



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

Web site: www.ValleyForgeARS.org

NEWSLETTER

October/November 2012

Unless specified otherwise, meetings are at Jenkins Arboretum

Calendar at a Glance

October 18 (Thur.)	7:30 pm, Joe Minahan, "Rhododendrons of Central Pennsylvania"
November 11 (Sun.)	1:00 pm, Annual Banquet at St. Davids, Program: "Chanticleer Gardens"
January 20 (Sun.)	2:00 pm, Joseph Klimavicz, "Hybridizing Evergreen Azalea"

President's Message

Kudos to all who helped make the District 8 Cutting Exchange and Auction such a success. \$1719 was raised to be split between the ARS Endowment Fund and the ARS Research Foundation.

This fall we have three great events lined up for the chapter. Hopefully you made it to our Plants for Members (P4M) sale that featured nearly 100 John Doppel hybrids and other special plants for sale at crazy low prices. .

Joe Minahan, multiple flower show trophy winner, is our October 18 meeting speaker at 7:30. Joe will focus on Rhein and other Susquehanna Valley hybrids including his own.

Our annual banquet caps off the 2012 portion of the season. For many years the ballroom at St Davids Golf Club has been our venue for this event and once again we will convene at 1pm on Sunday, Nov 11. The social hour will be followed by dinner at 2 pm and our speaker, Przemyslaw Walczak, at about 3 pm. He is horticulturist, arborist, and metallurgist at Chanticleer and his presentation is titled "Chanticleer - Today and the Future". Details on the banquet appear in this newsletter. Please contact our banquet chairwoman, Kathy Woehl, with questions.

So please join all your friends and attend all these events this fall. As for all our events you are more than welcome to bring guests.

Regards,

Bob Smetana (610) 688-5249, vfarssmetana@yahoo.com

Chapter's web site: www.ValleyForgeARS.org

On Oct. 18 (Thursday) at 7:30 pm:

Joe Minahan: "Rhododendrons of Central Pennsylvania"

Joe is a charter member of the Susquehanna Valley Chapter and has been a member of the American Rhododendron Society for 49 years, having joined the Philadelphia Chapter in 1963. Joe's hybrids include Dan Layman, Howard Roberts, and John Paul II (shown in photo). Having bred one of the best reds, John Paul II, he has been working to breed a good yellow. He shares the beauty of his plants at our rhododendron flower show and has won many ribbons and trophies. Joe and Winnie's Garden have been on numerous tours. Thanks to Joe and other area hybridizers, central Pennsylvania is the home to a number of new and exciting rhododendrons.



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

On Nov. 11 (Sunday) at 1:00 pm:

Annual Banquet at St. Davids Golf Club

Social Hour and Cash Bar at 1:00 p.m.

Dinner at 2:00 p.m.

Speaker:

Przemyslaw Walczak, Horticulturist, Arborist, & Metallurgist

Program: *Chanticleer - Today and the Future*

Przemyslaw holds a Masters Degree in both Economics and Agriculture from Warsaw Agricultural University in Poland. He interned at both Morris Arboretum and Winterthur. He has been a Horticulturist at Chanticleer for over 15 years in the Woodland and Stream Gardens. Recently he has been developing Chanticleer's Native Deciduous forest with minimum intervention. He is a naturalist at heart and a horticulturist by profession. Przemyslaw finds inspiration from nature for his garden art, which can be seen throughout Chanticleer, and he typically expresses in metal, wood, and stone. He has transformed bridges, fences, stonewalls, ponds, and railings throughout the garden. He is married to Linda, a Landscape Architect with the PHS, and has two beautiful daughters.

Thanks to Kathy Woehl, we have 3 great entrees and lower prices: Curried Chicken Salad, \$22; Grilled Black Angus Sirloin, \$29; Pan Seared Atlantic Salmon, \$29

See enclosed flier with registration form. RSVP today!

The Valley Forge Chapter of the
AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

cordially invites Members and Friends to the

Annual Dinner

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 11, 2012

1:00 p.m.

ST. DAVIDS GOLF CLUB

845 RADNOR STREET ROAD • WAYNE, PENNSYLVANIA

610-688-20 10 • www.stdavidsgc.com

Social Hour and Cash Bar at 1:00 p.m.

Dinner at 2:00 p.m.

Speaker

Przemyslaw Walczak, Chanticleer Gardens

“Chanticleer - Today and the Future”

RSVP: Please Return Reservation • Proper Attire

**District 8 Cuttings Exchange &
Auction**

By all accounts this event was again a total success. Debby and John Schmidt were great hosts and everyone had a great time. We had a beautiful day to enjoy the Schmidt's garden.

The bidding was spirited, helped by the cooperative efforts of Karel Bernady and Jim Gears. The proceeds of about \$1719 will be donated in equal parts to the ARS Research Foundation and the ARS Endowment Fund.

We thank Ellin Hlebig who organized the details for the event. We also thank everyone who contributed in any way to the success of this annual event, especially those who brought any of the wide variety of plants there were to choose from.

Membership Dues for 2012-2013

Renewal notices will be mailed to members who have not prepaid, are not life members, or have not joined recently and thus become automatically a member for the coming membership year.

Your check, payable to Valley Forge ARS should be sent to

American Rhododendron Society
Valley Forge Chapter
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by December 1, to save us reminder notices and you a late fee for receiving the Winter issue of the ARS Journal. With Christmas approaching, why not include a gift membership to a friend or relative with your renewal forms?

