



# Potomac Valley Chapter

American Rhododendron Society

www.arspvc.org

Fall Newsletter: September 2017

## Potomac Valley Chapter Calendar - 2017

- September 24, 2107 – Chapter Picnic, Seneca Creek State Park
- October 20 - 22, 2017 – ARS Eastern Regional, Richmond, VA
- October 28, 2017 – PVC Banquet and Speaker, Normandie Farm
- May 20 – 27, 2018 – ARS / DRG Joint Convention, Bremen, Germany

### Chapter Officers

**President:** Ginny Mohr  
rngmohr@msn.com  
**Secretary:** Diane Reinke  
Isabelle49@aol.com  
**Treasurer:** Phyllis Rittman  
prittman@erols.com

## Chapter Picnic and Plant Exchange

Where: Seneca Creek State Park

11950 Clopper Rd

Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Date: Sunday, September 24, 2017

Time: 1:00 – 5:00 PM

We are returning to popular Seneca Creek State Park near Gaithersburg for our picnic this year. The date is Sunday, September 24, from 1 – 5 PM.

We will be at the Fawn Pavilion, the large covered picnic facility we have used for many years. It is located on the south side of Clopper Lake. Follow the signs, or ask for directions at the gate. The park does charge a nominal entry fee per person that they will collect at the gate.

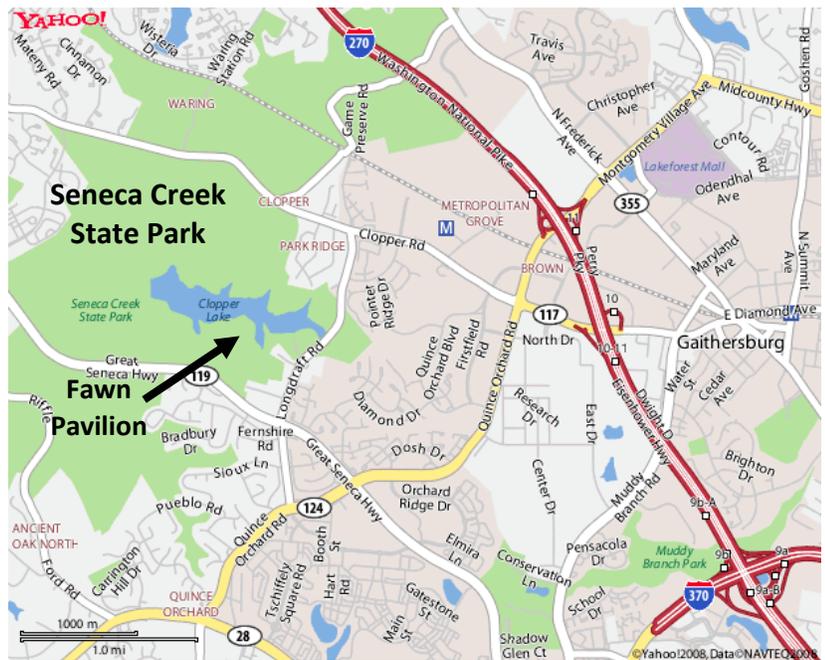
The chapter will provide hamburgers, hotdogs, and buns. We are looking for someone who will bring the drinks this time. If you can assist with that, please let Ginny Mohr know. For the rest of us, please bring some other picnic type food like salads, sides, or desserts to share with others.

Alcoholic beverages are not allowed. There are no trash cans so we must remove our own trash.

**Plant Exchange:** A popular part of our annual picnic is a plant exchange. To participate, just bring a plant worth about \$5 to trade with others. Many chapter members have excess plants and bring extras. Those who didn't bring a plant to exchange are usually able to get plants after the first round.

### DIRECTIONS:

1. Take I-495 to I-270N toward Frederick
2. Merge onto I-270 Local N
3. Take the Exit #10 West, toward MD Rt. 124
4. Turn RIGHT onto MD 117 (Clopper Rd)
5. Turn LEFT into the Park: 11950 Clopper Rd



## Fall Banquet: Steve Henning

“The Rhododendrons and Gardens of Scotland”

Where: Normandie Farm Restaurant

10710 Falls Road, Potomac, MD 20854

Date: Saturday, October 28, 2017

Time: 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM

We will be returning to the popular Normandie Farm for our fall banquet. Our speaker will be Steve Henning who will share his thoughts and beautiful pictures on the Rhododendrons and Gardens of Scotland. Look for additional information and the registration form in this newsletter. Our treasurer must **receive** your reservation no later than Saturday, October 21. Hope to see you there!

