

# Willamette Chapter American Rhododendron Society Newsletter

Volume 2

Issue 9

## CHAPTER MEETING December 13, 2020

The Zoom meeting will start at 1:00pm. Since we aren't having the "in person" potluck dinner this year, feel free to join the meeting with your own potluck meal, including beverage of choice, on a TV tray (if you remember what that is).

The meeting will consist of socializing, catching up on what has, and is happening with all of us, sharing pictures of your yard during the past 9 months, trips taken, etc. (I'm hoping John Poole will play one of his original compositions)

The Zoom link for the meeting is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89197786445>



Light-O-Dendron  
Display at Shore  
Acres State Park  
in Coos Bay, OR

Turn your speaker up and Click on the following link to see a video of Shore Acres State Park lit up for Christmas. Please disregard the advertising and concentrate on the video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b8UJBx38pis>

# November Minutes

## Mary Crofts - Secretary November 11, 2020

Once again we met via "Zoom", starting with a "social-half-hour" from 6:30 to 7 PM. It was more like 7:15 when Wally Reed, our beloved Prez-4-Life, officially welcomed all to the meeting. He commented on several attendees who "traveled" quite a way to be with us, but the prize (had there been one) went to Marc Colombel who joined us at 4 AM, his time which I think was in France.

Zoom does make it much easier for more people to join us, especially those who live miles away from us, but your Secretary is still trying to wrap her brain around Zoom meetings. They do have several other features that are a "plus". You can wear your pjs if you want, or even attend in your "birthday suit" , provided you turn your camera off. That depends on how many "birthdays" you've had, I guess. You can sleep through a meeting or eat your supper or read a book or watch TV or do all sorts of things, while still keeping an eye and an ear on your computer. But what you can't do is give your friends a hug or a hand-shake. Or compliment whoever made the cookie you're devouring, on how good it tastes. Or catch up one-on-one with other members on their lives or latest adventure. There's no reason to wear a new dress or pair of slacks when you're just in a room in your home. (And your bed doesn't need to be made either!) Zoom is pretty close to "being there" but it's not the same. I truly hope we don't get so used to Zoom, that it totally replaces meeting in person. I'm already missing complimenting Dick Lundin or Karen Cavender or any of our other super-good cookie bakers on how delicious that cookie was. My sermon is now finished and on to the minutes.

After Wally's welcome, he discussed our up-coming annual Christmas Potluck, which is still in question as to how to do it safely and protect everyone who attends. Sadly there were no constructive suggestions as to how to accomplish this. This pandemic has left us with very few choices. And having a Zoom Potluck is pretty much out of the question. So Wally introduced our Program Chair, Keith White, who introduced our evening's speaker, Gisele Schoniger, who is the Product Educator for Kellogg Garden Products, the makers of wonderful organic soil that we can use in our gardens and KNOW there are no nasty ingredients in it. Gisele has worked for Kellogg for 20 years and loves her job. I'd love to say that Gisele has worked for Kellogg from the ground up (no pun intended) but that wouldn't be possible since the company was founded by the Kellogg family in 1925. And no...for those of you not at the meeting, Kellogg Organic Soil and Kellogg cereal are not produced by the same Kelloggs.

Gisele's Kellogg "uses water" and Kellogg cereal "uses milk". Grandpa Kellogg was "pals" with Walt Disney and provided him with the organic soil he used in his parks. The company is now in its 4th generation of the Kellogg family.

If you were like me, you'd figure that, basically, when you purchase a bag of soil, Kellogg or otherwise, they had just scooped it out of a huge pile and put it into attractive bags for us to buy and use. Not so. Kellogg company has to "make" their soil and this starts long before we buy it. The ingredients that make their soil, are mixed in large "plots" or "pits" , sort of like gardens within a huge soil garden. Every "bat" of soil has to be "turned" at least 6 times before it is ready to put into bags for us to buy. I didn't count how many varieties of organic soil they make when she showed them all together, but I'm guessing about 10. Each has its own purpose and its own set of ingredients, just like Susan Doellinger might have when she's getting her Christmas cookies ready to send to family.

The pandemic plus a growing awareness of global warming has created an increase in doing organic gardening. At the start of the pandemic, seed packets all but disappeared from the shelves. The purchase of house plants has also gone up. People are looking more at drought-tolerant plants for their gardens, and more people are gardening to encourage wild-life. With the boom of apartment-building we're experiencing, the high-rise dwellers are putting raised beds on their balconies. The pandemic has started some weird sort of hoarding... store shelves emptied of toilet paper and sweet-pea seed packets.

Some areas of cities are growing more public gardens. Kellogg is partnering with the rhody society in Eureka, CA, to put together the Humboldt Hospice Garden, thus helping their community in two ways: parks and assisting others. Kellogg has partnered with Gisele's adopted home town of Castle Rock, WA, to make huge hanging pots for their lamp posts. She also showed us her own rhody, a giant 35' R. Christine.

