

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

Web site: www.ValleyForgeARS.org

NEWSLETTER

October/November 2015

Unless specified otherwise, meetings are at Jenkins Arboretum in Devon

Calendar at a Glance

- October 15 (Thu.) 7:30 pm Liz Schumacher, “***Gardening On Hillsides***”
October 16-18 ARS Fall Conference, Long Island, N.Y. See page 7.
November 15 (Sun.) 2:00 pm, Annual Banquet at St. Davids (social hour starts at 1:00 pm)
Charles Cresson, “*Choosing Hardy Camellias for Spring and Fall*”
January 17 (Sun.) 2:00 pm, Janet Novak, “***Flowers of Greece & Sardinia***”
April 20-24, 2016 ARS Convention, Williamsburg, Va. See page 7 for details.

President's Message

We've had two great events the last two months. The VF chapter joined the GP chapter at their Plants for Members (P4M) event in lieu of a VF chapter September meeting. They had many unique cuttings and grafted plants in both gallon and quart containers. As you know the two chapters have held a February joint meeting for many years. This P4M event was an extension of the success of having joint events, which will be applied to both chapter's banquets. GP chapter members are welcome at our November 15th banquet and the GP chapter will reciprocate to VF members at their April banquet.

The other event was the District 8 cutting exchange and auction that raised over \$1000 for the Endowment Fund and the Research Foundation. See details further down.

Our next meeting will be back at Jenkins at 7:30pm Thursday Oct 15 featuring Liz Schumacher. Charles Cresson will be our November 15th banquet speaker. The GP chapter's November meeting will effectively be held at our banquet thereby ensuring a bigger audience. In April 2016, the VF chapter meeting will be effectively held at the GP banquet. This coordination of more meetings and events is an effort to reduce duplication and increase meeting attendance.

I hope all of you can support all the gatherings regardless of venue. Please contact me or any of your board members with questions or suggestions.

See you next month,

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

Chapter's web site: www.ValleyForgeARS.org

On October 15 (Thursday), at 7:30 pm:

Liz Schumacher: “Gardening On Hillsides”

In 1967, Liz and her world renowned rheumatologist husband, Ralph, bought a house at the bottom of a very steep, barren hill. Necessity forced them into education.

Liz began studying horticulture at the Barnes Foundation and together they began collecting specimen plants. As the years passed and the terraced hill developed into an award winning garden, Liz and Ralph began the search for appropriate ornaments to incorporate in the garden design. As they traveled the world for Ralph’s lectures, they began to accumulate unique artifacts from many countries and cultures. In 1979 with encouragement from family and friends, Liz founded Garden Accents!



Liz now writes articles and lectures at universities, The Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, and garden clubs around the country on garden design and the use of garden ornaments. Her pieces have enhanced many award winning exhibits at the prestigious Philadelphia Flower Show as well as the Vassar Design House and other local events. In 1996, Garden Accents won the blue

ribbon for their first commercial booth at the Philadelphia Flower Show and again received a First Prize in 1999 and 2000. Philadelphia Magazine rated Garden Accents “Best of Philly” in 1996, 1998, 2000 and 2006. Besides gardening, Liz enjoys antiques, folk art, tennis, paddle tennis, traveling, reading and her three wonderful grandchildren.

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

On November 15 (Sunday), Banquet at St. Davids GC at 2:00 , Social Hour 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: Charles Cresson, noted author & horticulturist

Program: “*Choosing Hardy Camellias for Spring and Fall*”

Charles Cresson has been growing camellias outdoors in his garden, near Philadelphia, for 40 years and has been trialing the hardier introductions for over 20 years. He is also a garden designer, consultant, photographer and author. He studied horticulture at the University of Vermont and the University of Bath in England and has worked for the Royal



Horticultural Society and W. Atlee Burpee Co. as well as several public gardens. He is the award winning author of 3 books, *Charles Cresson on the American Flower Garden*, *Ornamental Trees* and *Rock Gardening*. In 2001, Cresson was awarded the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Certificate of Merit.

Recent breeding breakthroughs have transformed the fabled camellia from a southern jewel into a hardy landscape plant. These easily grown evergreen shrubs produce

months of bloom in both spring and autumn. Camellias thrive in shade, tolerating heat and drought. Learn how to select and grow the best varieties in your garden.

If your registration is received before Oct. 31, you will receive a \$5 drink chit for each person

See enclosed flier with registration form. RSVP today!

