



Potomac Valley Chapter

American Rhododendron Society

www.arspvc.org

Summer Newsletter: August 2023

Chapter Officers

President: Carol Segree
csegree17@outlook.com
Secretary: Diane Reinke
Isabelle49@aol.com
Treasurer: Phyllis Rittman
rittwoman@gmail.com

Potomac Valley Chapter Calendar – 2023

- September 20: Picnic & Beaudry Dedication, London Town Gdns, MD
- October 19 – 21: ARS Western Regional Conference, Florence, OR
- October 28: Chapter Banquet, Potomac United Methodist Church, MD
- January 2024 TBA: Ralf Bauer Zoom Presentation
- April 28 – 30, 2024: District 9 Meeting, Annapolis, MD
- May 2 – 5, 2024: ARS Convention, Bellingham, WA

Chapter Picnic & Jean Beaudry Bench Dedication

Historic London Town & Gardens

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

11:00 AM to 2:00 PM

We will be having our picnic and the dedication of a bench honoring Jean Beaudry at Historic London Town and Gardens on Wednesday, September 20. This bench was sponsored by our Potomac Valley Chapter ARS and the Ben Morrison Chapter ASA. Jean and her husband Norm were long time members of our chapter. The beautiful garden they created in Bethesda is still one of the best in the region and Norm has been donating many of their specimen plants to landscape the site. Jean was a very special person and touched so many of us with her kind and caring spirit. This will be a lasting tribute to both her and Norm.

Please **RSVP** to Carol Segree by **Sunday, September 17**, if you plan to come. We need to have your names on the list to provide London Town since they will not be charging our members their standard entry fee.

Carol Segree – Email: csegree17@outlook.com

Address for London Town Gardens:

839 Londontown Road, Edgewater, MD 21037

<https://www.historiclondontown.org>

We will gather at the Pavilion near the Gray Carter Memorial at 11:00 AM and expect to eat at 11:30 AM. The chapter will provide fried chicken, plates, drinks, and eating utensils but we ask you to bring a side or dessert to accompany the meal. After lunch, we will have a toast to Jean and then tour the garden.

There will also be some plants for sale and proceeds will go to support the plantings at London Town.



Location of the Jean Beaudry Memorial at London Town

The bench which we have installed at London Town in honor of Jean Beaudry is located beneath a large oak on the lower terrace closer to the water. The site has a commanding view of the South River and is one of the most scenic spots in the garden.

The large Beaudry family already had a private celebration of Jean's life in May at London Town and then reconvened for ceremonies in the Beaudry garden. This is the time for our chapter members and Jean's other garden friends to pay respects to her.



Norm Beaudry at Jean's Bench - London Town Gardens

Chapter Banquet – *Save the Date!*

Potomac United Methodist Church

Saturday, October 28, 2023
12:00 Noon to 4:00 PM

We will be having our annual chapter banquet on Saturday, October 28. The venue will be the same as last year, the Potomac United Methodist Church, which is on the corner of Falls Rd, and S. Glen Rd. The banquet will be in the Parish House Darvish Room. The church has a large parking lot and the room is toward the back of the hall on the second floor. There is a convenient elevator but there are also some stairs leading to the room from an access road in back.

Location: Potomac United Methodist Church
9908 S Glen Rd, Potomac, MD 20854

They will let us into the facility at 11:00 AM since we will need to set up tables and chairs. We need to bring in a few auction plants, too. Naturally, we will have to put everything back in place and clean up before we leave so please schedule a bit of extra volunteer time to help us out. Thanks in advance!

The meal will be handled by a professional caterer but we haven't finalized the menu or prices yet. We will send an official registration form in late September. Expect the cost to be comparable to last year. Ginny Mohr will be working closely with the caterer so we will ask you to send your reservations and checks to her. More about that later.

Our speaker will be Jim Dronenburg, a well-known horticulturist in the DC area. Jim has been very active in the Rock Garden Society as well as the Four Seasons Garden Club. He is an excellent speaker and his partner, Dan Weil, is a professional photographer. Jim is putting together a program for us titled "Pamela Harper Remembered" using pictures Dan has taken over the years. It is something you won't want to miss!