Kellogg produces soil, not dirt (dirt is what you get under your nails - soil is a living thing that nurtures your plants). The quality top-soil that pioneers found here has been planted over and over so many times that the natural nutrients have been depleted. Pouring on inorganic fertilizers will not resuscitate what is becoming dirt. This only allows the dirt to grow narrow monocultures. Soil scientists predict that we have only 60 years of harvests left until our local soils are completely depleted.

Gisele went on to talk about soil health, which is, she says "much more complex" than most of us realize. It would help to be a scientist, or a biologist, or a Master-

Gardener to really appreciate what she was saying. I did understand her "formula" for soil, but now that I look at my notes, I think your Secretary's brain drifted off somewhere for part of it...probably went for another cup of coffee. Anyway, ideal soil has 25% air, 20% water, 10% organic material, and 4% sand, silt and clay. What the other 41% was, I didn't write down. But it's pretty easy to figure out that our soil probably isn't as healthy as it should be. "Soil is sort of the skin of the world" and we aren't taking very good care of it. We need to "mimic Mother Nature" in soil care. We tend to consider it normal to use sprays on plants. It's not. Soil needs microbes and spraying kills them. Good soil has earthworms, fungi, protozoa, bacteria, etc.. The critters break down organic matter and make the nutrients that feed plants. They also build good soil structure and suppress diseases.

She recommends mulching our beds as mulch is a natural fertilizer. Putting organic matter in our garden is called "cold top-down gardening". One thing Gisele recommends as a mulch is kelp. I don't know that my dad used kelp, but I know he used seaweed. We lived by the beach and at times seaweed would cover the sand. And it was cheap.

Gisele closed with descriptions of the various organic soils made by the Kellogg "factory". And thus, ended a surprisingly (to me) talk about something I've pretty much taken for granted. Not any more. Thanks, Gisele ! Some people lingered on to visit longer but there was no mad last-time dash to finish off the last of the cookies.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Mary Crofts -Secretary-WCARS**

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**Since this is December, I definitely think I would be remiss if I didn't include this picture of Rhododendron Christmas Cheer.**



# Pretty in Pink

## A Teasing for What is to Come

The following are a few pictures from Ali Sarlak's yard. I hope this is just an enticement for what he will show at our December meeting on the 13th.



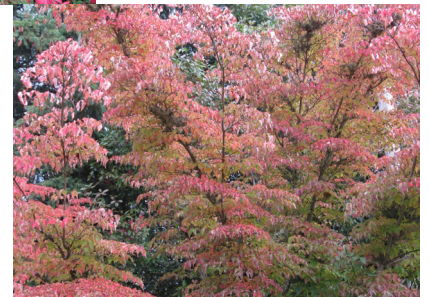
**Rhododendron  
Isola Bella**

**Japanese Maple**



**Euonymus alatus**

**Japanese Maple**



**Parrotia persica**

**Kousa Dogwood**



# Review of Two Outstanding Programs

**Editors Note: If you are not familiar with the language of Rhodonese, you might find the first review causes your eyes to cross and brain fog to set in.**

There were two great programs, both National Geographic quality, given last month.

The first was the Eugene Chapter ARS meeting on November 18, featuring Harold Greer. The title was "The World In Your Garden. The descriptor for the program was: "Harold will share pictures and information about where our rhododendrons originate and how much of the world is actually represented in our gardens". Harold first showed maps of the area he was describing. Starting in Turkey and the Caucuses, were *R. luteum* and *R. smirnowii*, *R. caucasicum* and several others. Then Europe: *R. ponticum* (speculating on which form is the nasty invasive species), the alpenrose, *R. ferrugineum* and related species. Then Eastern North America, represented by the deciduous azaleas such as *R. canadense*, *R. arborescens*, *R. calendulaceum*, *R. atlanticum*, about 15 species in all. Also the elepidotes *R. maximum* and *R. catawbiense*. In NW north America *R. macrophyllum*, *R. occidentale*, *R. albiflorum*, and what was *Ledum* now all incorporated into *Rhododendron*. In Japan, the evergreen azaleas, *R. sanctum*, *R. pentaphyllum*, *R. quinquefolium* and their relatives as well as the elepidotes, *R. degronianum* which has several subspecies including *R. degronianum* ssp *yakusimanum*. In Korea, *R. schippenbachii*, the Royal Korean azalea. From S.E Asia Pacific are most of the Vireyas. From E China *R. honkongense* and *R. simsii*. If you think I am going overboard on species names, I assure you that I am only scratching the surface of what Harold showed us in less than an hour. From Taiwan *R. pseudochrisanthum* et al. From W China a plethora of species including *R. augustinii* and several other triflorums, *R. strigillosum*, *R. orbiculare*, and many, many more. From Tibet, *R. cerasinum*, *R. pumilum*, *R. forestii* var *repens*. From the Himalayas of India, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, Arunachal Pradesh come *R. arboreum*, *R. barbatum*, *R. niveum*, *R. thomsonii*, *R. cililatum*, *R. campylocarpum*, *R. hodgsonii*, *R. wightii*, *R. lanatum* and way too many more to name. I likely left out some geographical region. I did leave out E Russia with *R. dauricum* and in W Russia those species in the Caucuses. But about this program I can certainly say it was around the world in more than 80 excellent photographs.

