

WILLAMETTE CHAPTER AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

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CHAPTER MEETING OCTOBER 9, 2019

7:00 pm in the Carrier room (600 State Street entrance) of the
First Methodist Church on the corner of Church and State Streets, Salem

Speaker: John Poole
Peonies: The Revelations of a Gentleman
Who Tells

ALL VISITORS WELCOME

NEWSLETTER

Willamette Chapter American Rhododendron Society

Volume 15

October 9, 2019

Issue 130

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 9, 2019	John Poole	Peonies: The Revelations of a Gentleman Who Tells
November 13, 2019		
December 8, 2019	Wally & Kathy Reed	Christmas Potluck
January , 2020		
February , 2020		
March , 2020		
April , 2020		
May , 2020		
June , 2020		

MINUTES - WILLAMETTE CHAPTER ARS September 18, 2019

We were all back together again, happily enjoying the food at our current watering-hole, The Ram. Since this was the first supper since last May, we had a lot to catch up on. Some of us had rhody "adventures" of one sort or the other as usual. The only thing unusual about our September meeting time was that it was a week later, i.e. not on our usual second Weds, of the month. By meeting on the third Weds, we were able to have Tim Walsh as our speaker and we were all happy with that.

So we met at the Carrier Room at First Methodist as usual, and enjoyed the delicious cookies baked for us with love by Susan Doellinger and the coffee provided by Mary Ellen White. Our President-For-Life, Wally Reed whacked his gavel at 7 pm sharp and, for a change, everyone settled down pretty fast, coffee and cookies in hand.

First, our ARS dues for 2020 are due. Dana Malby, esteemed Treasurer, is awaiting our checks, cash, and/or credit card payment. If you're paying by credit card, check the latest copy of the newsletter as directions for doing so are in there and clear enough that even your Secretary could follow them. You'll need your ARS membership number and if you don't have it or remember it, it's found on the outside cover of the ARS Journal. Make sure your dues

are in Dana's hands SOON so he won't have to get "rough" with you.....

The August potluck at Smith Garden was "wonderful" as always. There will be another work party for Smith on Saturday, October 26th so save that date. Keep it open. Be there. Work parties always entail food as well as work and enjoyable company.

Our annual Christmas Potluck will be held at Kathy and Wally Reed's beautiful home, as usual, but the date will NOT be the first day in December because that's the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Instead we will be having it the next Sunday, December 8th. Another date to be sure to save is for the ARS 75th Anniversary Convention to be held in Vancouver, Washington on April 30 - May 3. The Journal will have a lot more information, probably in the next edition. Plan to make reservations for the convention and for the Heathman Hotel in Portland when it becomes available, as this will be a very well-attended convention.

Our faithful and most excellent newsletter Editor, Dick Lundin, has retired from that office. Or...at least he WANTS to retire, but he doesn't have anyone to take his place. So this is an appeal to all of you to truly consider taking over for Dick, or one of these days there might no be a newsletter. Dick will happily train what ever warm body (or even not so

warm) to do it and then he can REALLY retire. Keith and Mary Ellen White now have the WCARS Library at their home. Actually, it is in the garage which is very large. Dick and Carol Lundin have had it at their house for eons and it had to go when they "downsized" from their large acreage to a smaller dwelling. (Now if he could just as easily move the newsletter stuff....) Keith plans to bring a selection of books from the library to each meeting. His "rules" on checking them out is that you list your name, the name of the book, and the date of same so the library can be managed but used by members as well.

Keith is also sort of "in charge" of orders we make to the RSBG. He has good connections there and can easily expedite any orders we make from them. There being no further announcements (Dick Caver was absent...), Wally went into "unfinished business" from our May Potluck meeting. First, he held up a lovely dish towel with flowers on it that was left at the Whites, unclaimed.

Second, and very important, was the presentation of the Bronze Medal to Roger and Kathy Lintault in recognition of all their work for our Chapter and for Kathy's web site. This presentation couldn't be made at the May Potluck meeting because they were absent. They join the other recipients of Bronze Medals for the year: Carol and Dick Lundin and moi, your Secretary. (My certificate is on the wall of my living room and the Medal is safely with me at all times as I'm very proud of the honor.)

Keith, now wearing the Program Chair Hat, introduced our evening's speaker, Tim Walsh and his delightful wife, June, who navigated his slides and did a super job. (Usually the slides or photographs get sort of "off-kilter" right at the start or half-way through.) June is the recipient of an ARS GOLD medal, which is the highest award an ARS member can receive and indicates A LOT of hard work on her part for the ARS.

