



Willamette Chapter American Rhododendron Society Newsletter

Volume 3

September 2021

Issue 6



Willamette Chapter ARS
Rhododendron Hillside Garden
Bush Pasture Park

CHAPTER MEETINGS: Due to Covid-19, our current chapter meetings are held online via Zoom on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from September through May. Socializing begins at 6:30pm, with the meeting and speaker at 7:00pm. The Zoom link is sent via email and listed in the newsletter. This form of meeting will continue until in-person meetings can safely be resumed.

CHAPTER MEETING September 8, 2021

Speaker - Jacquie Clayton

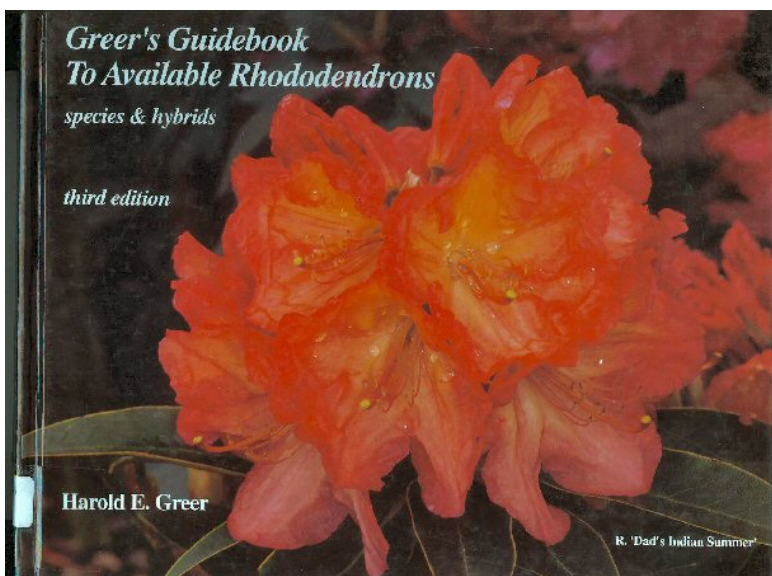
Speaking on: Sikkim Trek 2015

**From a Holistic Naturalist/Historian/Journalistic Point
of View**

Social Time: 6:30pm

Meeting and Program: 7:00pm

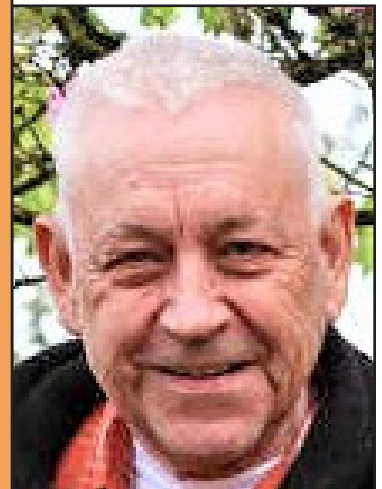
Join via Zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87603777993>



**The Goal Isn't to
Live
Forever**

**It is to Create
Something That
Will**

Chuck Palahniuk



July Potluck



Mary Ellen Ramseyer
Hostess who forgot to take pictures
July 31, 2021

Fortunately it dawned as an overcast day, which kept the clouds in place until late in the morning, delaying a temperature spike to unbearable. A group of 16 WCARS members plus Gordon and Linda Wylie from the Eugene Chapter gathered to enjoy the camaraderie of socialization with one another, eat great food, laugh, eat more food, swim and participate in a scavenger hunt.

Appetites were voracious from the moment people arrived and the food hit the table. Karen Cavender with her red hair, was dressed in a brilliant yellow pant suit and reminded me of a radiant sunflower



One of my main goals for the day was to take pictures for the newsletter so those not able to attend could also enjoy the festivities. But sadly, my time management skills were sorely lacking and I was in the kitchen more than outside so picture taking was put on the back burner. So far back, that the burner was never turned on. So I will do my best to describe the festivities as they happened.

The main meat for the potluck was hamburgers, Beyond burgers, moose hot dogs (from my son in Alaska) and regular hot dogs, all grilled by Keith White, chef extraordinaire.