## ***Dues Are Due!***

We are sending your 2017 renewal notice and an envelope with this newsletter. We encourage you to register for the Fall Banquet and renew your membership at the same time. You can pay with one check! Please return your payment to our Treasurer, Phyllis Rittman, with checks payable to:

### **Potomac Valley Chapter ARS**

Membership categories:

<b>Category</b>	<b>Cost</b>
<b>Regular</b> - (one or two people in the same household)	<b>\$40</b>
<b>Commercial / Corporate</b>	<b>\$90</b>
<b>Sustaining</b>	<b>\$75</b>
<b>Sponsoring</b>	<b>\$150</b>
<b>Student</b> – (under age 25) Access to online Journal only	<b>\$10</b>
<b>Life Member – Single</b>	<b>\$1000</b>
<b>Life Member – Family</b>	<b>\$1500</b>
<b>Associate</b> – must already belong to another ARS Chapter	<b>\$10</b>

Mail your payment to:

**Phyllis T. Rittman, Treasurer**  
**prittman@erols.com**

## **On-line Dues Renewals**

For many years, the ARS has accepted credit card payments for new members but renewals had to be done by local chapters. At the last Board meeting, the ARS approved on-line renewal of memberships so people can use credit card payments even if the local chapter does not have that option. Our chapter is not equipped to handle credit card payments at this time so banquet registrations and dues renewals to Potomac Valley must be made by check. If you would like to pay just your dues by credit card or personal Pay Pal account, check out the OARS website for the ARS Office:

**<https://www.arsoffice.org/>**

In the blue Column for Membership Services, click on the link to “On-line Renewal of ARS Membership Dues.” To continue, you will need your Membership number which appears on your Journal mailing label.



### ***Our Banquet Speaker: Steve Henning*** ***“Rhododendrons and Gardens of Scotland”***

Steve and his wife Darlene bought their present home in Pennsylvania in 1965 and, thus, began their interest in gardening. They went to the 1972 Philadelphia Flower Show in search of the American Rhododendron Society. They were in luck and found an exhibit by the Greater Philadelphia Chapter of the ARS who informed them about the Valley Forge Chapter. They have been members of the VF chapter ever since.

Steve started Henning’s Rhododendron & Azalea Pages in 1996, trying to provide in one place, a reference of things that many rhododendron experts take for granted or may have forgotten, but that new members of the ARS and new “rhodoholics” will learn over time. <http://rhodyman.net/rhodyn.php>

On November 9, 2010, the National Arboretum announced it would "be deaccessioning our National Boxwood Collection and the Perennial Collections as well as the Glenn Dale Hillside portion of the Azalea Collection." Steve discussed this with long-time National Arboretum supporter Don Hyatt. Don and Steve decided that Don would lead a personal education campaign on various media and in talks at garden clubs, while Steve created the website: [SaveTheAzaleas.org](http://SaveTheAzaleas.org).

The campaign went viral. On April 25, 2012, the National Arboretum announced a reversal in its plans and declared the Glenn Dale Azaleas a heritage collection which should be preserved. FONA, Friends of the National Arboretum, raised over 1 million dollars to insure continuing care of the azalea, boxwood and perennial collections. Thank you Steve!

In 2013, Steve volunteered to create [ARStore.org](http://ARStore.org). This store is alive and well, and has raised over \$2,500 for the ARS through referral fees from online purchases from Amazon. Please go to the ARS Store first before linking to Amazon so the ARS will get a commission.

Steve was a physicist for Bell Labs for 27 years and then a Boy Scout executive for 13 years. Now retired, his activities include Scouting, gardening, traveling, photography and being a Rotarian. He enjoys giving presentations on rhododendrons and azaleas.

# Thoughts on Scotland

By Don Hyatt

Scotland is known for its magnificent castles and beautiful gardens. What may seem strange is that it is basically at the same latitude as Labrador in Canada where winters are severe and the ocean will freeze solid. Scotland has a very benign climate since the warm Atlantic currents like the Gulf Stream help moderate temperatures and provide moisture.



Being so far north, these gardens never get too hot in the summer, either. It is an ideal place to grow rhododendrons and they do grow them to perfection! Our native azaleas were not as happy since they do appreciate hot summers.

Many gardens on the southwest coast are actually subtropical in nature and they can grow very tender plants including palms and tender rhododendrons like the fragrant *Maddenias* outside without protection. They can grow the large leaf species like *R. sinogrande* which can have leaves up to 3 ft. in

length and large flower trusses of light yellow. It is native to the foothills of the Himalayas and Yunnan in western China. We can't grow those plants in our area.



