



Potomac Valley Chapter

American Rhododendron Society

www.arspvc.org

Spring Newsletter: May 2021

Potomac Valley Chapter Calendar – 2021

- May 15 – 16, 2021 – Open House at White's Nursery
- May 20 – 22, 2021 – Virtual ASA Convention
- June 3 – 6, 2021 – Virtual ARS Convention in Nova Scotia.
- September 12, 2021 – Chapter Picnic / Plants for Members Sale
- Late October / Early November – Chapter Meeting w/ speaker

Chapter Officers

President: Ginny Mohr
Ginnymohr63@gmail.com
Secretary: Diane Reinke
Isabelle49@aol.com
Treasurer: Phyllis Rittman
rittwoman@gmail.com

Returning to Normal!

As more people get vaccinated, activities in the region are getting get back to normal and restrictions imposed during the pandemic are being lifted. Our chapter has been making plans to resume a normal schedule, too. We have been able to rent the Fawn Pavilion at Seneca Creek State Park near Gaithersburg for our fall picnic. The date is September 12. We intend to have a typical pot luck meal and expect to have some rhododendron liners from Van Veen Nursery for sale to our members. Save the date!

We have decided against a banquet this year but we are planning a regular meeting at the Potomac Community Center with a speaker in late October or early November. The facility is not booking any meetings yet but we will provide details in your summer newsletter.

Virtual ARS Convention: June 3 - 6 Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada

I did sign up for the virtual ARS Convention option in June this year. I would much rather see those lovely Nova Scotia gardens in person, listen to the excellent speakers live, talk with good friends about rhododendrons face to face, and enjoy some of that excellent seafood. Looks like I'll have three days of Zoom meetings and a can of tuna fish instead. I will still enjoy it.

Virtual ASA Convention: May 20 – 22

The Azalea Society of America also had to cancel their 2021 Convention and are planning a virtual meeting on May 20 – 22. There will be no charge to attend. Check their website for details:

www.azaleas.org



George McLellan buys azaleas from Mike White

White's Nursery Open House Saturday, May 15 and Sunday, May 16

Surely the best local nursery for azaleas and rhododendrons is White's Nursery in nearby Germantown, MD. They have great plants and great prices with over 350 varieties of evergreen azaleas, many deciduous azaleas, and they have added some rhododendrons, too. Mike and Deb White opened their season on April 10, and will continue to be open on weekends through much of June except the 6th. Check out their website:

<http://www.whites-nursery.com/index.html>

Their Saturday hours are 9 AM to 5 PM and Sunday hours are from 1 to 5 PM. Be sure to visit the nursery during their open house on May 15 and 16 for some real bargains. (No credit cards!)

Here is contact information for the nursery:

White's Azaleas: Mike and Deb White
whiteaz@verizon.net

The ARS Next Generation Program

Christina Woodward (canadacaw@yahoo.ca) and Juliana Medeiros (jmedeiros@holdenfg.org) have asked us to remind members of a new initiative being launched this year at the virtual convention called the Next Gen Program. They want to emphasize the importance of sharing our interests beyond the confines of the ARS. Check out their website for more information:

www.rhododendron.org/next_gen.htm



The Next Gen Photo Contest

Christina and Juliana have created a photo contest this year and have asked us to reach out to students of botany, biology, and photography to encourage them to enter. Three cash prizes are offered in the student category.

They also want skilled photographers in our organization to send in photos (recent shots or archival images) to contribute to a growing library of photographs for use in future projects. Competition entry deadline is May 25th. For details, check out the contest website: www.rhododendron.org/next_gen_photocontest.htm

Wildflower Plant Sale: May 15 Maria Price – Beaver Creek Cottage Garden

Maria Price, our very popular January 2020 speaker on herbs, is having a wildflower plant sale at her nursery on Saturday, May 15, from 11 AM to 4 PM. Check out details on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/beavercreekcottagegarden

Emerging from My Cave Paranoid about a Pandemic By Don Hyatt

I guess I have been worrying about every virus strain that ever made a debut on the world stage for most of my life. I have been expecting a pandemic like the 1918 Spanish Flu that hit when my grandmother was expecting Mom. I did inherit Mom's "worry gene" so that has amplified my paranoia. There was the Asian flu, AIDS, H1N1, Ebola, and the Zika virus. When Covid-19 arrived, I became a hermit and did not emerge until after I got my vaccination. I only used one tank of gas all last year which says a lot.