Ali Sarlak brought crab cakes to round out the protein selection.

In addition to other goodies, Karen and Roger Landers brought a vegetable tray with fresh home-grown tomatoes from their garden. Wally brought a selection of cheeses from the Willamette Valley and home made baguette toast rounds. There were a variety of salads, including [Cowboy Caviar](#) (Click on the link for the recipe). And a variety of chips, dips, etc.

No potluck is complete without many desserts and ours did not disappoint in that category. We had a selection of several pies, a chocolate cake from Anne Gross, a chocolate peanut butter dessert from Gary Schultz, and brownies. And of course, a variety of beverages.



After all the eating, Roger Landers and Anne Gross relaxed in the pool. Karen Landers, Ali Sarlak, Mary Crofts, Dana Malby, Bill Vagt and JR Kruger accepted the challenge of solving the clues in the Scavenger Hunt to find prizes that consisted of a \$20 gift card to the RAM, a \$25 Safeway gift card, garden gloves and several [Speed Weeders](#). (Keith discovered the Speed Weeder at a garden in England that we toured with the Scottish Rhododendron Society in 2019 and has identified it as an essential tool in a gardener's tool belt.) All the clues were solved except 1.

For those of you who like a challenge, the following are the clues for the Scavenger Hunt. See if you can identify the plant - Answers at the end

1. The Dutch Heritage Pres.
I am named after
The Neder Folks gave me
As a gift for your service
Variagated leaves
(A very interesting private life)
I'm popular with Rhodoholics
This makes me a master
Of my location
Stalin, Churchill and I secretly
Met during the WWII disaster
2. From the mountains of Tibet
A deciduous Tree Pee am I
Gracing the landscape
Of our pool and deck
Inside my leafy bod
You'll find a gift
You will not reject

3. A tiny Nipponese island
I am named after
Small stature, curve edged leaves, fuzzy
under
The Rhody parenting world I have plundered

4. A Magnolia I am
Crossbred by a French guy
I'm top heavy in one direction
Cut this part out
Or if not
I'll crack and topple
My substance only good
For the wood lot

5. A King I am called
Now Nobody would think
Cause my big leaves are shriveled
Toasted and crinked

6. A Chinese later bloomer
My Bracts pink or white
I grow in a clump
Of trunks slim not wide
In the front yard
You can't miss me
If you don't find me
Your prize will be history

7. My leaf shape is my appellation
I'm a fave in the rhodo species nation
But planting me too close is a big mistake
A tall monster I'll become
My thousands of orbs
Crowding your little estate

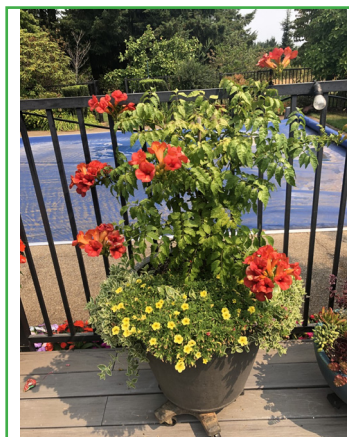
8. I'm used as a girl's name
A climber most social
My perfume you'll sniff
As you amble by
If you roll me and smoke me
You will not get high

9. I'm ficto not lacto
But early taxos thought to
Not to be in da' king's court.
We now know better,
(We think)
I've been lumped.
Despite my red under rump
With rex,
As a species cohort.

Answers: (1) R. President Roosevelt (2) Tree Peone, Peone luteum (3) R. yakusimanum (4) Magnolia Soulangiana Lenneii (5) R. rex (6) Cornus kousa (7) R. orbiculare (8) Jasmine (9) R. fictolacteum

With all of that being said, it was a great day and it was evident the biggest gain of the day was just the simplicity of seeing one another and gathering together in person.

A few pictures of the flowers on the patio at the time of the potluck.





Zoom-Master's Clarification

Being the program host for our WCARS monthly Zoom meetings, I have the ability to mute individuals or all participants but **I cannot unmute them.** If I mute you, you should see a red line through your microphone on your dashboard.