Tim and June are from Eureka, California where they have a superb garden of their own. Keith noted that they have attended EVERY Conference no matter where it is held. Tim has an interesting background, especially how he first got the "rhody bug". His Dad was a dentist so he used to pluck off branches of the thousands (literally) of R. Countess

of Derby that grew all over the Eureka area, and then sell them to people for candy money! He is currently District 5 Director and is "thoroughly Rhodo-holic". In 1991 he was asked to join other flower lovers in making what is now the Humboldt Botanic Garden. And it is almost totally managed by the effort of volunteers.

His talk was entitled "Rhododendrons A to Z" but although he did name some rhodys in alphabetical order, he included other rhodys as well, but NOT in alphabetical order. And since most of these rhodys (and other plants) are in the Humboldt Botanical Garden, I'll start there. Said earlier, Tim is one of the founding fathers of the garden. He and fellow founders started the garden "from scratch". And it has grown and is still growing as the Humboldt area has a "great botanical climate". It has a cool temperate winter and a dry hot summer.

Many of the plants start their lives in the huge Glass Houses which were donated to the garden by someone and I apologize that I missed the name of said person and/or group that did this as it's enabled the Garden to really flourish. The Glass Houses provide and very big and tall and provide about 300,000 square feet in which to grow plants that might not survive otherwise. Among those plants are the vireyas as they prefer the "warm and dry" climate all year. Since one of the objectives of the Garden is to be a place of learning, students from Humboldt State College help at the garden as well as learn about the plants there. Every two weeks, inmates from the local prison come to work and do a really good job, and are part of the volunteers that compose the major staff and "worker-bees" for the Garden.

Other areas of the garden include an ornamental A heather garden is another featured planting along with a Temperate Woodland Garden (the Moss Family Garden). It was started in the late 2000s and is proceeding slowly but steadily to develop. An Iris Garden composing mainly Iris Douglas Ana is yet another area. The irises are native to Humboldt and were there when the Garden was started. Volunteers dug them all up and then replanted in refurbished soil and now are doing beautifully.

So what if Tim's Rhodys are A to Z?

PEONIES

The Revelations of A Gentleman Who Tells

John Poole has been growing peonies since the late 1980s when he had to give up his greenhouse moving to a new residence where the property could not sustain a viable orchid house. John had been growing orchids since 1966 in his own greenhouse. John had taken an upper division botany course during college where he performed tissue culture, "meristemming", of cymbidium orchids with the success that may be expected of a 12 week endeavor. John had trained as a judge in the American Orchid Society judging program but soon realized he did not possess the mental capacity to remember Latin names, was not willing to sacrifice his weekends and had to give priority to his ever-expanding family obligations. He started growing peonies in his native Pasadena, California where it was thought they could not grow. He later moved to the Bay Area and since 2007 has been growing them in Napa, California. John and his wife, Juliana Inman, moved to Court Street NE, Salem, in 2017, and brought with them about 100 peonies dug up from their Napa garden. Since John and Juli's arrival to the Promised Land of Horticulture, his fervor in acquiring new plants became unbridled and his collection began to outgrow their home mandating the 2019 acquisition of adjacent land to their home to accommodate the expanding collection. And then John learned where he could purchase peonies "wholesale" from Alaska.

John is a principal software engineer at Oracle Corporation having been with the company over 20 years. John specializes in supporting the company's documentation teams using XML technology and leveraging re-use of content to realize savings in translation costs; in addition John has become an avid enthusiast of open source software and maintains Gentoo Linux servers and virtual machines while contributing and adopting various open source projects. John is also an attorney licensed in California. John shoots with Nikon. Juliana shoots with Nikon, but mostly with her phone and documents the couple's garden on social media. John is cur-

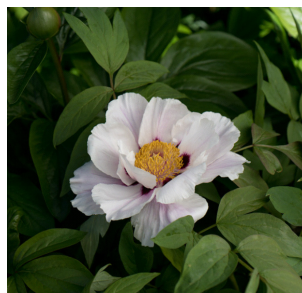
rently erecting a 12' x 22' aluminum greenhouse to house cattleya orchids, plant propagation and his citrus collection. John is also a gentleman sawyer which feeds his woodworking habit with emphasis on the American Arts & Crafts movement (Greene & Greene). Finally, John is an avid pianist who collects and publishes 2 piano 8 hand music and convenes highly proficient piano sight readers to explore *á tempo* his transcriptions of all the major Romantic symphonic works arranged for piano duet, 2 piano 4 hands, and 2 piano, 8 hands published under his publishing empire, Editions Poole. During his vacations, John would travel to libraries across the United States with his laptop computer and 11"x17" professional scanner and scan rare piano sheet music; he has scanned over 20,000 pages and now has one of the finest collections of 2 piano 8 hand sheet music in the United States. And John cooks and makes ice cream.