The deer were not hibernating. They were busy eating my azaleas and everything else in sight. My large leaf rhododendrons had a good bud set last year but I am now dealing with poor leaf retention. For many years, the deer did not eat leaves on my rhododendrons but that has changed. This winter, they stripped the foliage from most of my plants up to at least 6 ft.

Below are a couple of pictures of 'John C. White'. They ate all the leaves but not the buds. Last year, they did the same thing to 'Taurus' but as the buds began to open, they ate the flowers, too. This year, they let the plant bloom. I hope



Deer defoliate 'John C. White'



Uneaten bud opens on 'John C. White'

the plants will recover in time. The obnoxious deer even pulled the wire mesh off of some liners I was trying to protect. They ate them, too.

So far, the deer in my neighborhood seem to avoid rhododendrons with indumentum, that fuzz under the leaves of some plants. My *R. metternichii* and *R. adenopodum* as well as *R. yakushimanum* hybrids were spared. I suspect the critters will eventually develop a taste for them.

To date, the deer in my neighborhood do not seem fond of my small leaf lepidotes like *R. keiskei*, 'Olga Mezitt', and '24 Karat' either. Those plants have aromatic foliage and that is not a favorite flavor of Bambi and friends... yet! That will probably change at some point, too.

I did plant lots of daffodils this year since I was anxious to see something bloom in the garden. They were lovely and I will share some photos in future newsletters when we start to think about planting bulbs.

I was impressed with a rhododendron I bought in 2019, Steve Krebs's Southgate® Splendor™ which bloomed this year. It was in a pot that I kept close to the house to protect it from the deer. The flowers lasted three weeks! Its red buds opened into tight trusses of deep pink blossoms, each bloom sporting a red blotch. The pink color gradually faded to lighter shades of pink and eventually ended up as a blush pink.

The flowers passed through some hues of bluish pink that are not favorite colors for me but did transition to better shades later. 'Splendor' has lasted longer than any other variety I have but that may not happen every year. I think I like the ruffled flowers of 'Ingrid Mehlquist' better but they do turn to white rather quickly.

Now that I have been vaccinated and should have immunity to Covid-19, I have been cautiously venturing out to see gardens of other

people. I will discuss some of my travels and then provide images of the gardens.

My first trip was to the Cosby Garden outside of Richmond on April 20. It was one of the featured gardens during our 2016 Williamsburg Convention but it was hit hard by a freeze the week before the tour. The garden had been the pride of three elderly siblings, Roy, Elizabeth, and Madeline Cosby. Madeline passed away shortly before the convention but Roy and Elizabeth continue to expand the collection. The Cosbys have now given their 79-acre tract with 11 acres of azaleas to the Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens. How fortunate we all are when great gardens can be preserved for future generations.

Dave and Leslie Nanney invited me and the Fellers from Long Island to see their garden that afternoon. Gorgeous! I always check on a rare orchid they have, a Showy Orchis. It was still in bud, but Dave just posted a picture of it in bloom. They also keep the plants of each hybridizer in close proximity so the garden is educational, too.

On Sunday, April 25, I visited Carol Segree and Richard Bradshaw to see their gardens. They live very close to one another, perhaps five minutes away. This was actually my second trip to their gardens since I did see Richard's early camellias and daffodils on a previous excursion.

Carol has done so much to her garden in recent years. She has regraded her lawn to correct some drainage problems. She has added low retaining walls along paths that provide an elevated area to display small plants. She built a second patio with a fountain and had some new iron furniture made to complement the design. Now with a deer fence, she has been removing ordinary plants and adding choice selections that need protection. Every year her garden gets better and better but I think I must have been there at peak bloom. Her garden really is a show place.



