



'Valley Forge'

Charles Herbert's Hybrid

American Rhododendron Society

VALLEY FORGE CHAPTER

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

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2009

Calendar at a Glance: April meeting still at St. Luke Lutheran Church in Devon.

Thursday, April 17, 7:30 p.m.:	Randy Kobetich on Cold-Hardy Camellias
May 1-3	Chapter Plant Sale "Gala" and Public Sale at Jenkins
May 10	Flower/Truss Show at Jenkins Arboretum
June 12-14	Southern Appalachian Highl. Conservancy Annual Mtg., Crossnore, NC
June 28:	Chapter Picnic and Annual Meeting with Election of Officers
August 16	Cuttings Exchange/Plant Auction
September 17	Harold Sweetman on Vireyas
October 23-25	Northeast Regional Conference, Lionville, PA

President's Message

The annual plant sale, our biggest event of the year, is coming up, and we'll hold it in the new Jenkins Education Center. Our chairman, Bill Dennis, and his hard-working committee have already held five meetings in preparation for the event. They will surely need many volunteers the week of April 27th to set up the sale, so don't hesitate to contact Bill or me, if you can help, even if it's for just part of a day.

If the plant sale represents the beginning of the process of growing beautiful rhodies, the Flower/Truss show is the culmination of your efforts. We encourage everyone to cut some trusses from your plants and bring them to Jenkins on Sunday morning, May 10. It's very easy, and many people will be on hand to help you get your flowers entered. This could be the biggest show ever, as we are combining forces with the Greater Philadelphia Chapter. Our new venue will be on the upper level of the Center, instead of in the greenhouse, and in the mainstream of the Mother's Day crowds.

Don't forget we have one more chapter meeting at our temporary meeting place, St. Luke Church. That is April 16 at 7:30 pm, with Randy Kobetich speaking on hardy camellias. This is an important meeting, as we can update you on both the Plant Sale and the Truss Show.

Don't forget to go to our website www.ValleyForgeARS.org for more details on these upcoming events. See you at the April meeting.

Bob Smetana (vfarsmetana@yahoo.com)

Thursday, April 16, 7:30 p.m.

at St. Luke Lutheran Church in Devon, Conestoga and Valley Forge Roads

Growing Cold-Hardy Camellias

Speaker: Randy Kobetich

This will be a digital power presentation on the selection, care, and culture of camellias. The pictures will feature varieties that grow well in this area and dispel the myth that camellias will not grow in the North.

Randy Kobetich is a certified Master Gardener and a member of the American Camellia Society. He has been gardening with camellias for 14 years. His other interests include daylilies, perennials, hardy tropicals, and hybrid witch hazels. He likes "odd" plants and appreciates those that bloom when others are dormant.

Refreshments: Anyone willing to bring fingerfood desserts.

Friday to Sunday, May 1 – 3

2009 Plant Sale at Jenkins Arboretum

Chair: Bill Dennis

The Plant Sale will kick off with a Wine and Plant "Gala" on Friday evening, May 1st, an opportunity for those who want to have first pick of specimens offered.

Volunteers will be needed to unload and set up plants early in the week and to work **at the sale**. Please mark your calendars and **reserve the dates** for us. Don't be surprised when you receive a call from **Maggie Bazzel**, a relatively new member, who volunteered to phone and recruit members for the many different jobs that have to be done. We need everyone, novice and expert. Also, please keep in mind that we gratefully accept the **donation of plants** that are surplus in your garden for our special "Garden Treasures" corner at the plant sale. These donations are pure profit to the Chapter. Please bring them during the week of the set-up. For more information, contact

Bill Dennis 610/935-2696 Nounce_2000@yahoo.com

Sunday, May 10 (Mother's Day)

2009 Flower and Truss Show at Jenkins Arboretum

Chair: Jim Willhite

Members of all area chapters are cordially invited to exhibit at this show, for which entries are **accepted between 7:30 a.m. and 10:15 a.m. at Jenkins Arboretum**, where the exhibit will take place.