*R. sinogrande* flower



*R. sinogrande* in the Benmore Botanic Garden. Benmore is one of many gardens in the National Trust

The Edinburgh Botanic Garden is considered by many to be the best rock garden in the world. They can grow all the dwarf alpine rhododendrons and rare companion plants. Alpine rhododendrons die in hot summers but are very happy in Scotland. They also have an enormous collection of rhododendron species so it is little wonder that they have long been the center for rhododendron taxonomists.



Edinburgh Botanic Gardens: Alpine Rhododendrons

Peter and Euan Cox founded Glendoick Gardens in Perth Scotland in 1953. It has been one of the major retail sources for rhododendrons in Europe. It is now run by 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Kenneth Cox but they no longer sell mail order. The Cox family has been noted for their many plant explorations to China and the Himalayas to collect new rhododendron species that they can introduce to the world. They are prolific authors and have written at least 20 excellent books about rhododendrons which are available on the Internet. Some of Ken's new rhododendron hybrids are available in the US now, thanks to tissue culture. 'Wine and Roses' has pink and red flowers with dark leaves. 'Ever Red' has red flowers with leaves that are dark reddish brown to almost black.



'Wine and Roses'

## Garden Tour Remembrances

Were you able to join us on the chapter garden tours on May 6<sup>th</sup> this year? Spring was early and the weather forecast was for rain that day, but Mother Nature smiled on us and we had a wonderful time.



Chapter Members Conversing in the Wallenmeyer Garden

Our first stop was the home of Tim and Catherine Wallenmeyer in Gaithersburg, MD. They have a lovely wooded lot with broad expanses of lawn bordered by curving beds filled with rhododendrons, azaleas, and companion plants, many of which they bought at past chapter auctions. A large ‘Percy Wiseman’ in the front yard was past peak but many of us were enthralled by it anyway. That rhododendron is very difficult for us to grow and most of us can only keep it alive a year or two. They obviously are master horticulturists!

Most people in our society are just as interested in the companion plants as we are with the rhododendrons and azaleas. The Wallenmeyers had a white variety of sweetshrub (Calycanthus) called ‘Venus’ that was just beginning to open. Most forms of sweetshrub have dark red flowers so this plant with its fragrant waterlily-like blossoms raised much attention.



Calycanthus ‘Venus’ ‘Ben Morrison’ at the Wallenmeyers

Some of us stopped by the Brighton Dam Azalea Garden which must have been pretty but way past peak. We met for lunch at a picnic pavilion and then headed to the garden of Bob and Rosa McWhorter.

The McWhorter’s large wooded garden is always spectacular and they have so many exciting things to see. They have many winding paths in the garden with mature rhododendrons and rare companion plants along the trails. Those treasures add interest to the landscape.

Some of the McWhorter’s companion plants that impressed me included a variegated hosta that had white and green leaves but with red stems. It is called ‘Raspberry Sundae’ and really did stand out in the garden. A burgundy and white lady’s slipper orchid

(Cypripedium) was one of the new hybrids and very elegant. The McWhorters had planted an Asian Mayapple (Podophyllum) called ‘Spotty Dottie’ on the bank beside the driveway. Many of us got one of those during this spring’s field trip to Pennsylvania nurseries. The Asian Podophyllums have large umbrella-like leaves with distinctive markings. The plants have been very expensive, often running \$40 and up for small plants in just a 4-inch pot. One nursery had large plants in gallon pots for \$18, so we couldn’t pass it up!



‘Raspberry Sundae’ Cypripedium ‘Spotty Dottie’

Bob and Rosa have been adding new hybrids from local hybridizers. One plant we had to see was Tom Ahern’s ‘Amazing Grace’. The flowers are a blend of pink and orange and they seem to glow, even on a cloudy day. Their plant was in fine form.



‘Amazing Grace’ in the McWhorter Garden

Bob had several new rhododendron hybrids that he had raised from seed that were blooming for the first time. It is always exciting to see first blooms since you have no idea what the flowers will look like. A cross of ‘Disca’ x ‘Dexter’s Honeydew’ raised from our chapter seed exchange had large fragrant trusses of ivory white and blush pink. Bob’s cross of ‘Vineland’ with pollen of the species *R. ririei* he got from the Rhododendron Species Foundation had soft pink flowers. Consider raising some plants from seed this year. It is great fun!



‘Disca’ x ‘Dexter’s Honeydew’

‘Vineland’ x *R. ririei*

## Garden Tour Remembrances (cont.)

Most gardens have a peak season, but even though we may have been a bit late this year, the gardens were lovely and we had a chance to admire plants that we typically do not see on tours or in the flower show.