Color transitions of Southgate® Splendor™ over 3 weeks

I managed to work in a quick trip to see Bob and Rosa McWhorter's garden on May 1st between sessions of the Middle Atlantic Chapter virtual spring meeting. Their garden has really matured and it was spectacular. I have been there many times but this was the best display I have ever seen. Totally awesome!

Having lost most of my large rhododendrons due to weather extremes in recent years, I had almost forgotten how majestic they can be. The McWorters have huge Dexter and Cowles hybrids, rhododendrons from local hybridizers and other sources, choice deciduous and evergreen azaleas, and many companion plants. So many of their plants are fragrant. A sweet perfume pervaded every part of their garden.

They have constructed a network of trails that wind through the undulating terrain in their backyard under the dappled shade of tall trees. Of course, Bob and Rosa are master gardeners. In that microclimate, they have been able to grow many cultivars that most of us cannot keep alive.

Bob has raised many plants from our local and ARS Seed Exchanges. They kindly pointed out plants from seeds that I had donated to the cause.

On May 4th, I gave my first on-site talk in over a year at the 50th Anniversary of Historic London Town and Gardens in Edgewater, MD. It had several threads including our chapter's sponsorship of a memorial bench for Gray Carter. It was so nice to see the landscaping we put around the bench and remember Gray's kind friendship.



Gray Carter

The main part of my talk was on the legacy of the Marshy Point azaleas developed by the late Harry Weiskittel. The ASA donated a number of his plants to London Town and they planted them through the garden. Their talented horticultural director, Meenal Harankhedkar, has arranged the azaleas in harmonious color combinations to enhance the landscape. Carol Segree and I

walked around the garden with the London Town staff and the attendees. The azaleas were in peak bloom and put on an absolutely stunning show!

On Friday, May 7, Norm Beaudry and I thought we would try to beat an impending rain storm and drive to Harrisburg, PA. One of our Associate Members, Joe Minahan, is a hybridizer up there and he had many seedlings blooming for the first time. One of Joe's most famous plants is a red with a large conical truss and deep green leaves he has named 'Pope John Paul II'.

The rain held off and we had a chance to see Joe's garden and his new hybrids. As we arrived, the flower beds in front of his home and along the perimeter were ablaze in brilliant rainbow of colors. I love yellow in the landscape and I could see at the far corner of his lot a clear yellow rhododendron that just seemed to glow. The color was so bright and clear, I wanted to run to see it first, but we let Joe lead the way.

Joe's philosophy is to raise many seedlings from a complex cross to see its potential. With so many genes that can come together, the more seedlings you grow, the better the chances that all the desired characteristics will appear in one plant. It is similar to playing cards. Don't expect a "seven no trump" bridge hand on the first deal.

Joe got many nice plants from his cross (('Mary Belle' x 'Mars') x 'Phipp's Yellow'). He has named at least two so far, a yellow called 'House of Gold' and a yellowish pink called 'Cause of Our Joy' and praises 'Mary Belle' as a parent. Joe has been acquiring yellows from other breeders to use in his crosses, too, including many things from Bob Furman.

We finally got to the corner of his property to see that yellow. At this point he just calls it "Yellow Yellow". It is his cross of (('Mary Belle' x 'Odee Wright') x 'Phipp's Yellow'). The truss may be lax but that color is so luminous!

When we returned, I had a chance to talk to Jean briefly and then checked out the Beaudry's lovely garden. Norm has some very nice new hybrids, too. The 2020 newsletter supplement "This Week 10" had more on Norm's work. The remaining pages have images from my tours.