Pam was a world renowned garden writer and photographer who lived in Seaford, VA, which is near Yorktown. She has spoken to local ARS chapters and authored a host of awesome garden books. Her two-acre garden was superb and some of us have visited the property for inspiration many times. Some of the rare plants she cultivated in her garden have found their way to the market via commercial growers, like Tony Avent and his Plant Delights Nursery. I have several.

Sadly, Pam passed away this summer at the age of 93 but has left a legacy of excellence that will be hard to match. Her son invited guests for one final tour of her garden on August 12 and several of us made a final pilgrimage. The next column and following page have some of my images and impressions of Pam's garden.



Pam Harper's Garden by Don Hyatt

I have visited Pam Harper's garden several times and will provide some images and thoughts about my experiences. Her memory was phenomenal and she seemed to know my name after the first visit. She was such a warm and inviting host, she made everyone feel like a long-lost friend. It was a delight just to hear her talk about plants in her garden since she had a wonderful British accent that added authority to every word she uttered.

The first thing I noticed was that I rarely saw a label on any plant in her garden. She explained that she takes many photos of her plants for books and magazine articles. Nothing ruins a photo more than a sea of labels sticking up like tombstones in a cemetery. She knew every plant in her garden as though it was her own child but she did admit she had some insurance. Beside each plant was usually a large stone, and under the stone was a plastic label on which she wrote the plant name in pencil. Plastic labels hidden from sun do not deteriorate and pencil is extremely durable. Critters don't steal labels they cannot see. Absolute genius!

I never saw any large leaf rhododendrons in her garden but her spring landscape had many evergreen and deciduous azaleas. She was partial to fragrance and I remember her saying how much she liked native hybrids of *R. austinum* such as 'My Mary'.





Pam had no grass to mow but her wide gravel driveway had garden rooms and trails on both sides. The borders had choice shrubs and trees with masses of “time tested” perennials. She did not need every cultivar but selected the best forms for landscaping. If a plant did not perform, she would pull it out and replace with something else. She wrote several books on that topic.



Her favorite evergreen azaleas were planted in masses like the fragrant lavender spider ‘Koromo-Shikibu’ (pictured below) and the blush lavender ‘Rivermist’ in the photo on the prior page. She used plenty of white in the garden, too. She liked pastel colors near the house but situated the brighter deciduous azaleas in other areas of the garden. Pam wrote an excellent book titled “Colour Echoes” where she emphasizes variations on a color theme and color harmonies repeated in a landscape. Super!



Carol Segree, Karel Bernady, George McLellan and I did attend the open garden on August 12. We saw many nursery friends who also came to pay homage to her. The summer garden featured crape myrtles that had brilliant colored blossoms. One showstopper was a brilliant red with dark foliage. I didn’t see a tag but it looked like ‘Ebony Fire’, a relatively new and quite stunning variety.



Her tallest crape myrtle was the Japanese species *Lagerstroemia fauriei*. It was found on the island of Yakushima in Japan, the same place where *R. yakushimanum* was discovered. This plant has white flowers which were already through but it is best known for its copper colored bark. Gorgeous!



District 9 Meeting – Annapolis April 28 – 30, 2024

Our Potomac Valley Chapter ARS will be hosting a District 9 meeting next spring in Annapolis and we will be needing the help of our members to host this event. Your chapter officers have done much to organize this meeting and we want to share with you this press release so you can start planning, too.

Hotel Accommodations

This three-day meeting will be held at the Country Inn & Suites in Annapolis. The hotel has given us a special rate of \$99 per night plus taxes if we avoid the peak weekend demand. We plan to arrive on Sunday, April 28, and will leave on Tuesday, April 30.



Expect good food, excellent talks, beautiful garden tours, and a great plant sale. This will be a great opportunity to reconnect with old friends!



