

Willamette Chapter American Rhododendron Society Newsletter

Volume 5

March 2023

Issue 3



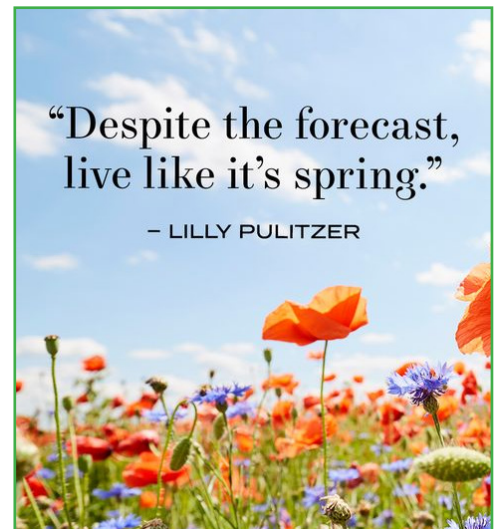
Willamette Chapter ARS
Rhododendron Hillside Garden
Bush Pasture Park

CHAPTER MEETINGS: Our current chapter meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month from September through May. Socializing begins at 6:30pm, with the meeting and speaker at 7:00pm. Due to Covid 19, our meeting may be in person or via Zoom. Meeting information will be sent to members via email and available in this newsletter. This form of meeting will continue until more permanent plans are made.

CHAPTER MEETING March 8, 2023

Speaker: *Jack Olson,*
Rhododendron Hybridizer
Title: *Garden Tour of the Olympic Peninsula*

**An in person meeting in the Bearcat Room at the RAM
Restaurant and Brewery. Full details on Page 5**



“Despite the forecast,
live like it’s spring.”

– LILLY PULITZER

February Minutes



Mary Crofts Secretary February 8, 2023

The Zoom Connection opened somewhere between 6:30 and 7 pm, with enough "spare time" for some "chit-chat" but no actual business topics. Our fearless Zoom Leader wasn't around either, so Mary Ellen opened for him. He was traveling home. Not from a trip abroad in some exotic land, but from the ski slopes (probably Hoodoo) and apparently still all in one piece. This is excellent news as skiing is one of Keith's pleasures.

Our evening's speaker, Brandon Baker, was right on time. Mary Ellen did the presentation honors and Brandon was as comfortable doing this Zoom-stuff as if he did it every day. (Which might be true, actually.) He's the Executive Director of Crystal Springs Garden in Portland which is a large, beautiful, well-established garden and he is the first Executive Director to be salaried.

The title for his talk was "A Sanctuary of Tranquil Beauty for the Wellbeing of All". The major purpose for Crystal Springs is to remind us of the beauty and need of rhododendrons in a city landscape. Since the Garden has already received 73 years of tender loving care, Brandon is able to focus on building its capacity to provide excellent educational and well-being programs for the public at large. To that end, Brandon's brought with him many years helping other gardens to success, including Portland's famous Japanese Garden up towards the zoo.

Crystal Springs was founded in 1950 on 5 acres of brushy woodland and blackberries. Brandon told us that the idea for a large rhododendron garden in Portland started in the 1940's when members of the ARS (founded in Portland) wanted a garden where rhodys could be "tested".

The garden is sandwiched on the east bank of Crystal Springs Lake with Reed College and the Eastmoreland district to the east and Eastmoreland Golf Course occupying the land and west shore of the lake.

Since the land was within the city limits, it also came under city ordinances and had to be a public park, although that wasn't the original idea for its usage. But the idea certainly "took off". The first planting started in October 1950 with the transplanting of two 40-year-old hybrid Cynthia rhododendrons, which were donated from the home of Mr. C.P. Keyser, Portland Park Superintendent, in memory of his late spouse Aimee.

The ARS, whose members in Portland were taking care of the garden, held its first show in 1953. There were 25,000 visitors to Crystal Springs during the 10 days of that show. In 1955, the Portland Chapter of the ARS was officially formed with their mission being to care for and maintain the garden for all to see as well as the testing of species and hybrid rhododendrons.

An interesting "aside": the oldest rhododendron in the garden predates even the golf course which was established in 1917. It is there today on the west side of the island close to the lake.

Brandon talked about the contributions of several key individuals in the development of the garden over the years. One of those was Ted Van Veen who was a visionary full of enthusiasm and excitement and the garden flourished during his involvement.