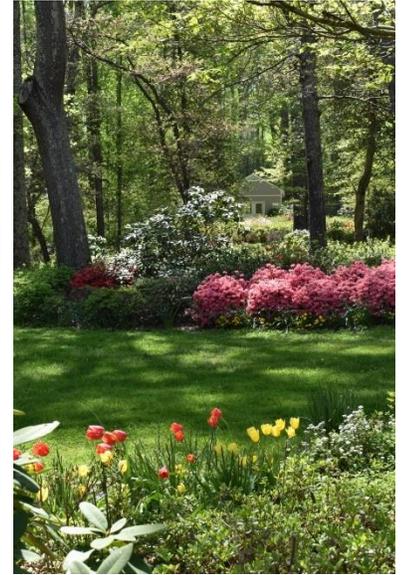


Cosby home and azaleas



Rural vista from the Cosby Garden

The Cosby Garden



Azaleas and Tulips



Azaleas, Tulips, and Pansies provide a riot of color



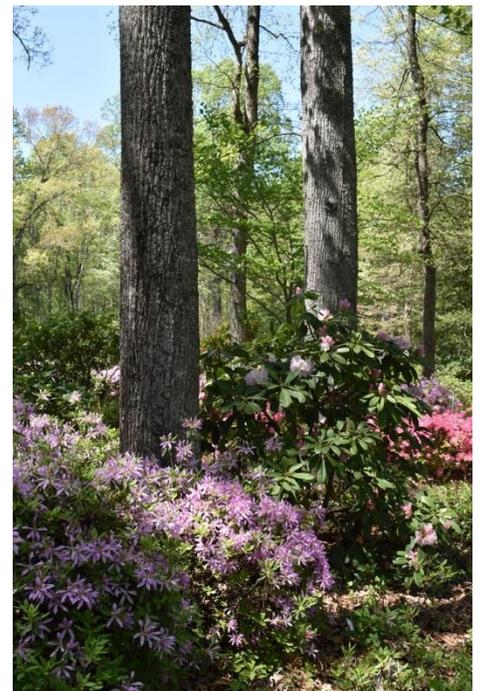
Masses of the same cultivar create a strong visual effect



Woodland Vista



Elizabeth Cosby



'Koromo-Shikibu' with Rhododendrons



Pergola and the Cosby Home



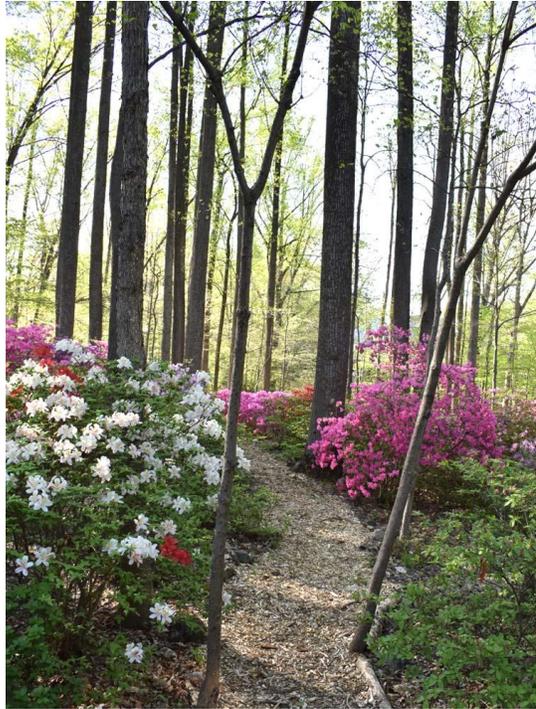
Vista from a Garden Room



Woodland Vista



The Nanney Home



New Trail

Dave and Leslie Nanney Garden



Glenn Dale Azalea 'Ambrosia'



'Ambrosia'