To unmute, you must click on the microphone symbol on your Zoom dashboard, which unmutes you until muted again, or you can hold your spacebar down to temporarily unmute yourself to ask a question or make a comment.

So when the Program Speaker for the night begins the program, I will most likely mute you if you have not muted yourself. Please remember this if you want to ask a question at the end of the program.

Keith White - WCARS Zoom-Master

September Program

Sikkim Trek 2015 From a Holistic Naturalist/Historian/Journalistic Point of View

September 8, 2021 6:30 Social 7:00 Program

Zoom:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87603777993>

Meeting ID: 876 0377 7993
One tap mobile
+12532158782, 87603777993# US (Tacoma)
Dial by your location
+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

I am pleased to announce that Jacquie Clayton from Lions Bay, B.C. is our speaker for this Zoom presentation. Jacquie and husband Tony were members of the 2015 Rhododendron Species Bo-

anical Garden expedition to Sikkim. Jacquie will present a more holistic/naturalist's perspective on that trek. Keith White used quotes from Jacquie's trek journal several times for his article on the trek in the 2016 RSBG "Rhododendron Species" annual journal. He was very impressed with the video that Jacquie made of the trip. For our program, Jacquie will present that video and another with an in-depth view of Sikkim as a beautiful and historical Himalayan (former) kingdom.

From Keith: I saw part of Jacquie's program last night.....fantastic.....Worthy of an international meeting audience.....the best program on a trek ever. This is the Sikkim Trek 2015 through the eyes of not only a rhododendron lover, but a journalistic/history minded holistic view of the former Kingdom of Sikkim with great photos and artistic production.

Jacquie & Tony's love of plants started in childhood when Tony helped his grandfather in his allotment in England, and when Jacquie watched her mother plant rhododendrons down their driveway in Vancouver, B.C. Later in life, both had well developed mountaineering backgrounds....Tony in England & Europe growing up, and later in B.C, after immigrating to Canada in 1966. Jacquie was born in Vancouver, and found her love of the mountains later in life, hiking in the US and Canada.

After moving to Lions Bay, their love for Rhododendrons was increased by visiting the beautiful woodland gardens of neighbours and now friends, Joe and Joanne Ronsley and of Richard and Heather Mossakowski. Jacquie and Tony joined the Vancouver Rhododendron Society, in 2000 and the Species Foundation shortly after. Tony served on the executive of the VRS and is a former chapter president. Their small lot in Lions Bay contains well over 250 Rhodos, with many species, and is a delight every Spring.

So when Steve Hootman invited them to join an expedition to Sikkim, to take place in the Spring of 2015, it was the culmination of two loves, and a resounding "YES" by both of them. It turned out to be a most remarkable and memorable journey shared with many other members of the RSF.

The presentation gives, first, some background on Sikkim and then a slide show of the actual treks into the Himalayas, where you will no doubt recognize many of your friends and fellow members.....and maybe some Rododendrons.



Rhodos to Toastadendron

Some Rhododendrons Change Genus

As a result of the hot weather this summer, some of the rhodies at our garden have changed genus. When it hit 112 F on our shaded deck on June 28th, the transformation began. Within a few days the change was evident. Several of what had been rhododendrons became "Toastadendrons". Plants that formerly looked wonderful developed burned, curled leaves that showed some or no life. I thought that I had a good watering routine going. Everybody in our rhodie world was happy. But after this event, when examining the settings on our automatic irrigations system and really looking at where the water was falling, I found that some plants had been getting "just enough" water to keep them going. Also, I figured out that my daily 2 PM sprinkling (each of 8 stations go on for 5 minutes to cause evaporative cooling) was not enough. I adjusted the sprinkling from once a day to 4 times a day, starting at 11 and going every 2 hours.

My wonderful R Xanthocodon (concatanens group) that had produced a profusion of waxy orangish yellow blossoms this spring was a remarkable transformation. I had been nurturing this plant for 20 years. It was just coming into its own. After the heat I found the leaves drooping and curled. No amount of water would revive it. It had changed genus to Toastadendron. The same was a nearby R lutescens, "Bagshot Sands" in a pot. Two great plants dead in one shot!