Visitors stroll by three waterfalls via two picturesque bridges and wander down shaded paths to Crystal Springs Lake. Time, water and weather have taken a toll on two of the waterfalls, causing extensive erosion - the Jane Martin and the Flowerree. Revisions and restoration are in the future plans for these waterfalls.

Aside from the rhododendrons and other plants composing the garden, the abundance of wildlife around the lake is a huge draw for birders and animal lovers. These creatures depend on the garden and the lake for their livelihood. They range from a family of herons to many duck species, bald eagles, wood ducks, muskrats, beavers, river otters, coyotes, etc. They also have those charming dancing water birds called western grebes who dance on water when picking a mate.

The future of the garden is to inspire through rhododendrons and feature Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden as a sanctuary.

With that in mind and looking to the future, one of their plans is to create a Dick Cavender collection of plants on the north part of the garden, which will include his occidentale and other plants picked from his collection by Dick's wife, Karen and close family friend, Mike Stewart.

Back again this year is the Mother's Day Show which will include sprays and trusses from local gardens.

Some other program ideas if there are enough volunteers include leading tours through the garden, having an area for local species of rhodys, programs for the general public on the care and keeping of rhodys, wellness-type programs in the garden to demonstrate how nature is important for our health, refinishing the Exhibit Hall and continuing to work with the Bureau of Environmental Services on providing the best possible water for the Garden and for the buildings around it.

Mary Ellen asked if they were working with the Portland School District and had programs in place for school children to visit and become more involved with gardening and Brandon replied that this is a future goal.

At this point, the Crystal Springs staff is 1 full time Director, a full time Gardener (Frank Tree, name very appropriate), two assistant gardeners and a host of volunteers.

The Gardens **current** hours are 10:00am - 3:30pm Monday through Saturday **except** for Wednesday which is 1:00 - 3:30pm. Garden admission is waived on Mondays, but they ask those who can support the garden to consider a donation.

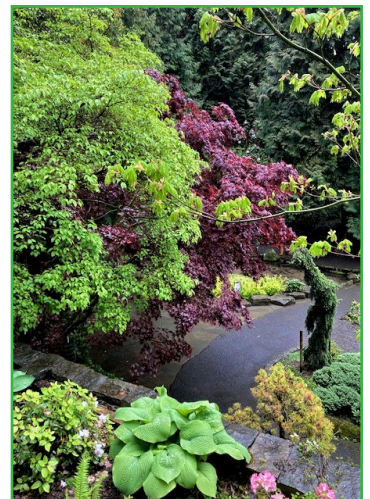
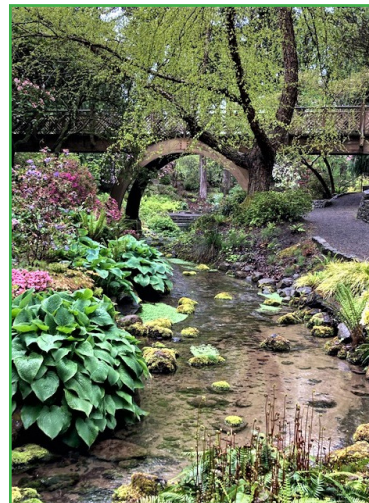
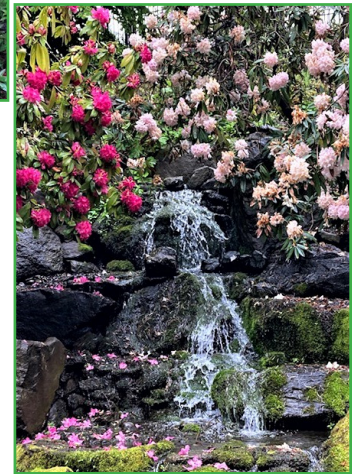
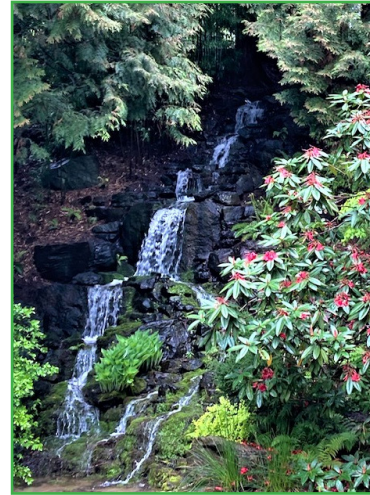
If you have never been there, it's an absolutely stunning garden.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Crofts - Secretary- WCARS.