Speakers

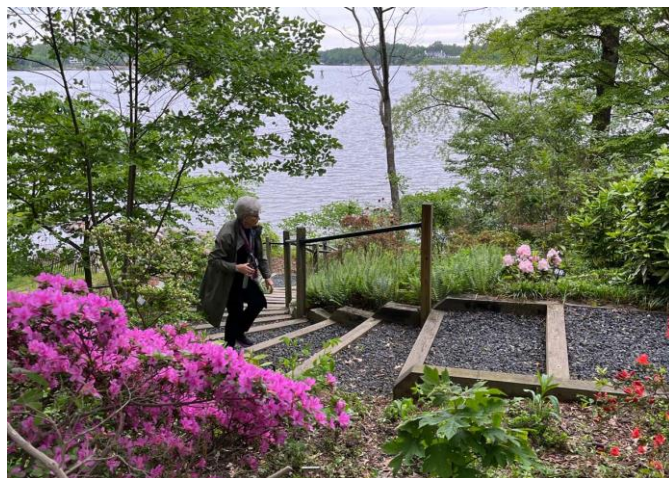
Don Hyatt will be the Sunday evening speaker and he will talk about the Marshy Point azaleas. He will also give a preview of the plant sale.

Tony Dove, author and retired horticulturist at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, will be our banquet keynote on Monday night. He was the original designer of the landscaping at Historic London Town & Gardens and will talk about the history of the garden. He will share some images from his private garden, too.



Monday Tour – London Town Gardens

On Monday, our tour will begin with Historic London Town & Gardens, a 23-acre park and museum that overlooks the South River on the Chesapeake Bay. London Town was originally a colonial port in 1683. A tavern built on site in 1760 was an almshouse for many years but has been converted into a museum.



The 10-acre garden includes a mile-long walking trail among ornamentals and native plants. In addition to rhododendrons and azaleas, the garden has collections of camellias, magnolias, and hollies. Our Potomac Valley Chapter ARS has established memorial gardens for Gray Carter and Jean Beaudry. It is an ASA Legacy garden for Marshy Point azaleas.



McWhorter Garden

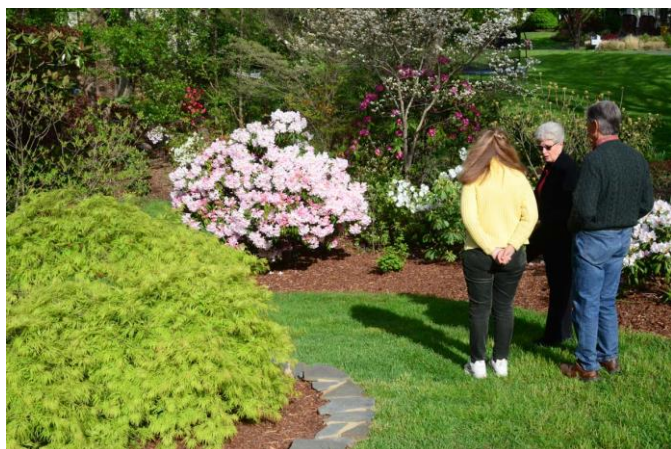


On Monday, we will also visit the garden of Rosa & Bob McWhorter. The McWhorters have a mature landscape under a tall canopy of trees with many winding paths among the plantings. It features large evergreen and deciduous azaleas, as well as an extensive rhododendron collection. They have many rare Dexter and Cowles hybrids and some new hybrids Bob raised from the Seed Exchange.



Tuesday – Segree Garden

On Tuesday we will visit the garden of Carol Segree. She has a diverse landscape with both sunny and shady areas including wooded paths among mature rhododendron and azalea plantings.



Carol has added significant stonework in recent years including retaining walls and a second circular patio and fountain as seen in her photo above. She is now refining her collection, keeping the best azaleas and rhododendrons while adding new introductions and choice companion plants like camellias, Japanese maples, evergreens, flowering trees, and perennials.

Bradshaw Garden



We also expect to see the private gardens of Hidden View Farm owned by Richard Bradshaw. This 100-acre wooded estate has a 10-acre fenced garden that includes a large pond with water features, a camellia collection, azaleas, a redwood forest, hollies, and a vast collection of ornamental trees, shrubs and companion plants.