Mary Elizabeth “Betts” Layman 1924-2012

The Valley Forge Chapter lost one of its best friends on Aug. 15 with the death of Betts Layman at age 88. The Philadelphia Inquirer quoted her daughter, Kate Layman Gee, as saying, “If she couldn’t be useful, she wasn’t happy.”



And useful she was, to Bartram’s Garden, Braille publishers, All Saints Church in Wynnewood, and of course the rhododendron community.

The garden that she and Dan Layman created in Wynnewood is a wonder to behold, and the number of plants that left in the hands of admiring visitors is staggering. Those gifts always came with cogent advice, or tales of Betts’ days taking horticultural classes taught by Laura Barnes herself at the Barnes Foundation.

One plant that many chapter members cherish is the azalea ‘Betty Layman,’ with large salmon flowers in the late-midseason. One of the Robin Hill azaleas, it was named for her by hybridizer Robert Gartrell around 1970 and registered in 1985.

The Valley Forge Chapter extends its deepest condolences to her children, Kate Gee and Stephen Layman, and her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Student Membership

Student membership in the ARS is now available to young people under 18 and those over 18 with student ID. The ARS would like to encourage young people to join our Society by making it affordable. With their membership, they will receive an electronic version of the Journal but not a paper copy.

Karel Bernady Grafter Extraordinaire

Karel Bernady is well known for collecting and propagating cuttings from many gardens throughout District 8 for P4M.

He meticulously records his rooting rates for each variety and noted that some varieties had very low rooting percentages. Other varieties either developed poor root systems or had good root systems but were very disease prone.

In 2010, while attending the International Rhododendron Conference in Bremen, Germany, Karel saw Timo Schröder simultaneously make rhododendron grafts and stick the rootstock cuttings. He studied this technique and when he returned home he started some experiments. I was excited to be able to graft plants that were before very difficult, onto rootstocks that provided good disease resistance root structures.

Now he has 24 different gallon sized grafted plants he is making available to P4M including Chinese Silver, Aviva Ann, Barbara Ann, Butter and Eggs, Emperor Waltz, Heritage Campfire Peach, and Keith Brown.

New Registrar

Jay Murray, Registrar of Plant Names for the Genus Rhododendron, is stepping down from her position and Michael Martin Mills of the Greater Philadelphia Chapter is taking over.

For about 25 years Jay Murray served as ARS Plant Registrar. Her registration of plant names required careful attention to detail and long hours.

Jay and her husband Robert created a computer database of most every registered and unregistered name of rhododendron and azalea cultivars that greatly improved the registration process. In 1999 the ARS Gold Medal was presented to Jay and Robert Murray.

Weird Weather

We had a very mild winter, followed by an extremely early spring. Most plants were about month early. The chapters were desperate for plant material for their truss shows. The shows saw many varieties that had never been entered before. The summer was extremely hot with about 60% of days reaching over 90F. The summer rainfall was typical with periods of drought and periods of drenching rain. As Karel stated last year, for the East rhododendron hardiness is now more matter of heat tolerance than cold.

Are you brilliant?

The clever folks who design and create our annual exhibit at the Philadelphia International Flower Show are always looking for more ideas and more participants. The work on the exhibit typically begins in the fall, with idea and design meetings. Committee chair Linda Hartnett will soon be scheduling those meetings and if you'd like to join in please contact her at 610- 940-9478 or lindahartnett@gmail.com.

The title for the overall March show is "Brilliant!" – that is, British. Linda has already rejected the suggestion of an exhibit of charred *R. ponticum* (a scourge on the sceptered isle), but it shouldn't be difficult to work our favorite genus into an English tableau. What's your brilliant idea?

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

Plant Cold Hardiness

A study in New England determined that a plants hardiness rating varies by about 10 degrees from winter to winter. A decrease in hardiness is usually caused by warm spells followed quickly by very cold spells. The hardiness rating that is reported is usually the lowest temperature a plant has been known to survive without damage. In the real world, the actual capability may be 10 degrees warmer than that some years. Some rhododendrons can tolerate severe winter conditions while others cannot. There are two problems from cold:

1) cellular damage caused by freezing when plant is not hardened off properly or is too tender a variety for the temperature. To harden off properly a plant must be allowed to go dormant in the fall. New growth is the most susceptible. This means that fertilizers containing nitrogen shouldn't be applied after early summer since nitrogen fertilizers encourage new growth. If the weather is warm in the fall before early frosts, this is an ideal time to see freeze damage. The two photos show examples of severe freeze damage and mild freeze damage. [Photos are courtesy of Harold Greer]



2) desiccation of the foliage when the ground is frozen and sun and wind attack the leaves.

There are four solutions:

1. cold-resistant varieties of plants
2. winter windbreaks
3. winter sun shade
4. chemical antitranspirants & antidesiccants

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Valley Forge Chapter
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FIRST-CLASS MAIL



NEWSLETTER
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Officers and Committees:

President:	Bob Smetana	(610) 688-5249
Vice President:	Alice Horton	(610) 430-0196
Treasurer:	Chris Smetana	(610) 688-5249
Secretary:	Joan Warren	(610) 913-0005
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
Newsletter Editor:	Steve Henning	(610) 987-6184
Webmaster:	Jim Willhite	(484) 887-0232
Membership:	Darlene Henning	(610) 987-6184
Plant Sale:	Chris Smetana	(610) 688-5249
Truss Show (V.F.):	Bob Smetana	(610) 688-5249
Plants-for-Members:	Jim Willhite	(484) 887-0232

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