Dave Nanney and Bruce Feller survey the azaleas



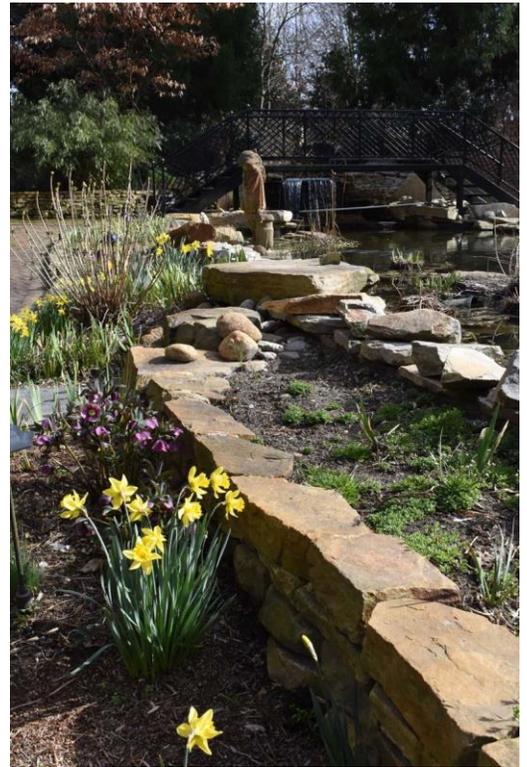
yakushmanum x makinoi



Rare Showy Orchis Photo: D. Nanney



Richard Bradshaw's Home



Daffodils at the Edge of the Pond

Richard Bradshaw Garden



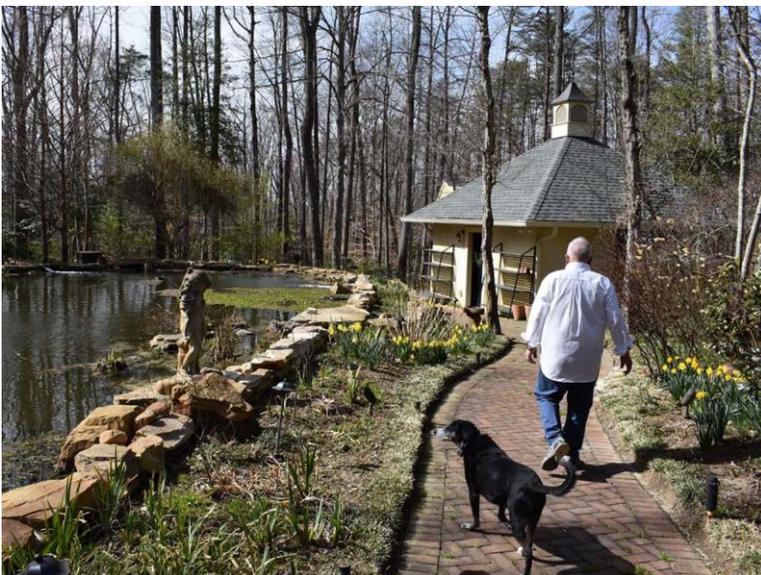
Camellia, Tulips, and Tree Peony



Camellia



Arched gateway to the pond



Richard and "Little Dog" walk beside the pond



Edgeworthia



Azalea 'Dayspring'



Border Garden



('Odee Wright x wardii), op



Maple 'Waterfall' and ('Odee Wright x wardii), op



Carol's New Patio



Tree Peony



Carol Segree and guests

Carol Segree Garden



Original Patio and *R. alabamense*



'Phyllis Korn'



'David Gable'



(*yakushimanum* x *metternichii*)



R. periclymenoides



'Todmorden' and azaleas



Azaleas along a walkway



Ostrich Ferns

Bob and Rosa McWhorter Garden



Knap Hill Azalea



'Peach Petticoats'



'Gigi' and 'Phyllis Korn'



Tunnel through 'Blaaus Pink'



'Queen Annes'



Tree Peony



Azalea 'Tradition'



Seedling raised from PVC cross: ('Scintillation' x 'Apritan')



Bob and Rosa at the McWhorter Home



Beaudry Garden: Rhododendrons and Azaleas



'Strawberry Parfait' and 'Bellringer'



Garden Vista with Hosta



'Ingrid Mehlquist'



'Ingrid Mehlquist'