The Valley Forge Chapter of the
AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

cordially invites ARS Members and Friends to the

Annual Dinner

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2015

1:00 p.m.

ST. DAVIDS GOLF CLUB

845 RADNOR STREET ROAD • WAYNE, PENNSYLVANIA

610-688-2010 • www.stdavidsgc.com

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

Dinner at 2:00 p.m.

Speaker

Charles Cresson, noted author & horticulturist

“Choosing Hardy Camellias for Spring and Fall”

RSVP: Please Return Reservation • Proper Attire

District 8 Cuttings Exchange & Auction

District 8 held its Annual Cutting Exchange and Plant Auction on August 16th at the home of Wayne and Doris Guyman in Chadds Ford, PA.

The weather was beautiful and the event raised \$1,035. The event organizer, Valley Forge Chapter, will donate the proceeds equally to the ARS Endowment Fund and the ARS Research Foundation. This continues to be an enjoyable event.

Karel Bernady auctioned off the donated plants. We 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.

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Rhododendron & Azalea Culture

Soil Conditions

Drainage: Rhododendrons and azaleas thrive in moist, well-drained soils high in organic matter. Rhododendrons and azaleas have shallow fine hair-like roots. These roots do not tolerate water-saturated soil conditions but do require moist soils. Poor drainage and wet soils are problems often associated with heavy clay and compacted soil. To test drainage, dig a hole about 10 to 12 inches deep and fill it with water. Then after it drains, fill it with water again and see how long it takes to drain. If the hole drains within an hour you have good drainage. If the water has not drained out of the hole within one hour, the soil is poorly drained and you must correct the drainage problem before planting. Planting in raised beds is the best solution in heavy soils. Raised beds are built on top of the native soil to a depth of 12" to 18" and held in place with timbers or stones. Raised beds may require watering during the summer as they dry out quickly.

Aeration: Aeration is important for healthy growth of rhododendrons and azaleas. Beneficial microorganisms in soils require air for respiration and metabolism. Vital microbial and fungal activity, such as decomposition of organic matter that make nutrients available for plants, nitrification and beneficial mycorrhizal associations, depend on the oxygen present in soil. Poor aeration results in the development of toxins in soil. Plants in heavy soils with poor aeration often become chlorotic from malnutrition. To improve soil aeration the best amendment is organic matter, with compost being an excellent choice. Soil bacteria acting on compost produces humus that binds with soil particles - that forces tightly packed particles apart; improves drainage and allows the fine roots of rhododendrons to more easily penetrate through the soil. In coarse sandy soil, it lodges in the large pore spaces and acts

as a sponge, so the soil stays moist longer. Amending heavy clay soils is not recommended. Eventually the organic amendments break down and the soil reverts to its original condition. As mentioned above, in gardens with heavy clay soil the best approach for growing rhododendrons and azaleas is using a raised bed atop the native soil.

Acidity: Rhododendrons and azaleas prefer acidic soils having a pH between 4.5 to 6.0. Rhododendrons and azaleas will let you know if the pH is not correct. If the leaves turn yellow between green veins then you most likely have a pH problem. If this occurs, a soil test is suggested for exact recommendations on adding a soil amendment to the soil in order to adjust the pH. Materials commonly used to lower soil pH are wettable sulfur or ferrous sulfate. Do not use aluminum sulfate to acidify the soil; it is toxic to rhododendron and azalea roots. Avoid planting azaleas near concrete sidewalks, driveways or foundations that may leach out lime which raises the pH. In rare cases, the pH may be too low. This is equally serious and must be rectified. The recommendation is usually to use dolomitic limestone.

Soil Mix: About half of the planting medium should be organic material. Combinations of sphagnum peat moss, pine or fir bark fines, compost, and aged, chopped leaves should be worked into the soil to a depth of about 12". Oak leaves are excellent. Make sure there are no walnut tree roots or leaves in the soil. All parts of walnut trees are toxic to rhododendrons and azaleas. Pine bark is particularly good because substances in the pine bark are thought to inhibit fungi that cause root rot. Adding a large amount of organic matter will raise the bed, which will improve the drainage and aeration of the soil. Inorganic materials that may also be added to soil include perlite, vermiculite or small diameter lava rock. Time-tested mixes for growing rhododendrons and azaleas in raised beds include the following:

Soil Conditions continued

- Rhododendron Species Botanical Garden mix: two-thirds coarse sand mixed with one-third medium bark, no soil
- Everett Farwell rhododendron mix: 80% medium fir bark mixed with 20% small (1/8" - 1/4" diam.) crushed lava rock, no soil
- Holden Arboretum mix: five parts coarse sand and one part medium pine bark to four parts loamy soil.