Disclaimer: In the matter of peonies, John has not been certified by any regulatory agency or authority, nor has he received any awards, credentials, or degrees in peony propagation. Consequently, his credentials remain unvalidated and self-promulgated and any advice rendered is solely speculative and adoption thereof is at the risk of the listener.

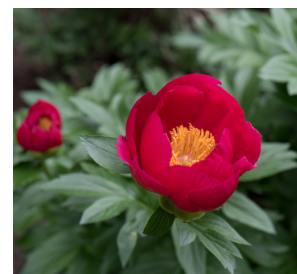
Tree Peony;
Toichi Ruby



Tree Peony;
Joseph Rock



Peony;
Little Corporal



Terrace with a "Rainbow of colored perennials. They have native plant garden where they grow mariposas lilies. A very special feature is an "Earth Sculpture" called "Fermat's Spiral". How to describe it? The photos didn't do it justice because in one it looks like a flat surface with grooves in it, but you can also see that the people in the background are smaller further away. The Sculpture Is based on an actual "thermo" and it much larger than it appears to be.

So what if Tim's Rhodys are A to Z?

First, is

R. ABERCONWAYI (a native species?) a beautiful almost stark white flower

R. MACROPHYLUM which don't do well in Eureka for some unknown reason. (They don't do well on Marten Ridge east of Eugene near Vida.)

R. OCCIDENTALE which is especially beautiful on Stage Couch Hill about 50 miles North of Eureka on Highway 101, with all of their many color schemes.

There are some vireyas: R KONORI with it's powerful and pleasant scent and R. POLYANTHEMUM which is a big orange ball of flowers per truss

R. QUINQUEFOLIUM which has red-tinged leaf edges.

R. PACHYSANTHUM with its rusty orange indumentum.

R. CAMPANULATUM whose leaves have a beautiful blue-toned oval leaves.

R. SINOGRANDE with leaves 30 inches long and 10 inches wide. (I kid you not.)

R. SINONUTTALII with magenta -colored new growth.

R. EDGEWORTHII which is very fragrant large whitish flowers the bloom like trumpets.

R. MADDENIIS: plans are to acquire all of the 25 or so species and already have a lot.

R. FORMOSUM which grows like a weed but smells so good.

Among the Walsh's favorites, both rhodys and other plants are:

CORDYLINEAR which grew 8' in 2 years

CORNUS KOUSA: the "Wolf Eye" dogwood. (I should have asked him why a dogwood tree has such a name but I forgot to do so and he never said and no one else ever asked so that shall remain a

mystery.)

TRILLIUM "Volcano" CHLDROPETALUM: a large plant with red flowers.

BLUE MEONOPSIS: the ever glorious blue poppy. It MUST have COOL summers which is not so in Eureka. The best of the blues: 'LINGHOLM'. Another poppy is the CAMBRICA with small yellow flowers. (I'm thinking that, from the name Cambric, it could be the Welsh poppy that I loved so much and lost in a bad winter. You know the kind...the freezy icy snowy kind unlike the mild winters we have now thanks to global warming.)

He also likes R. ARBORIUM which can grow to 200 feet, and R. EXASPERATUM WHICH IS STILL YEARS FROM BLOOMING FOR THE FIRST TIME.

A favorite tree is WOLLEMIA NOBILUS which used to be "the rarest tree on eBay". It's tall and skinny with long somewhat droopy branches with long somewhat droopy needles but still very pretty.

The Walsh's have started a "fern dell" full of beautiful ferns, some being very large. And although this isn't exactly "A to Z", there IS a "Z" rhody: R. ZEYLANICUM which Tim didn't talk about and I couldn't look up because I don't have a strictly rhody book anymore.

It was a great talk with many beautiful photos of all the plants, and I admit it, I did miss some along the way. A very big thanks to Tim and June.

While the rest of the refreshments were being polished off, we had our first raffle of the evening. Keith White brought in two baby peony plants. This kind can grow to 10 feet tall. The luck winners, one baby each, went to John Poole and Julie who GROW peonies for a living! Very fitting!!

Respectfully submitted:

Mary Crofts - Secretary - WCARS

Refreshments for October

Lundins

**WATCH
FOR IT**

**NOV.
NL**



Azaleas and Rhododendrons for Minnesota and Wisconsin

Azaleas and rhododendrons, best known for their showy, colorful flowers, can be used in many Minnesota landscapes if the proper species and cultivars are selected. Botanically, azaleas and rhododendrons belong to the genus *Rhododendron*. This genus is one of the largest genera of woody plants, containing over 800 species. The terms azalea and rhododendron are general terms used to describe subgroups within the genus. Azaleas that survive in Minnesota and Wisconsin can fit in one of the two categories but, as always, there are exceptions. *Rhododendron mucronulatum*, which is hardy in Minnesota and Wisconsin, is considered a rhododendron, although it is deciduous.