Norm & Jean Beaudry Garden



'Blaney's Blue'



'Don Kellam'



Beaudry's ('Cornellia' x 'Atlantic Gold')



R. yakushimanum 'Fred Minch'



('Nestucca' x (*maximum* x *calophytum*))



Beaudry's ('Hardy Giant' x *macabeanum*)



Joe's **'Yellow Yellow'** ((Mary Belle x Odee Wright) x Phipp's Yellow)



Joe Minahan's **'John Paul II'**

Joe Minahan Garden



Rhododendron Beds



Minahan's **'House of Gold'**



Minahan's **'Cause of Our Joy'**



Joe Minahan with Furman's **'Atlantic Gold'**



((Mary Belle x Odee Wright) x Witches Butter



Minahan's **'Fritzie Boy'**



Furman's **'Impression'**



More Amazing Seedlings!



((Mary Belle x Mars) x Phipp's Yellow)



MacMullen Hybrid **'Winsome Winnie'** (Joe's wife)



Azaleas along the Spring Walk

Historic London Town and Gardens



'Wagner's White Spider' & 'MP Annapolis'



'MP Bopalula'



'MP Red Tape' and 'MP Touchdown'



Primroses



Harold Belcher and Gabrielle Scott



Carol Segree with 'MP Love Lace' and 'MP Lavender Girl'



Vista of the South River

Potomac Valley Chapter ARS - Newsletter
Donald W. Hyatt, Editor
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Potomac Valley Chapter
of the
American Rhododendron Society

The Potomac Valley Chapter ARS is one of three American Rhododendron Society chapters located in District 9 which represents the Middle Atlantic region of the United States. Some of our chapter activities include:

- Regular Meetings with Speakers
- Annual Chapter Banquet
- Garden Tours
- Field Trips to Nurseries or to Wild Stands of Native Azaleas and Rhododendrons
- Local and National Seed Exchanges
- Plants for Members Program
- Flower Show
- Informative Chapter Newsletters
- Annual Photography Contest
- Access to Chapter Library Books

Our regular chapter meetings are usually held four times a year at the Potomac Community Center in Potomac, MD, on Sunday afternoons. However, we do hold occasional meetings at other locations in nearby Maryland, Virginia, or Washington, DC.

We encourage you to check out our chapter website which includes at least 16 years of previous newsletters that contain interesting articles, more color pictures, and examples of past activities:

www.arspvc.org

As a member of our local chapter you will also become a member at the national level of the American Rhododendron Society. This entitles you to a year's subscription of their outstanding quarterly **Journal** filled with information and many color pictures. You will also be invited to attend national conventions or regional conferences.

The cost of ARS membership is \$40 per year and includes membership in a chapter of your choice, such as our Potomac Valley Chapter. If you are already a member of another ARS Chapter, you may join the Potomac Valley Chapter as an Associate Member for only \$10 per year but you will need to identify your home chapter.

For more information about the American Rhododendron Society, check out their website:

www.rhododendron.org

Membership Application
American Rhododendron Society

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____

Zip/Country _____

Telephone _____

E-mail: _____

Memberships are on a calendar year basis and include the local chapter membership:

Individual/Family.....	\$40.00
Student (proof of age required).....	10.00
Commercial/Corporate.....	90.00
Sustaining	75.00
Sponsoring.....	150.00
Life, single	1,000.00
Life, family.....	1,500.00
Associate Membership*.....	10.00

**Associate Members must identify home chapter*

I would like my "home" chapter to be the Potomac Valley Chapter

To join our chapter, contact our treasurer:

POTOMAC VALLEY CHAPTER ARS
prittwoman@gmail.com

You may also send this form with US Funds payable to the national organization:

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
P.O. Box 214
Great River, NY 11739

To pay online by credit card, follow the link to "Membership" on the ARS website:

www.rhododendron.org

More ARS National Contact Points:

Phone (631) 533-0375, Fax (866) 883-8019

Email: member@arsoffice.org