Toastadendron Xanthocodon

When inspecting the watering pattern in that zone I found that the water from one sprinkler was going over the plants, giving just a tiny shower. And the water coming from a sprinkler on the other side that used to douse these plants was being blocked by the limb of a tree that had expanded. I had walked around, observing the watering patterns and adjusting the sprinklers in April. But that was not good enough for June 28. Neglect had helped take the heat toll. Had I carefully walked around again in June, I could have corrected the issue. This was not the only water blockage instance. Elsewhere, new growth partially obstructing the water flow had taken a toll, giving some plants just enough water to survive with toasted leaves.

Some plants that had looked great with the amount of sun they were getting, even though they got plenty of water, just couldn't take that much heat along with even partial sun. My R rex, "Black Bamboo" with its huge leaves, had started to make the transition to "Toastadendron wrecked". Fortunately, it still had functioning leaves and new leaf buds all set to grow next spring. A similar case was R falconeri, growing in only early morning sun. Fortunately, soon after getting toasted, this plant sprung up another flush of new felty indumented growth.



Toastadendron rex

Then there is (or was) R thomsonii and R lanatoides. Both young plants, growing in full shade next to each other. The lanatoides was completely dead and thomsonii has partly curled drooping leaves, still green, which make me think that it is on its way to the "Toastadendron" genus. Perhaps it was the youth of these plants that doomed them. Notably, however, a R heatherae, also a young plant nearby under the same conditions (supposedly a fragile species re cold tolerance) came through without a scratch.

Having learned a few lessons, I have just walked around in August. I have found leaks in pipes that decreased water pressure to sprinklers. And I have found broken and non-functioning sprink-

lers. I had to undertake fast repair action to save the nearby droopers.



**Toastadendron
thomsonii**

Also, I have found some deciduous azaleas on their way to changing to genus "Muckodendron" being smothered by organic planting material that, with the help of too much water, broken down into mud. I have had to dig these up and plant them higher up in media that contains coarse sand for drainage in order to try to save them. Regarding the "too much water" issue, I have converted two sprinklers into the one necessary to keep these plants happy.

And limbing up some Douglas firs has changed the sun pattern on formerly shaded plants, now requiring more water and some artificial shade for a few.

All this has taught me again that I need to walk around in the daytime (watering system runs all stations full time at night) every couple of weeks to catch all the problems that are developing. After doing this rhody thing for many years, I am still learning (for the cost of some unfortunate plants) "The Hard Way" to keep my plants from changing to genus "Toastadendron" species "deadianum".

Keith White



**A Hibiscus
currently
blooming
in our gar-**

Portland Chapter September 16, 2021



Speaker: Dick "Red" Cavender

**Topic: Rhododendron
occidentale:
"The Outlaw Species"**

Social Time 6:30pm Program time 7:00pm

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86153706368>

Meeting ID: 861 5370 6368

One tap mobile

+12532158782,,86153706368#

Dial option: 253-215-8782

From Dick: "Like many Westerners, R. occidentale is fiercely independent. It takes great delight in confounding the taxonomists because it simply does not obey the rules! Taxonomists expect species to be fairly uniform but occidentale is extremely variable. These variations include leaf texture, flower color, size, shape and an ability to thrive throughout a very large range of habitats. The one consistent thing is occidentale's great fragrance." Dick will show us some of the variability of the plants throughout its range and will show and tell you why you really need to have a number of these fine plants in your garden.

Dick & Karen are the owners of Red's Rhodies in Sherwood, Oregon, specializing in Rhododendron occidentale. Dick has been an avid collector, hybridizer and grower of Rhododendron occidentale for about 55 years. He has named and registered a number of wild collected clones and his hybrids.



**Rhododen-
dron
September
Song**



Harold Eldon Greer

1945 - 2021

Harold Eldon Greer, 76, passed away unexpectedly on August 10, 2021, while tending to his landscape and his beloved rhododendrons. Harold was born to Edgar and Esther Peterson Greer on May 21, 1945, in Greeley, Colorado. His family moved to Eugene, Oregon, when Harold was seven years old and shortly thereafter Harold was introduced to the world of plant materials, and specifically, rhododendrons, by his father. What began as a shared hobby between father and son soon became a business, Greer Gardens Nursery, originally located in the River Road area. In 1961, the family purchased a parcel of land on Goodpasture Island Road and moved the nursery to the site which would be home to the business for the next 50 years.