For more information on Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden, you can visit the website [here](#).

To view the presentation on Zoom, click [here](#) and enter the Passcode: Wtnm^i68

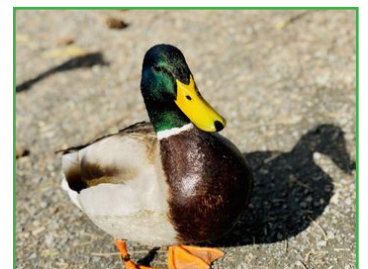
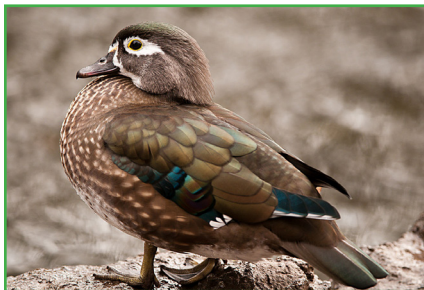
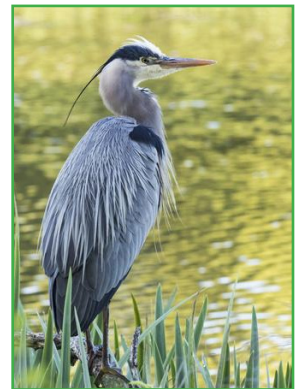
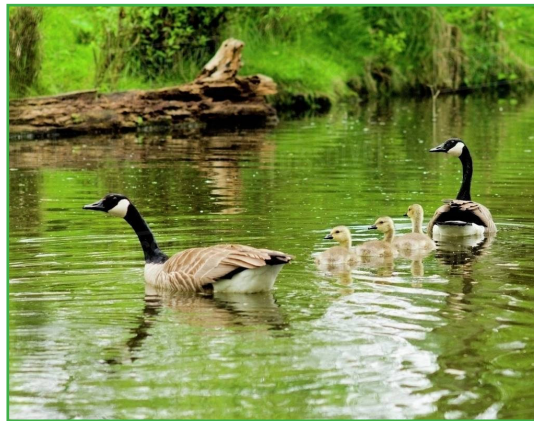
The following pictures were taken by Keith White at CSRG last year on the ARS Convention Tour. The top 2 pictures are a front and side view of the Jane Martin Waterfall. The bottom left is the High Bridge and the bottom right is the walkway by the Flowerree Waterfall.



A map of the 0.8 mile loop walk at the garden. The low bridge traversing the lake is in the center, with the island at the bottom loop and the peninsula at the top loop. There are interspersing trails throughout as well.



In addition to the animals around the lake at the Garden, Crystal Springs is a bird lover's paradise. There are over 100 varieties of birds at any given time. The following are just a few.





President's Report March 2023



It's like déjà vu all over again! Punxsutawney Phil was right about the 6 weeks more winter.

We have a few possible events coming up that the members need to think about and let us know if we should participate. The first event is the Mission Street Parks Conservancy annual plant sale on April 28-29. I know there will be some of our members who will be traveling, so do we have enough people to set it up and staff the booth? With the weather the way it is, will we have enough trusses to make it worthwhile?

The Salem Home and Garden Show is March 24-26. There is an opportunity to have a booth to promote membership with the club.

The Marion County Master Gardener's annual plant sale is May 5-6 at the State Fair grounds. Is anyone interested in having a truss show there as well as promoting membership in our club?

Please send me an email with your thoughts about what you think we should do for each of these three events.

The Smith Garden Work Party is on Saturday, March 18, from 8:30a - 3:00p and I hope to see many of you there. Your assistance is greatly needed to spruce up the garden for the Open Garden Days in April and May.

I hope you all survived the "snow apocalypse" and are enjoying the sunshine, at least today (Friday) when I am writing this.

Hope for more sunny days!

Dana Malby - WCARS President

March Program and Speaker



The definition of "**fanfare**" is a short ceremonial tune or flourish played on brass instruments, typically to introduce something or someone important.

Well, I hope you hear the "fanfare" as after 3 years we are finally **meeting in person** and our speaker is non other than Jack Olson, rhododendron hybridizer and owner of Rocky Knoll Farms. Those of you who know Jack, know his energy and enthusiasm are infectious. And tonight will be no exception.

