:30 pm, Board Meeting

June 12, 2004 (Saturday), 10:00 am - noon: Pruning Workshop.

As promised, a pruning workshop will be conducted by Frank Brouse and Eva Jackson in the Jackson garden in Radnor on Saturday, June 12, from about 10 to 12 a.m.

Since most azaleas and rhododendrons will have finished blooming by then, it is an excellent time to prune. New growth is stimulated and can harden before winter sets in.

We encourage especially our new members to join us and to bring their pruning questions. Light refreshments will be served.

For directions or other questions, please call or email Eva Jackson.

June 27, 2004 (Sunday), 2:00 pm: Our Annual Picnic.

Our annual picnic will be hosted by Bob and Chris Smetana. Hope to see everyone there!

Everyone should **bring a dish**. Beer, wine, soft drinks, and a meat (e.g., ham) will be provided by the Chapter. **Annual election** of officers and board member seats up for election will be held. Usually truss show awards are given out, but perhaps not this year as we didn't participate in the Longwood show.

Everyone is encouraged to **bring folding chairs and tables**.

Directions:

From the intersection of North and South Gulph Roads and Route 202 near the King of Prussia Mall and Valley Forge Exit of the PA Turnpike: turn east onto South Gulph Road (0.8 mile), turn right onto Brooks Road (0.1 mile), right onto Croton Road (0.5 mile), left onto King of Prussia Road at light (1.3 miles), left onto Upper Gulph Road (0.4 miles), and left onto Northwoods Road (0.1 mile). 14 Northwoods Road. Plenty of parking on the street.

August 15, 2004 (Sunday): Our Annual ARS Plant Auction and Cutting Exchange – at Frank Brouse's. Save this date – this is always a fun time! Details will be sent in the August newsletter.

September 16, 2004 (Thursday): A regular monthly meeting.

Note: Unless otherwise specified, meetings are held at Jenkins Arboretum

As always, if you have program suggestions, with suggestions of presenters, please contact Reid Warren.

Election of Officers

This is the slate of officers that will be presented for election at the June 27th picnic:

Joan Warren President ('05)

Bob Smetana 1st V.P. ('05)

Open 2nd V.P. ('06)

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| Chris Smetana | Treasurer ('06) |
| Open | Corresponding Secretary ('06) |
| Kelly Reene | Newsletter Editor ('05) |
| Margaret Fawcett | Director ('06) |
| Joe Bellanca | Director ('06) |
| Win Howe | Director ('05) |
| Anne Howe | Director ('05) |
| Steve Henning | Director ('07) |
| Darlene Henning | Director ('07) |

Being a Board or Committee member is a great way to become involved in our Chapter's activities. If you would like to become more involved, or even if you want to ask questions to see if you would like to become more involved, please call Margaret Fawcett or Joan Warren.

Evelyn Rahn's Memorial Bench

On May 6th, Clarence Rahn, his sister-in-law and niece came to Jenkins Arboretum to tour the gardens and for the dedication of his wife, Evelyn's, bench. The bench was given by the Valley Forge Chapter of the ARS in memory of Evelyn, and it has a plaque on it saying that it was donated to the arboretum by Evelyn's friends at the Valley Forge Chapter of the ARS. Clarence was really pleased to see the bench and to have lunch with us, though he told us that Evelyn would never have expected so much.

Clarence is shown below with Joan Warren. Clarence was one of the earliest members of our chapter and is an inspiration to all. Thanks to Margaret Fawcett for the photo.



All The Best, Bob – by Reid Warren

Conservation Piece was out in full display this morning as Joan and I looked over our evergreen azaleas, some of which are just coming into bloom. Joan reminded me that we received the plant at one of the Philadelphia annual dinner meetings. Judy Meade came up to us after the meeting and told us she no longer had room for this plant in her garden, but that we would love it. We do – all the more since it came from Judy. Judy died shortly after that from cancer.