The second program was given to the Portland Chapter on November 19th by Mike Stewart. The title: Botanical Gems And Their Journey To Your Garden. The program description: Mike will focus on plant exploration on the North American continent with a special emphasis on the

the Pacific Northwest and the adventures and discoveries of the great Scottish botanist, David Douglas. As usual, Mike made a scholarly investigation very interesting and enjoyable. He made his way quickly to the topic of David Douglas. After seeing this program, in which Mike delved deeply into the history and environment and the fantastic foot journeys of David Douglas and photos and maps that beautifully illustrated the topic, I can say that Mike put the Wikipedia entry on David Douglas to shame. In brief review, David Douglas was born to parents of simple means in Scone Scotland in 1799. He left regular school at a young age after which he worked his way up through several years of garden apprenticeships to the Botanical Gardens of Glasgow University. There he attended botany lectures. He was noticed by and became the protégé of the famous botanist, William Jackson Hooker, who was Garden Director and Professor of Botany. Hooker took Douglas on a plant hunting expedition in the highlands of Scotland and subsequently recommended him to the Royal Horticultural Society of London. Douglas made 3 plant hunting expeditions to North America. The first, in 1823 was to the eastern side of the continent, returning home that same year. The second expedition to the Pacific Northwest was from 1824 through 1827. The Royal Horticultural Society had sent him on what became one of the greatest botanical expeditions of all time. To end this expedition he made his way from Oregon, thousands of miles to a fur trading outpost on Hudsons Bay, mostly on foot. The third expedition started in 1829. He travelled to the Columbia River, then down the West Coast to San Francisco and then to Hawaii, back and forth until 1834. He was the first westerner to climb Mauna Loa (13,000 ft +). He collected and described many plants there. While scaling Mauna Kea he fell into a pit trap meant to capture bulls and was killed by a bull that fell into the same trap. Over the course of his short but very productive career Douglas introduced hundreds of plants to Great Britain. There are approximately 80 species of plants named after him. In our area he is commemorated by the most valuable timber species, the Douglas Fir (ironically given the botanical name of *Pseudotsuga menziesii* after another contemporary botanist, Archibald Menzies, who is credited with the discovery of *R. macrophyllum*). I recognize the Douglas tree squirrel and the widespread *Iris douglassii*, which blooms at the margins of my garden. All in all this was a very engaging program by Mike, who could have a second or third career as a professional program writer and narrator.

Both of these programs were recorded via Zoom and may be made available by the Eugene and Portland chapters of the ARS.

Those of you who have not been participating in Zoom meetings are missing out on programs that you could easily see. One's computer need not have a camera. You can use an ipad or cell phone to see these programs live.

I will be happy to teach any of you who have not yet tried this.

**Keith White**

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# Finest Gardens of England and Scotland

## A Zoom Program by Steve Hootman

This presentation is just one of a number of opportunities to join in some informative, educational, and entertaining Zoom programs this month.



**From Cumbria to Argyll: A Plantsman's tour of some of the finest gardens in northern England and Scotland.**

**Thursday, December 17, 2020  
5:00 pm - 6:30 pm  
\$10 Members, \$20 non-Members**



Escape the doldrums of winter and join Steve Hootman for a springtime tour of some of the most beautiful gardens in the United Kingdom including Muncaster, Stonefield Castle, Crarae, Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh and Glendoick among many others. The talk will be followed by a moderated Q&A.

For more information and to register, click here:  
<https://rhodygarden.org/events/zoom-talk-from-cumbria-to-argyll-a-plantsman-e2-80-99s-tour-of-some-of-the-finest-gardens-in-england-and-scotland/>

### **Jingle Bells, Jingle Bells, Jingle all the Way**

With a name like Jingle Bells, it seems this hybrid rhododendron should be red and bloom in December but that is not the case. It blooms in late spring and the flowers are tubular funnel-shaped, 3" across, orange with vivid red throat, orange fades to light yellow with age. Black anthers and stigma. Held in lax truss of 8-10 flowers. It prefers semi shade with a peaty acidic soil.