Our final garden visit was to Carol Segree's place. Carol has been remodeling her home, adding an addition in back that replaced her deck with a huge kitchen and breakfast area. She can now overlook her garden year round through the large windows. Her contractors have put in new walkways and a patio, too.



Fringe tree (Chionanthus)

Carol's New Patio

Professionally, Carol has been a graphics designer so you can see her artistic choice of colors and design skills everywhere in the garden. She carefully positions unusual trees and shrubs in the landscape and uses annuals and companion plants as bold accents. One of my favorite accents was a large, rustic frog planter (below left) in which she planted a new orange-leaved oxalis called 'Molten Lava' with the yellow Creeping Jenny 'Goldilocks'. It was the perfect combination!



Frog Planter

'Dream of Kings' on a Trail

Carol has made excellent use of the typography in her garden. The central is nearly flat where she has an open grassy area garden room. There are ravines on at the perimeter and winding paths in the woods. Pictured above right is a large purple rhododendron 'Dream of Kings' with 'Hachmann's Charmant' just beyond.

Some trees in the backyard and on the side have been taken down and others have been trimmed high to provide light. Carol's front yard has significant sun and is an excellent place for many perennials including peonies and iris and many deciduous azaleas.

Along the walk beside the house, I was impressed with how a clump of yellow peonies was echoed by the color of the deciduous azalea 'Golden Lights' in the distance. Her peony is one of the Itoh hybrids which are crosses between herbaceous and tree peonies. They come in many new colors and have strong stems that do not need staking. 'Bartzella' is my favorite!



Walkway

Itoh Hybrid Peony

All of the gardens on this year's tour were superb and we thank the hosts who let us visit. Thanks!

## ARS Fall Eastern Regional Conference October 20-22, 2017 Richmond, VA

The Middle Atlantic Chapter is hosting an ARS Fall Conference at the Hilton Garden Inn - Richmond Airport. MAC's weekend events are always great fun.

Details and registration forms were in your Summer ARS Journal or you can go the MAC website and click on the link for "Events" under the Activities heading:

<http://www.macars.org>

## ARS 2018 Convention: Bremen Germany May 20-27, 2018 – Optional tours: Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and Finland

Registration opened September 1<sup>st</sup> for next year's ARS Convention in Bremen, Germany. (See image page.) There are tours before and after the meeting to the Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, and Finland. Space is limited. Registration closes November 15<sup>th</sup>. For details, go to the website and get on the mailing list:

<http://ars2018.org/home.php>

## NV- ASA Auction and Plant Sale

**Saturday, September 23, 2017 1:00 – 4:30 PM**

Our friends in the Northern Virginia Chapter ASA will hold their annual sale at the Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, 8336 Carrleigh Parkway, Springfield, VA.

For more info: [www.nv-asa.org/sale](http://www.nv-asa.org/sale)

## Harold and Eveline Pilkington

We learned recently that both Harold and Eveline Pilkington passed away this year. Eveline was 98 when she died in February. Harold passed in April at the age of 99. Many of our members visited their lovely Cape Cod garden and admired the Consolini hybrids they saved and others they introduced. (See image page.)