The title of the program is "Garden Tour of the Olympic Peninsula". This tour was offered as a pre-tour to the 2022 ARS National Convention.

About this program, Jack says "I have been gardening now for over 60 years. Rhododendrons have been my passion. I have been hybridizing rhododendrons for over 25 years. When I found out there would be a garden tour and part of it would be to Heronswood garden, I wanted to go. My program will be about the trip in the Olympic peninsula. I will show the incredible gardens I got to view. -

DETAILS:

Dinner and the program will take place in the Bearcat Room at the RAM Restaurant and Brewery at 515 12th St. SE, Salem, OR 97301.

Meet for dinner at 5:00pm and the program will start at 7:00pm.

Keith says that how much this venue costs the Willamette Chapter is inversely proportionate to the number who attend. **SO PLEASE COME!**

Smith Garden Spring Work Party and Open Garden Days

*"Volunteers are not paid
-- not because they are
worthless, but because
they are priceless."
Sherry Anderson*

Come one, Come all to The Smith Garden Spring Work Party on Saturday, March 18. The Party commences at 8:30am and goes until 3:00pm. Arrive whenever you can and work as long as you want. Bring your favorite hand tools and gloves. A list of job duties will be posted that need to be done. Light snack food and drinks will be provided. There is work for all skill levels and numerous teachers to assist and provide instruction and guidance. Your assistance is greatly needed to spruce up the garden for the Open Garden Days in April and May.

And speaking of the Open Garden Days, Your Second opportunity to volunteer will be at **The Smith Garden Open Garden Days** which take place on Saturdays and Sundays during the months of April and May. The garden is in full bloom and open to visitors to experience it's beauty, tranquility and peacefullness and to purchase rhododendrons for their own gardens. Details are being discussed and a sign up sheet will be sent via email when finalized. **Think about which weekend days you would like to volunteer and be ready to sign up when the information is available.**



The following addendum was submitted by Keith White.

The Cecil and Molly Smith Garden is open for visitors every Saturday and Sunday, April and May.

Every year I look forward to spending a day or two hosting one of the open garden days at the Cecil and Molly Smith Garden. This gives me time to tour the garden before and after (and while my partner keeps a lookout above) the 5 hour stint as a host.

I enjoy meeting the people who visit. Education rhodys is always fun. I do my best to recruit new ARS members and my best to sell the plants we have for sale.

Ideally, I like to visit the Smith Garden every other week. Thus, I look at my garden host volunteer times as a fun opportunity to visit the finest woodland garden in the Pacific Northwest.



All pictures on this page taken at the Smith Garden by Mary Ellen Ramseyer during the ARS 2022 Convention tour.

Hosting the May Potluck

Is there anyone who would like to host the May potluck and plant sale. If we are as lucky as last year, it will be a beautiful day and there will be lots of interesting, maybe even rare plants, for auction. I'm sure you will find at least one or two calling out that want to be planted in your yard. This is a perfect time of year to show off the rhododendrons blooming in your yard and let others reap the benefit of your long hours and hard work in the garden.

Prior to Covid, the potluck was on the 2nd Wednesday evening in May, which is our normal meeting night. Since Covid, our 2 potlucks have been on a Saturday afternoon.

Keith and I will be in Greece on Wednesday, May 10, but can host it at our house later in the month if no one else comes forward to volunteer.

Please give this consideration so it can be discussed more in detail at our March meeting.

Nothing better than enjoying good food, great company, laughter and spending money in a beautiful setting of blooming rhododendrons!



Don't forget to Spring Forward on Sunday, March 12

Spring is in the air and it's about bloomin' time!



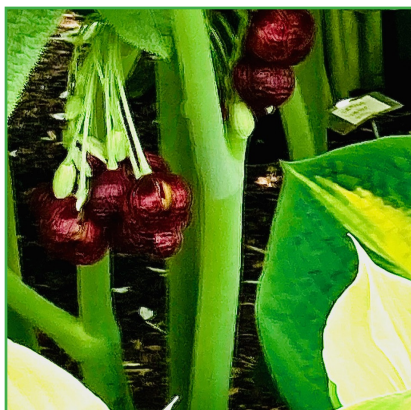
On the Road Again!