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## Other Zoom Opportunities this Month

From the **Portland Chapter** there are two Zoom Presentations:

Portland Chapter members Ray and Ann Clack are the new managers of the ARS Seed Exchange. Ann and Ray will be hosting the meeting. This is the time when seed is being donated to the Exchange in advance of Seed sales and distribution in the Spring. Details here:

### **"Growing Rhododendrons from Seed" hosted by Ann and Ray Clack**

Guest Speaker: Doug Keough

7pm, Thursday, December 10

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81293967072>

Meeting ID: 812 9396 7072

One tap mobile: +12532158782,,81293967072#

### **Regular Portland Chapter Meeting**

You're invited to the regular ARS Portland Chapter meeting. This Zoom meeting will feature selected images from our members who we welcome to share special garden photos or other favorite moments from the past year—hobbies, travels, etc

Program: Member Slides

7pm, Thursday, December 17

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89733059492>

Meeting ID: 897 3305 9492

**5** One tap mobile: +13462487799,,89733059492#

It seems many Chapters are featuring member get togethers and sharing of pictures, events, travels, etc.

### Eugene Chapter Meeting

You Are Invited!

Eugene ARS Chapter Meeting for December

Wednesday, December 16

6:30 pm/Social; 7:00 pm/Meeting and Program

Program Topic: Member Show & Tell ... a slide show of flowers, gardens and projects, among other things, as submitted by our members.

ZOOM Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81001009130?pwd=YVRMd2N6ajBVdk1IcG1kMXc5R1lwdz09>

Meeting ID: 810 0100 9130 Passcode: 871907

**Editor's Note:** Keith took pictures of a few "bloomings" in our yard this past Sunday. I think he wants me to post them to the newsletter so he can show a video of his knee replacement surgery at our "December Zoom meeting" instead of these pictures.



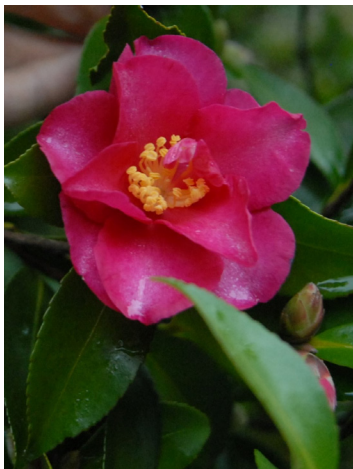
**R. luteum  
Golden Comet**



**Whitney's Peach**



**2 Sasanqua Camelia's**



# Dues Are Still Due and We Are Way Behind

I'm getting tired of putting this announcement in the newsletter every month. If paying your dues has just been an oversight, please submit your check as directed:

**Please Note: IF USING A CHECK, our Maps Credit Union is now requiring that our Chapter's FULL name, "Willamette Chapter American Rhododendron Society", NOT WCARS, be written on the check or they won't be able to accept it. Please write really small if you can.**

**Please Note: ASSOCIATE MEMBERS CAN ONLY renew through Dana Malby by cash or check, So, please get out your pen and check book and USPS mail.**

**Regular Membership in ARS and**

Willamette Chapter ARS.....\$40

Associate Membership WCARS

(Must have a Home Chapter memship).....\$10

Please write a check to **Willamette Chapter American Rhododendron Society, NOT WCARS** for the appropriate amount and mail to:

Willamette Chapter ARS  
C/O Dana Malby, Treasurer  
3910 Brooks Ave. NE  
Salem, OR 97303-4024

There is more detail regarding paying online or via mail in our October newsletter on pages 6 & 7 at:

<http://www.arswillamette.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/October-2020.pdf>



**Wishing you all a most Merry and Blessed Holiday Season!**

**Please click on the link below:**

[https://www.americangreetings.com/pickup?rr=y&m=&token=r590cb9ef-1f34-4ac0-8422-d3c76eef-4fe7&pn=prod3482970&utm\\_medium=pick-up&utm\\_source=share&utm\\_campaign=receiver](https://www.americangreetings.com/pickup?rr=y&m=&token=r590cb9ef-1f34-4ac0-8422-d3c76eef-4fe7&pn=prod3482970&utm_medium=pick-up&utm_source=share&utm_campaign=receiver)

# 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.

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## 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

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## DISTRICT 4 CHAPTER WEB SITES

Willamette Chapter	<a href="http://arswillamette.com">arswillamette.com</a>
Eugene Chapter	<a href="http://eugene-chapter-ars.org">eugene-chapter-ars.org</a>
Portland Chapter	<a href="http://rhodies.org">rhodies.org</a>
Siuslaw Chapter	<a href="http://siuslawars.org">siuslawars.org</a>
Tualatin Valley	<a href="http://tualatinvalleyars.org">tualatinvalleyars.org</a>

All other web sites can be found on [rhododendron.org](http://rhododendron.org)  
Under "chapters" under web sites

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

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## 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

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## WILLAMETTE CHAPTER OFFICERS

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