Up to 1/4 loamy soil can be added to 3/4 RSBG or Farwell mixtures.

Keep Moist: Rhododendrons and azaleas will not survive in wet, poorly-drained soil. Although too much water can injure the roots it is important that they receive adequate moisture, especially during the first year after transplanting. A two to three inch layer of organic mulch surrounding the base of the plants helps retain moisture and helps control weeds.

More information about soils can be found in the following Journal ARS articles:

- **Tips For Beginners: Good Soil Promises Rhody Success** by Harold Greer
<http://www.rhododendron.org/bobtest/v46n1p21.htm>
- **Tips for Beginners: How To Adjust Acidity Levels in Your Soil** by Fred C. Galle
<http://www.rhododendron.org/bobtest/v46n2p77.htm>
- **Experiences With Rhododendrons In Southern Red Clay** by C.A. Dewey, Jr.
<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/v12n4/v12n4-dewey.htm> ,
- **More About Rhododendrons In Southern Red Clay** by C.A. Dewey, Jr.
<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/v18n2/v18n2-dewey.htm>

This part of the new online ARS Plant Culture and Care Guide was written by Steve Henning.

News from ARSStore.org

Special Book Offer for ARS

The newest addition to ARSStore.org is the all-new edition of the book, ***Compendium of Rhododendron and Azalea Diseases and Pests*** published by the **American Phytopathological Society (APS)**.

ARSStore.org negotiated a \$20 discount on sales from ARSStore.org and also a donation to the ARS of 5 percent of the proceeds from sales made using this special ARS promotion. This is a special offer for ARS members on this much-improved second edition of the classic reference. A book review appeared in the Fall 2014 Journal of the ARS

Online Shopping Venues

ARSStore.org earns money for the ARS at no expense to you when you begin your online shopping at ARSStore.org. Not only does it include **Amazon.com**, it also includes:

ARS Books4Members	Microsoft Software
Best Buy	Powell's Books
Calendula. Books	Rodale & Rodale's
HP Computers	Sam's Club
iTunes Store	Tractor Supply Co.
IX Webhosting	Wal-Mart

In Store Shopping Also

If you prefer shopping in stores rather than online, you can also earn money for the ARS by purchasing gift cards online before you go shopping. Gift cards also make great gifts.

ARSStore.org Financial Report

During 21 months of operation ending August 31, 2015, with online sales of over \$15,000, ARSStore.org has had earnings of over \$800 for the ARS.

Perfect Place for Holiday Shopping
Every purchase benefits the ARS

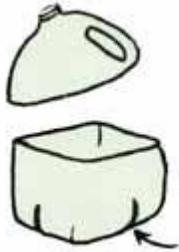
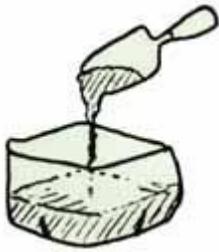
Rooting Azalea and Lepidote Rhododendron Cuttings

by Don Hyatt

Cutting Preparation:

 <p>Select new growth that is starting to hardening off.</p>	 <p>Carefully remove lower leaves. Pinch out any soft tips and flower buds.</p>	 <p>Dip end of cutting in a rooting hormone like Dip 'N Grow or Rootone.</p>	 <p><i>Note:</i> Long cuttings may be cut in shorter sections if many plants are desired.</p>
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Planting:

 <p>Use a cut-off plastic jug or any clean pot. Make slits in the bottom for later drainage.</p>	 <p><i>Medium:</i> 1/3 Peat, 1/3 sand, & 1/3 perlite Fill about 2 to 3 inches deep. Soil should be damp but not too wet.</p>	 <p>Insert cuttings, but not too deep. If bugs were present, spray with insecticide or give quick dip in a 10% Clorox solution.</p>	 <p>Enclose in a clear plastic bag. Grow under fluorescent lights, 16 to 24 hours a day. No need to water or fertilize.</p>
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Procedure Details:

- Make short cuttings, 2 to 3 inches long. Pinch out the soft growing tip to stop flower bud formation. Remove excess foliage at the base. Long cuttings can often be cut into several sections if desired.
- Optional: To combat insects or disease, submerge cuttings in a 10% Clorox solution for 5 minutes and then rinse very well. You can also spray with an insecticide / fungicide mix after the cuttings are stuck.
- Dip the end of each cutting in a rooting hormone such as Dip 'N Grow or Rootone. Shake off excess
- Insert the bottom inch of the cutting into a container filled with a porous medium (1/2 Peat, 1/4 Sand, 1/4 Perlite). The medium should be damp but not wet since too much moisture encourages rotting.
- Enclose containers in clear plastic bags and place under fluorescent lights with "long day" conditions (16 to 24 hours of light each day). A bright north window out of direct sun can be used in lieu of lights.
- Cuttings should root in 2 to 4 months. They usually require no water and are best kept on the "dry side" since most problems are caused by excess moisture. After well rooted, gradually remove plastic bags and continue growing under lights the first winter or else provide cold frame protection. Avoid fertilizer under low light conditions as it encourages disease. Don't fertilize cuttings that will winter outside for they must go dormant before frost.
- Keep deciduous azaleas growing under lights until the new growth starts. Otherwise they often will never break dormancy and die the next year

Coming ARS National Meetings

2015 Fall Regional Conference

October 16-17, 2015

Long Island, NY

Website:

http://rhododendron.org/2015_FallConference.htm

2016 ARS/ASA Annual Convention,

April 20-24, 2016

Williamsburg, VA

Website: <http://arsasaconvention2016.org/>

Both the 2015 Fall Regional Conference and 2016 ARS Convention are an easy drive away. Sneak a peak at what is being planned for 2016 at <http://arsasaconvention2016.org/>. With Don Hyatt involved we know it will be great. Be sure to calendar it now.

Resources on 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

[ARS Online Store: ARSStore.org](http://ARSStore.org)

From A Guide for the Hungry Gardener:

Sweet and Sour Red Cabbage

- 1 large red cabbage, 3-4 pounds
- 2 slices bacon cut into ¼ inch squares
- 1 onion sliced
- ½ cup water
- 1 apple, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 whole cloves

Strip outer leaves of cabbage and cut in two. Cut away the hard core. Cut cabbage in fine strips and soak in cold water. In a heavy dutch oven fry cut bacon and sauté onion. Add cabbage, removing from water direct to dutch oven. Add apple, water, salt, vinegar and spices. Cover and cook over low heat until apples are transparent (about 1 hour), lifting cabbage frequently. Serve hot. Serves 8 to 10.

Membership Dues for 2015-2016

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

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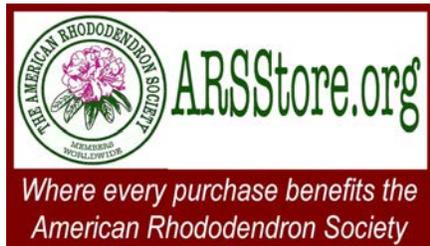
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FIRST-CLASS MAIL



NEWSLETTER
October / November 2015



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Page 3 • District 8 CutX & Auction	Darlene Henning (‘13-’16) (610) 987-6184 Steve Henning (‘13-’16) (610) 987-6184
Page 4 • Rhododendron & Azalea Culture – Soil Conditions	Alice Horton (‘14-’17) (610) 430-0196 John Ryan (‘14-’17) (610) 971-2368
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ARS website: rhododendron.org	VF Chapter’s web site: ValleyForgeARS.org

Please contact us with 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).

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AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

cordially invites ARS Members and Friends to the

Annual Dinner

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2015

1:00 p.m.

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610-688-2010 • www.stdavidsgc.com

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Dinner at 2:00 p.m.

Speaker

Charles Cresson, noted author & horticulturist
“Choosing Hardy Camellias for Spring and Fall”

RSVP: Please Return Reservation • Proper Attire

Valley Forge ARS Banquet Reservation

(Must be received by November 12, 2015)

Please Indicate The Number Of Persons

_____ **Hot Lunch Buffet -- \$30 per Person**

If received before October 31, you will receive a \$5 drink chit for each person

Appetizer: Italian Wedding Soup to be served to table.

Chicken Francaise

Atlantic Broiled Salmon

Flank Steak with Wild Mushroom Demi Glace

Seasonal Vegetable Medley

House Salad, Caesar Salad, and Potato Salad

Iced Tea, Lemonade, Tea and Coffee

Dessert: Ice Cream served to table after buffet.

Please send check, made payable to Valley Forge ARS

In the amount of \$ _____ to:

Kathy Woehl

143 Old State Road

Berwyn, Pennsylvania 19312

610-688-9173

Name(s): _____