To quote Thelma and Louise, "**Sometimes all you need is a great friend and a tank of gas.**"

With that being said, I think it's time to schedule another trip and hit the road. I'm looking for a date in April. We can do a weekday if all participants are retired, or Saturday, April 22 if not.

My thoughts were to stop by Kevin Vaughn's garden in Salem for a tour. Kevin is the Iris hybridizer that gave our November program and he says there is always something in bloom. For certain there will be daffodils and fantastic sempervivum. If you have purchased one of his books, I'm sure he would be more than happy to sign it.

From there we could strike out for Sebright Gardens which offers 1000 varieties of hostas, over 150 varieties of hardy ferns and 120 varieties of epimediums and shade tolerant plants. We visited last year as part of the National ARS Conference Tour and there are some very interesting plants! The following picture is from that tour.



Mary Ellen holding up a large podophyllum leaf with the fruit underneath

Other places for consideration are the Wooden Shoe Tulip Festival - tickets would need to be purchased, Bauman's Farms, The Cecil and Molly Smith Garden - should be in beautiful bloom, Millers Manor Gardens in Canby - over 1000 different perennials and 400 conifers, etc. All ideas and options welcome.

Please email Keith if you would like to participate so a date and destinations can be finalized and scheduled. His email is: www.rhodoc@msn.com

Rhododendron: Beyond It's Beautiful Bloom

The following is an excerpt written by Sarah Fiorello on May 20, 2021, for the Cornell Botanic Garden in Ithaca, New York.

Rhododendrons, which include Azaleas, are extensively used as ornamental plants around the world—cherished for their evergreen leaves and large, beautiful, rose-like flowers (Rhododendron means “the tree of roses” in the Greek language).

While we most often associate Rhododendrons as the plant of choice for home landscapes, this group of plants has long been used as food, medicine, and wood material around the world.

Rhododendron is one of the largest genera of flowering plants with more than 1,000 wild species, most of which occur in the Himalayan region and Southeast Asia. A much smaller number of species grows in North America, Europe, parts of the Middle East, and northeast Australia.

Cultural Uses

The red flowered *Rhododendron arboreum* is the national flower of Nepal, where it is called *lali gurans*. During bloom time, women wear flowers in their hair, and the blooms are given as offerings at Buddhist temples.



R. arboreum

Also in Nepal, fresh flower petals of *R. arboreum* are used to flavor a sweet drink, eaten with salt and chilies, and added to fish curries in the belief that they dissolve any fish bones which might get caught in the throat.

R. arboreum is the state tree of the northern India region of Uttarakhand. There it is used to make a sweetened drink called “buransh squash”, which is sold commercially.



Also native to the Himalaya region, *R. anthopogon*'s fragrant leaves are used as an incense in Buddhist temples. The essential oil distilled from the leaves is said to be calming.



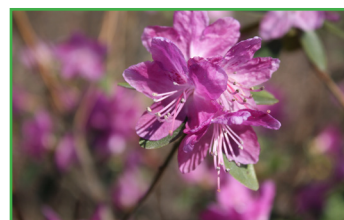
R. anthopogon

The fine-grained wood of many rhododendron species is used for making bowls, spoons, furniture and fences. It is also used for firewood, which produces a long-lasting heat, and for making charcoal.

Traditional Medicine

The leaves, stems, and flowers of Rhododendrons have been documented as having toxic side effects if consumed in large doses. Despite their toxicity, Rhododendrons have been used as traditional medicine for a wide variety of treatments, and rhododendron remedies may have promise in addressing inflammatory and autoimmune diseases.

Rhododendron dauricum and *R. molle* are listed in the Chinese Pharmacopoeia to treat cough, migraine, swelling, and pain associated with injuries from falls.



R. dauricum



R. molle

In Korea, *R. brachycarpum* was used in folk medicine for the treatment of diabetes, arthritis, headache, and hypertension.



R. brachycarpum
Photo by
Singing Tree Nursery

Traditional Tibetan herbalists used flowers and leaves of *R. anthopogon* and *R. anthopogonoides* to treat inflammation, lung and skin disorders, and general body weakness.

In Nepal, flowers of *R. anthopogon* and *R. campanulatum* are used for the treatment of different types of pain, while *R. lepidotum* is used to purify the blood and also mixed with other plants to combat common cold symptoms.