SITE SELECTION

The ability to successfully grow azaleas and rhododendrons depends on site selection and preparation. For azaleas, an area with full sun to partial sun is preferable although they will tolerate slight shade. The evergreen rhododendrons will tolerate more shade than azaleas and need protection from winter sun to prevent leaf burn. Azaleas and rhododendrons are also sensitive to extreme heat. Try to avoid selection areas such as an exposed south side of a house where heat is reflected and can build up. Also avoid areas where wind and root competition could be problems. Because of their very shallow, fibrous root systems, azaleas and rhododendrons tend to dry out rapidly and will require watering during dry periods, especially during hot summer days. With this need for irrigation, a site with good drainage is a must. Poor drainage can result in root rot caused by many species of the fungus *Phytophthora*. Azaleas and rhododendrons require an acid soil for best growth. If your soil is not acidic, the addition of acid peat, sulfur, or ferrous sulfate can lower the pH. A pH of 4.0 to 5.5 is optimum. Organic matter should also be added liberally to the soil. Compost, manure, sawdust, or acid peat moss will provide necessary organic matter. **PLANTING** When planting, it is important not to plant too deep. Most rhododendron roots are within the upper four

to six inches of soil and should not be buried any deeper than they were previously growing. Dig a shallow hole and backfill around the plant with acid peat. Once planted, azaleas and rhododendrons can be fertilized once or twice a year during spring or summer with an acid fertilizer. Ammonium sulfate or special azalea fertilizers are available. The use of a mulch is extremely beneficial. It will help retain water within the soil during hot, dry periods, modify the soil temperature, and inhibit weeds. Deep cultivation and hoeing disturb the shallow root system, so a mulch is preferable.

PESTS

In our climate, azaleas and rhododendrons do not have many serious pest problems and a scheduled spray program is not necessary. Powdery mildew may need to be controlled in years with hot, humid summers. Chlorotic foliage may indicate that the soil is too alkaline and needs further acidification. If proper species and cultivars are chosen, no winter protection is needed other than that used to discourage rabbits and mice. A cylinder of hardware cloth prevents feeding by rodents.

RECOMMENDED SPECIES & CULTIVARS

The following list of azaleas and rhododendrons are recommended for Minnesota and Wisconsin landscapes. There are other species and cultivars that do survive here, but they are not recommended due to borderline hardiness, poor form, or lack of availability. Because flower buds are the least cold hardy part of the plant and flower show is the primary landscape value, cold hardiness ratings used in this discussion refer to flower bud hardiness. Most harsh winters that will kill flower buds will not injure the vegetative part of the plant and will not affect the ability of the plant to form flower buds for the next year. *Rhododendron x kosterranum* (mollis azaleas). This hybrid species is often labeled *Rhododendron mollis* in the nursery trade. Mollis azaleas are extremely showy, blooming in late May with flower colors in shades of yellows, oranges, and reds. Mollis azaleas are flower bud hardy to -20° to -25° F, and will bloom well most years in the Twin City area and south. A particular strain of mollis azalea that has

been selected for hardiness by the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum is sold by Minnesota and Wisconsin nurseries. At maturity, mollis azaleas will have a height and spread of approximately six to eight feet. *Rhododendron mucronulatum* (Korean rhododendron). This is a deciduous rhododendron with excellent cold hardiness. *Rhododendron mucronulatum* is native to Korea, China, and Japan. It blooms in early May and can sometimes be hit by a late frost. The flowers are magenta colored and appear before the leaves, giving a bright floral show. A pink flowered form of this species, equally hardy, is a cultivar called 'Cornell Pink'. Northern Lights Series of hybrid azaleas. This is a series of hybrid azaleas being developed and released by the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. Any azalea released and included in this series will have flower bud hardiness of -30° to -45° F to withstand Minnesota winters. As the azalea breeding program continues, new selections will become available and will be denoted by a cultivar name that includes 'lights'. Current named cultivars include:

1. Northern Lights F1 hybrid seedlings. These azaleas are derived from a cross between *Rhododendron x kosteranum* and *Rhododendron prinophyllum*, and were first commercially available in 1978. The plants are extremely floriferous, with each seedling flowering in a shade of pink, giving a fantastic floral show in late May. The flowers have a sweet fragrance. Mature height and spread are six to eight feet.
2. *Rhododendron* 'Pink Lights' ('Pink Lights' azalea). 'Pink Lights' azalea is a clonal selection from the Northern Lights seedling azaleas, with light pink flower color. 'Pink Lights', like the northern Lights seedling, is hardy to -45°F with mature height and spread of eight feet. 'Pink Lights' has a sweet floral scent and is extremely floriferous. 'Pink Lights' was introduced by the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in 1984.
3. *Rhododendron* 'Rosy Lights' ('Rosy Lights' azalea). 'Rosy Lights' azalea is a clonal selection from the Northern Lights seedling azaleas with deep rosy pink flower color. 'Rosy Lights', like

the Northern Lights seedlings, is extremely hardy with mature height and spread of eight feet. 'Rosy Lights' is extremely floriferous. 'Rosy Lights' was introduced by the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in 1984.

4. *Rhododendron* 'White Lights' ('White Lights' azalea). 'White Lights' azalea is a hybrid of *Rhododendron prinophyllum* background introduced by the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum in 1984. Its flower bud hardiness is rated at -35°F. This cultivar is extremely floriferous forming many trusses of white flowers with a light yellow blotch. The flower buds do have a pink cast to them but open to give a white effect. 'White Lights' reaches a height and spread of five feet.
5. *Rhododendron* 'PJM'. PJM rhododendron is a hybrid resulting from crossing *Rhododendron carolinianum* and *Rhododendron dauricum*. It is an evergreen rhododendron that has very attractive small dark green leaves and lavender pink flowers. This cultivar is very hardy, (-35°F) and prefers a sandy soil to a clay soil. P.J.M. are the initials of P.J. Mezitt, the hybridizer of this cultivar.
6. *Rhododendron prinophyllum* (Rose-shell azalea). This species is synonymous with *Rhododendron roseum*. This azalea is native from Maine to Virginia and as far west as Missouri. The flower buds are hardy to - 40°F. The plant is small (three feet) with very fragrant white to rose pink flowers that bloom in late May. The plants are heat sensitive and do better in slight shade than other azaleas. *Rhododendron prinophyllum* is one of the parents of the Northern Lights hybrids.
7. *Rhododendron vaseyi* (Pinkshell azalea). This species blooms from early to mid-May in Minnesota before its foliage emerges. With delicate pale pink flowers and an open form it fits well into naturalistic settings. *Rhododendron vaseyi* is an extremely hardy species with flower buds rated at -35°to -40°F.

Rhododendron Exbury hybrids.

These azalea hybrids are not reliably hardy in

Minnesota and Wisconsin as the flower buds are killed at -15° to -20° F. Other cultivars listed above are more adapted for Minnesota and Wisconsin and should be used instead.

**ONLINE SHOPPING AND THE ARS STORE
A REMINDER TO HELP FUND THE ARS**

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 very wide range of merchants who have agreed to give the American Rhododendron Society a referral fee of 4% to 25% 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. Wally Reed - President

**MONTHLY EVENTS
EUGENE CHAPTER**

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

SIUSLAW CHAPTER

First Presbyterian Church 3996 Highway 101, Florence, OR

Third Tuesday of the month at 7 pm.

PORTLAND CHAPTER

All Saints Episcopal Church

4033 SE Woodstock Ave, Portland, OR

Third Thursday, and the program begins at 7 pm.

SALEM HARDY PLANT SOCIETY

First Tuesday of the month 7:00pm

Salem Heights Community Hall

3505 Liberty Road S.

TUALATIN VALLEY CHAPTER

First Tuesday of the month at 7 pm Washington County

Fire District 2 31370 NW Commercial Street

North Plains, OR 97133

DISTRICT 4 CHAPTER WEB SITES

Arswillamette.org

eugene-chapter-ars.org

rhodies.org (Portland)

siuslawars.org

sworegonars.org

tuatitinvalleyars.org

All other web sites can be found on

rhododendron.org

Under chapters under web sites



Phyllis Korn

Flower/Truss Description: Flower openly funnel shaped, wavy lobes, 4" across, white with red dorsal blotch which fades to light greenish-yellow with age. Held in trusses of 12 flowers.

Fragrant: No

Bloom Time: Midseason

Foliage Description / Plant Habit: Leaves elliptic to near ovate, 6" long, glossy, dark green, retained 2 years. Upright, sturdy, well-branched shrub.

Height: 5 feet in 10 years.

Cold Hardiness Temp: -15° F (-26°)

Parentage (seed parent x Pollen parent):

Diane x Gomer Waterer

Elepidote (E) or Lepidote (L): E

Hybridized or Selected by: Korn

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