Harold graduated from North Eugene High School and attended the University of Oregon, but his passion from a very young age was plant materials and rhododendrons. As a teenager, he was the youngest person to be accepted into membership of the Eugene Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society and by the age of 22, he was the youngest person to ever be appointed as a Director for the American Rhododendron Society. His involvement with the international organization continued as he served in a progression of officer roles, culminating as President of the American Rhododendron Society, again as the youngest person ever to do so. Additionally, he served on many ARS committees throughout his lifetime.

Along with his love of rhododendrons, Harold possessed a talent for photography, another passion which continued throughout his lifetime. He had a very good eye for composition and color. Over the years, he photographed thousands of plant blooms, trusses, and leaves, which became the illustrations for the many articles and presentations he prepared. In addition, Harold wrote and illustrated several books about rhododendrons, the best known of which is "Greer's Guidebook To Available Rhododendrons". Harold loved to share his wealth of knowledge about the plant world

but he was always striving to learn more. In addition to the American Rhododendron Society, he belonged to the Royal Horticultural Society, the Magnolia Society, the Camellia Society and he was a board member for the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Federal Way, Washington. Harold also loved to travel and he incorporated his thirst for knowledge into the many horticultural tours he and his wife, Nancy, led Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Germany, France, England, Scotland, Ireland and the Scandinavian region over the many years of their life together.

In 2015, as Harold looked forward to retirement, he sold the Greer Gardens Nursery property to The Springs Living, a retirement and senior living company based in McMinnville, Oregon. Harold worked with the new owner, Fee Stubblefield, and his team at The Springs Living to envision and bring into existence a multi-level retirement community on the property, surrounded by beautiful gardens containing the rare and unique rhododendrons Harold had collected and nurtured during his lifetime. An additional aspect of the new construction was a new home for Harold and Nancy's comfort and enjoyment in their retirement years. The Springs at Greer Gardens will always remain as a reminder of Harold's passion for rhododendrons and beautiful gardens.

Harold is survived by his wife of 55 years, Nancy (Scott) Greer; his sister, Elizabeth Montel, of Grants Pass; his sister-in-law, Linda Southwick, of Eugene; his nephew, Scott Reese and wife, Susan, of Eugene; niece Wendy Hitztes and husband, Will, of Denver, Colorado; niece Cassie Gaudette and husband, Brian, of West Point, New York; and numerous other nieces and nephews. A Memorial Service is being planned for a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Research Foundation of the American Rhododendron Society or to the Rhododendron Species Foundation of Washington.

Cecil and Molly Smith Garden

A Video Tribute

Photography by Jay Raney and Jim Schomaker

In May of this year I received 49 beautiful photographs taken by Jim Schomaker and Jay Raney at the Cecil and Molly Smith Garden in St. Paul, Oregon. I looked at the photos and was in awe but also wondered, who are these 2 gentlemen - I have never heard their names before.

As I repeatedly looked at the pictures, I was also contemplating the best way to present them to our WCARS chapter members, those of other chapters in Oregon, and friends in Washington, Canada, England and Scotland. In my mind, the pictures needed to be in a slide show or video set with music. Since I am very technically challenged, I started with much self-learning before finally turning to an expert to assist with the end product.

I communicated with Jim and Jay about their connection to the Smith Garden and in their own words, this is what they said:

Jim: Jay and I were volunteer gardeners at Bush Park starting about 15 years ago. We soon realized that we both enjoyed photography and started to photograph together. Since we also enjoyed gardening, photographing flowers came as second nature. Your WCARS rhody group showed and sold at our plant sales and we worked on the rhodys at Bush by weeding, watering, etc. It wasn't long before our group had an outing to the Smith Rhody Garden and that was our introduction there.

On a personal level I have been photographing for over 40 years. I have 46 unites of photography at U.C. Santa Cruz, and have sold and displayed at many galleries, shows, etc.