R. campanulatum
Photo by Hans Eiberg

R. lepdotum



In the Himalayan region of India, *R. arboreum* flowers are used in a wine to curb altitude sickness and also used for the treatment of dysentery, dyspepsia, diarrhea, nose bleeding, and removal of fish bones stuck in the gullet.

In Europe, leaves of *R. ferrugineum* have been used in Germany for the treatment of rheumatism, hypertension, muscle pain and metabolic disease.



R. ferrugineum
Photo by Hans Eiberg

R. luteum and *R. ponticum* have been used in Turkish traditional medicine against inflammation, rheumatic pain, and externally for fungal infections.



R. luteum

R. ponticum
Photo by Hans Eiberg



In North America, Cherokees have been using *R. calendulaceum* to treat rheumatic and women's ailments and *R. maximum* as analgesic and anti-rheumatic.



R. calendulaceum

R. maximum
Photo by
Kenneth Cox



In the northern territory of Canada, *R. tomentosum* and *R. groenlandicum* are used to prevent diabetes by the Inuit and Cree nations.



R. tomentosum
Photo by
Chris Klapwijk



R. groenlandicum
Photo by
John and Sally Perkins

Editor's Note: And I thought rhododendrons were just plants with beautiful flowers and interesting looking leaves for viewing pleasure only. Who would have thought.....

April Program and Speaker



Our meeting speaker for April 12 will be Brian Smith, Parks Project Coordinator for the City of Salem, talking about Native Plants. Many of you may remember Brian, as he presented the very interesting "Weed School" back in September at Bush Park.

The April program will be given via Zoom and full details will be in the April newsletter.

Our flower for the month of March is Rhododendron Shamrock developed by Robert Tichnor, ornamental horticulturist from Oregon. If you would like to listen to an interesting OPB interview with Dr. Tichnor regarding the development of this particular rhododendron click the following link: https://americanarchive.org/catalog/cpb-aacip_153-32r4xpv2. It's from 4/30/75.

O' Rhododendron For March R. 'Shamrock'



Photo by Osberton Nurseries

Shamrock is a dwarf variety of rhododendron with loads of small, yellow-green flowers, and small leaves. It is sun and drought tolerant which makes it suitable for rockeries. Very hardy. **It is usually blooming on March 17.** The dwarf Shamrock was created by renowned research horticulturist Robert Tichnor PhD. from Oregon.

Predominant Flower Color: Yellow

Flower/Truss Description: Flower tubular funnel-shaped, 1½" across, brilliant yellowish green with slight strong yellow-green spotting. Flowers fade to light yellow. Flat trusses of 8-9 flowers.

Bloom Time: Early to Early Midseason

Foliage Description/Plant Habit: Leaves elliptic, apiculate apex, cuneate base, 1¾" long, yellowish-green, retained 2 years. Dense and spreading shrub.

Height: 2 feet in 10 years.

Cold Hardiness Temperature: -5°F (-21°C)

Parentage (Seed Parent x Pollen Parent): keiskei, dwarf form x hanceanum 'Nanum group'

Elepidote (E) or Lepidote (L): L

Hybridized or Selected by: Tichnor 1978

Registration Reference: ARS 784

Plant information obtained from the American Rhododendron Society website.

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

PORTLAND CHAPTER

Third Thursday from Sept to May at 7:00pm
Reedwood Friends Church, 2901 SE Steele Street
Portland 97202

SALEM HARDY PLANT SOCIETY

First Tuesday from Sept 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

DISTRICT 4 CHAPTER WEB SITES

Willamette Chapter	arswillamette.com
Eugene Chapter	eugene-chapter-ars.org
Portland Chapter	rhodies.org
Siuslaw Chapter	siuslawars.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 Wermlinger	2013
Dick and Carol Lundin	2019
Mary B. Crofts	2019
Roger and Kathy Lintault	2019

WILLAMETTE CHAPTER OFFICERS

President: Dana Malby503-393-6463
V-President:
Programs Chair: Keith White ...503-559-5796
Secretary: Mary Crofts.....503-838-4122
Treasurer: Adele O'Neal.....971-570-0237
Librarian: Keith White503-559-5796
Newsletter Editor:
Mary Ellen Ramseyer503-689-3733
Print. & Mail: Mary Ellen Ramseyer -503-689-3733
Board Members:
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Web Site Kathy Lintault.....503-434-5472