Now her husband, Bob Wilkinson has cancer and has moved, for the time being, to the west coast to live with his brother and to receive treatment out there for his illness. We wish Bob all the best from his friends at the Valley Forge Chapter. And, we are reminded, that belonging to the ARS is not just about Rhodies, but about friends.

Mother Nature – by Reid Warren

Mother Nature's been busy this year in many helpful ways – a good bit of rain and sun and good weather for the convention – albeit a bit hot and muggy some days. We're grateful, and some rhodies which just seemed to "sit" and do nothing for two years after we planted them, put out astounding new growth this year.

But, Mother Nature (or is it Father when it's not so nice) has been giving us some problems also. Small poison ivy plants are springing up all over the place – hundreds of them, and there are weeds galore. We went to visit Jim Gears at his nursery the last week in May, and as we stepped out of our air conditioned car we heard the cacophony of locusts going non-stop for the one and a half hours we were there. The din was driving Jim nuts and he had to live with it from sun up to sun down 'til he went home that night.

There was also a crisis of major proportions on Briarwood Drive two weeks ago. We heard a noise from up the street and our next door neighbor called to tell us that worms were eating all his trees and he had the exterminator in shooting poison (probably Sevin) 40 feet up into his trees, and 40 feet back from the street on to his 2 ½ acre property. He opined that we ought to do the same as the whole mile long street was being eaten alive. To be sure, we could hear and were hit like rain, the droppings of over fed worms.

Joan called the US Forestry Service and was advised that they were canker worms which would eat until their life cycle changed and the damage would stop – usually not a problem for the trees which would put out new leaves, unless there was a second unlikely infestation or the trees were stressed by drought. We decided against spraying, especially when another neighbor said that the estimate given the first neighbor went up \$200.00 to \$700.00 from the original \$500.00 cost. How do you spell RIP OFF? Another neighbor not only had the exterminator one day, he had him back a second day spraying gallons, and gallons, and gallons of poison.

We have seven bird houses on our property. Two have bluebirds, one has black capped chickadees, and two have wrens. We also have 7 hanging seed feeders, suet and a hummingbird feeder.

One Person's Opinion – by Reid Warren

Some of you will be glad that expressing my opinion below is different than the usual political screed I send out via e-mail. Recently Joan was going through some old copies of the ARS Journal and in the Summer 1978 copy, Dr. Franklin H. West had a brief article praising John Wister's cross, 'Judy Spillane'. This plant is comprised of a cross of the pink budded form of R. maximum X Janet Blair, a Dexter hybrid. Dr. West's article about Judy Spillane (formerly Swarthmore 58-333A) is over 25 years old. How many people in the Chapter are familiar with Judy Spillane (no pun intended)? Have we ever offered it at our plant sales? Do Joan and I like it? We went out in the garden, and there, on 28 June, lo and behold, was a full blooming representative given to us by Jim Gears. Frank West was right. It is a very good plant. An old timer, you might say.

This leads me to my opinion. (You wondered when I was going to get around to it). In our chase each year to get that new hybrid, that new color, that new compact cute plant, we often overlook the old timers (I'm not talking about Frank and me now). How many new chapter members and shoppers at our annual plant sale are aware of some of the really striking old crosses – plants with very good plant habit and very good flower display? Some that are well rated include Cadis, David Gable, Double Dip, Caroline, Katherine Dalton and others by Gable, Accomplishment, Brown Eyes, Giant Red, Champagne, Brandygreen and Dorothy Russell by Dexter, Charles Therold and Gomer Waterer by Waterer of England, Jean Marie de Montague, a striking red by C.B. van Nes and Sons - I could go on.

We plan to re-introduce these plants in upcoming plant sales. Some have already been ordered for next year's sale. Whether you are meeting them for the first time or getting reacquainted, you won't be disappointed.

Newsletter - Kelly

This Newsletter Editor is taking a brief vacation from the newsletter, so I've combined the June and July newsletters into this one edition. The next newsletter will be sent in August.

Special thanks to Reid for his wonderful newsletter contributions! I hope his writing inspires you to write an article for the newsletter! As always, if you have photos to contribute, in particular photos from the ARS convention, please send them my way.