Jay: I've been to the Smith Rhododendron Garden several times, either with my wife or with Jim Schomaker, and always with my camera. Rhododendrons are an essential part of springtime in Oregon, and of the historic gardens maintained by the Lord & Schryver Conservancy where my wife and I are volunteer gardeners. The Compton Rhododendron Garden in Bush's Pasture Park is a block from my home in Salem and we have several rhododendrons in our own garden. I'm an amateur photographer, but I've been taking images for decades. Like Jim, I prefer natural subjects - landscapes, plants and critters. Most of my photos are taken in parks, gardens and natural areas.

So with that, I would like you to sit back and watch this 4.5 minute video of the Cecil and Molly Smith Garden:

https://youtu.be/DPO_MsG4GsI

If you enjoy it as much as I did, you will want to watch it more than once.

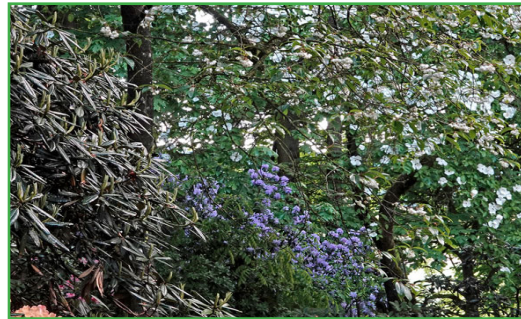


Photo by Jay Raney

Photo by Jim Schomaker



Photo by Jay Raney



Online Shopping and the ARS Store - A Reminder to Help

Anytime you shop online for just about anything, please consider first going through the American Rhododendron Society Online Store. The ARS Online Store is reached by the link <http://arsstore.org/>

On this site you will find a range of merchants who have agreed to give the American Rhododendron Society a referral fee back on each sale "referred" by ARSStore.org. Just use a link from the ARS Online Store site to go to a merchant's site and buy something like you normally would. You get the same low price and help the ARS.

MONTHLY CHAPTER MEETINGS

EUGENE CHAPTER

Third Wednesday from Oct to March at 7:30pm
The Springs at Greer Gardens, 1280 Goodpasture Island Rd, Eugene, OR

PORTLAND CHAPTER

Third Thursday from Sept to May at 7:00pm
All Saints Episcopal Church, 4033 SE Woodstock Ave, Portland, OR

SALEM HARDY PLANT SOCIETY

First Tuesday from Oct to May at 7:00pm
Dye House at Willamette Heritage Center, 1313 Mill Street SE, Salem, OR

SUISLAW CHAPTER

Third Tuesday at 7:00pm
First Presbyterian Church, 3996 Highway 101, Florence, OR

TUALATIN VALLEY CHAPTER

First Tuesday from Sept to April (except for Jan) at 6:45pm
Washington County Fire District 2, 31370 NW Commercial Street, North Plains, OR

DISTRICT 4 CHAPTER WEB SITES

Willamette Chapter	arswillamette.com
Eugene Chapter	eugene-chapter-ars.org
Portland Chapter	rhodies.org
Siuslaw Chapter	siuslawars.org
Tualatin Valley	tualatinvalleyars.org

All other web sites can be found on rhododendron.org
Under "chapters" under web sites

ARS BULLETINS are available online at:
<http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JARS/>

WILLAMETTE CHAPTER ARS AWARDS HISTORY - 1978 to 2019

GOLD ---

Herb Spady	1991
Betty Spady	2001

SILVER ---

Richard "Dick" Cavendar	2003
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BRONZE ---

June Brennan	1987
Jason Ashford	1990
Constance Hansen	1991
Betty Spady	1991
Bob Grasing	1997
Sharon Leopold	2002
Wilbur Bluhm	2006
Chuck and Maxine Dehn	2006
Keith White	2007
Helen Malby	2008
Anne Gross	2009
Dick and Carol Lundin	2011
Wally and Kathy Reed	2012
Syd and Don Werminger	2013
Dick and Carol Lundin	2019
Mary B. Crofts	2019
Roger and Kathy Lintault	2019

WILLAMETTE CHAPTER OFFICERS

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