The Boards of Greater Philadelphia and Valley Forge Chapters agreed to alternate truss shows, with Valley Forge presenting in odd-numbered years and Greater Philadelphia, in even-numbered years. Why? The reasons include difficulty in finding available judges, the increasing cost of exhibiting, and the loss of significant exhibitors. We opted for alternate shows rather than merged shows, for each chapter knows exactly what to do, and each chapter's trophies, rules, catalogues, and equipment (such as vases) are preserved. Yet, members of both chapters are encouraged to exhibit at each other's show and to help with clerking and other chores. With the new arrangement, we hope to increase the number of exhibitors and the number of trusses exhibited. For more show details, go to www.ValleyForgeARS.org or contact

Jim Willhite 484/887-0232 jwillhite@comcast.net)

Short Trips to view Early and Native Rhododendrons and Azaleas

Contact Jim Gears 610/793-2313, if you are interested in 1-day or 2-day excursions into southern territory. You may also consider visiting on your own **Welkinweir** in northern Chester County. Go to www.greenvalleys.org/welkinweir.asp for details and directions.

Friday to Sunday October 23-25

Northeast Regional ARS Conference

“Rhododendrons in Penn’s Woods”

The Inn at Chester Springs, Lionville, Pennsylvania

Hosted by the District 8 chapters (Greater Philadelphia, Valley Forge, Susquehanna Valley, Lehigh Valley), this weekend in Penn’s Woods, also known as Pennsylvania, will give you a sense of the abundance of rhododendrons in this area, grown and hybridized here by hybridizers with familiar names.

There will be knowledgeable speakers on subjects ranging from John Bartram to the legacy of Joe Gable. As always, there will be a plant sale and a Hybridizers’ Round Table. We will keep you posted. Also, for the latest details, go to www.arsfall2009.org. To volunteer, contact Karel Bernardy at 610/827-0113, Bob Smetana at 610/688-5240, or your Chapter president.

Membership Directory

Enclosed is the new Membership Directory, which is for the sole use of our members. Please do not use or let it be used for other purposes. Please inform us about any changes.

Please welcome our newest member:

J. S. L. Ivers, 1002 Oakfield Lane, Wilmington, DE 19810 302/529-1027

And note:

Lathrop Nelson, nelson1b@msn.com nelson is followed by the number 1 not the letter l

Nominating Committee Chair: Joan Warren 610/913-0005

Reminder: As a horticultural organization, we welcome **anyone** who shares our dedication to the genus Rhododendron. Since we have no religious or political affiliations or aspirations, members should refrain during chapter activities from making political, religious, or other remarks or jokes that may be offensive to others.—The Editor

‘Side Effects’ of Fertilizer (December issue of Mid-Atlantic Grower

submitted by Frank Brouse

In response to a question whether “fertilized trees are more prone to disease attack,” the answer in summary is that improving the nitrogen/nutritional quality of plants actually decreases a plants’ production of natural defensive chemicals and that in fertilized plants more energy goes into the growth zone than into the defense or storage zones. Scientists in Ohio (Hoitink and Nameth) reportedly found that Phytophthora root rot lesions on new growth of rhododendrons with high-nitrogen concentrations (more than 2% in new growth) extended down to the crown in 10 days or less, whereas the same infection on a low-nitrogen plant (1.2% in new growth) remained very small and barely detectable. Similar results were found by another Ohio team (Herms and Bonello) in Sphaeropsis shoot blight and canker of red pines. It is concluded that fertilization may not always have the expected effects but may be responsible for reduced tree resistance to disease pathogens and insects.

If you consider attending the June meeting of the **Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy**, of which the Chapter is a life member, check www.appalachian.org for upcoming information.

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Southeastern, PA 19399-0715

FIRST-CLASS MAIL



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Board members:

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	Joan Warren	610/913-0005
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You are encouraged to send news and other contributions to the Newsletter Editor:
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NoelEvaJackson@comcast.net or (new: jackson.evar@gmail.com).

ARS (national) Web Site <http://members.aol.com/RandANews/news.html>

Valley Forge Chapter Web Site: **www.ValleyForgeARS.org**