**The Pilkington Garden**



**'Strawberry Parfait'**



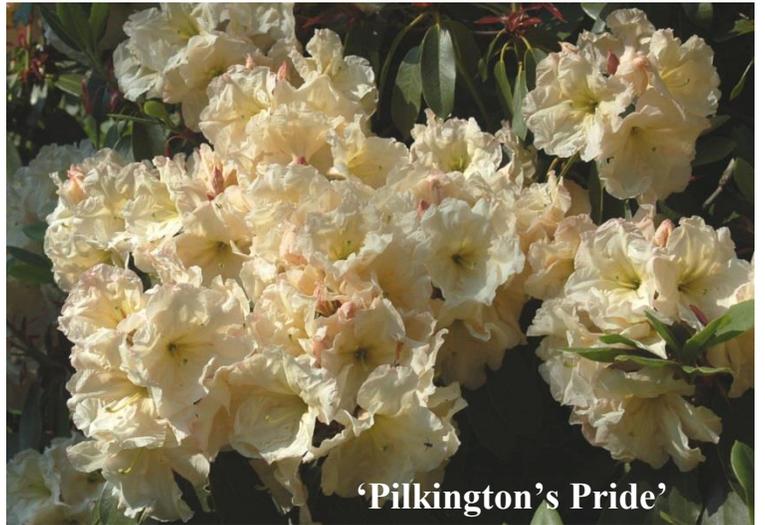
**Eveline and Harold Pilkington**



**'Bellringer'**



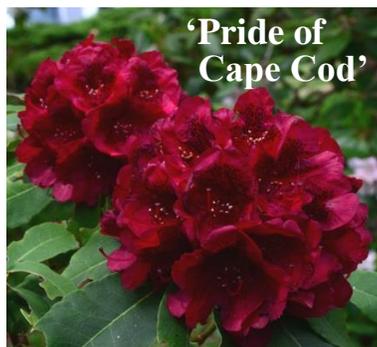
**Consolini #303**



**'Pilkington's Pride'**



**'Big Dome'**



**'Pride of Cape Cod'**



**'Taj Mahal'**



**Germany 2018!**



**'Hachmann's Charmant'**



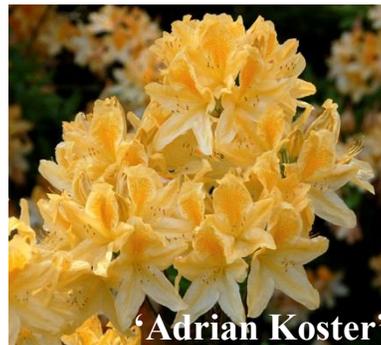
**Schröder Nursery 'Fantastica'**



**Park de Garten**



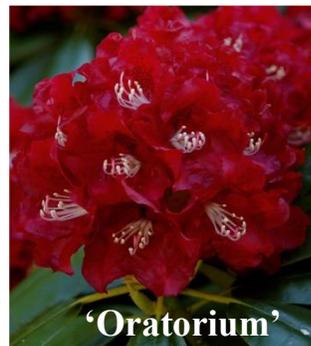
**'Bohlken's Snow Fire'**



**'Adrian Koster'**



**Bremen Rhododendronpark**



**'Oratorium'**



**Yak Hybrids**



**Potomac Valley Chapter ARS – 2017 Fall Banquet**  
**“Rhododendrons and Gardens of Scotland”**  
*by Steve Henning*

**When: Saturday, October 28, 2017 12:00 Noon - 4:00 PM**

**Where: Normandie Farm Restaurant**  
**10710 Falls Road, Potomac, MD 20854**

**Price: \$45.00 per person**

*Registration Must Be  
Received by 10/21/ 2017*

**Menu Choice: Chicken with Madeira and Mushrooms, Grilled Atlantic Salmon, or Vegetarian**

For our banquet this year, we are returning to the popular Normandie Farm, a rustic French restaurant in Potomac, MD. Entrée choices include Roasted Breast of Chicken with Madeira and Wild Mushrooms, Grilled Atlantic Salmon with Béarnaise Sauce, or a Vegetarian Platter. The dinner includes all the amenities as well as their famous hot golden popovers and homemade cheesecake with strawberries and chocolate drizzle. For more about Normandie Farm, check out their website: [www.popovers.com](http://www.popovers.com)

**Our Speaker: Steve Henning**

Our speaker will be one of the most knowledgeable leaders in ARS, Steve Henning. He is the current District 8 Director. He created the popular “Henning’s Rhododendron and Azalea Pages” on the Internet which is a valuable resource to all. Steve launched the “Save the Azaleas” website which helped stop the destruction of the Glenn Dale Azalea collection at the National Arboretum. Steve established the ARS Store. Steve and his wife Darlene have traveled extensively and he will share some of his beautiful photographs of gardens in Scotland.

*Please return your reservation form with check payable to Potomac Valley Chapter ARS to our Treasurer by October 21:*  
**Phyllis Rittman: prittman@erols.com**



**PVC Fall 2017 Banquet Registration Form**  
**“Rhododendrons and Gardens pf Scotland”**  
**Saturday October 28, 2017**

**Registration Deadline**  
*Saturday, October 21, 2017*  
 Mail to Phyllis Rittman so that she  
 has it by deadline date.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print the name of each attendee below, and circle the entrée choice  
 (**Chicken:** Chicken w/ Madeira & Mushrooms *or* **Fish:** Grilled Salmon *or* **Veg:** Vegetarian)

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken Fish Veg
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken Fish Veg
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken Fish Veg
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken Fish Veg

**No. of attendees** \_\_\_\_\_ **x \$45.00 each =** \_\_\_\_\_ **Total**    Make checks to: **Potomac Valley Chapter ARS**

Potomac Valley Chapter ARS  
 Donald W. Hyatt, Newsletter Editor  
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