A Tribute to Blossom McBrier

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Blossom McBrier of Fairview, PA, on July 10. She is pictured above with Barbara Bullock at the joint ARS/ASA Convention in Atlanta, GA, in April. Blossom was 99 years old. Could there be a better name for woman who loved plants? I don't think so!

I met Blossom when we toured her lovely garden at the 2014 ARS Convention in Cleveland, Ohio. The large tract of land was near Lake Erie and she had a number of lovely gardens on the way to her home at the top of the hill. One hybrid just coming into bloom was a magnificent specimen of 'Harold Amateis'. It had blood red trusses and dark green leaves. That plant (below) must have been 20 ft tall. It was a cross of *R. maximum* with the tender red *R. strigillosum*.



Blossom was known as a Renaissance woman but that was only part of the story. She was a human dynamo. I don't recall anyone even half her age who had as much energy and exuberance for life as she did.

Blossom was multitalented. She was an artist who painted in oils and was a sculptor. She worked with ceramics, too. Below are some of her whimsical creations we saw around the house and garden.



She was an accomplished concert pianist, serving as President of the Erie Philharmonic Orchestra. She was a humanitarian. She was a golfer and a gardener.

Blossom was so excited to see deciduous azaleas in the convention plant sale. She wanted to plant another garden and while in the checkout line at the sale, the unthinkable happened. She turned suddenly to look behind her, lost her balance, and fell on the hard cement floor. Those of us in the room heard the loud crack and our hearts sank. She had broken her hip.

The paramedics took her to the hospital and one of her sons arrived the next day to escort her home. A broken hip is a serious problem for the elderly and I suspect that contributed to her demise. She would have been 100 in December. Blossom's family will be celebrating her life at the home on September 3, and as a memorial, they suggest planting a tree somewhere in honor of the inspirational Blossom McBrier.

Dues Are Due!

Your 2024 renewal notice with a return envelope to Phyllis Rittman should be arriving soon. Please make checks payable to Potomac Valley Chapter ARS. Dues must be received by Dec. 1 to get the Winter Journal.

POTOMAC VALLEY CHAPTER ARS

Phyllis T. Rittman, Treasurer
rittwoman@gmail.com

Category	Cost
Regular - (one or two people in the same household)	\$40
Commercial / Corporate	\$90
Sustaining	\$75
Sponsoring	\$150
Student – (under age 25) Access to online Journal only	\$10
Life Member – (one or two people in the same household)	\$1000
Associate – must belong to some other ARS Chapter (please identify)	\$10

As long as your membership has not elapsed, it is possible to renew online using a credit card or Paypal but you will need your membership number. That is located on the address label of your Journal. Here is a link to the ARS Office where you can access that page. If you haven't set up an account with the ARS, we do encourage you to do so. That will allow you to read the online digital copies of the Journal from 2011 to the present. Here is the ARS Office website:

<https://www.arsoffice.org>

New members or those whose memberships have already elapsed can access an online membership form at the main ARS website:

<https://www.rhododendron.org>

Act Fast! There may still be time!

2023 ARS Photography Contest

As noted in your summer Journal (page 27), the deadline to enter the photo contest has been extended until midnight PST, September 1, 2023. Check official rules in the Journal but there are basically 6 categories: flower, plant, landscape, foliage, people/animal, and other. Send entries by email to:

ars.editor@gmail.com

2024 ROY Awards

By the end of October, ARS members in our area will be expected to send a list of recommendations for the 2024 Rhododendron of the Year Awards for the Middle Atlantic Region. That includes the chapters in our District 9 (MAC, Potomac Valley, and Mason-Dixon) and also nominations from Delaware, eastern Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.

We need one Elepidote Rhododendron (large leaf), one Lepidote Rhododendron (small leaf, scaly), one Evergreen Azalea, and one Deciduous Azalea. The plants should have pretty flowers, good foliage, nice plant habit, and perform well in the region. They should be different than varieties we have selected before. The plants should be available from nurseries or chapter plant sales, too.

You can check out the 2023 ROY winners at the following link and at the bottom of the page are listings of prior winners back to 2004.

<https://www.rhododendron.org/roy23ma.htm>

Please send nominations to Don Hyatt by October 10. Feel free to list up to four favorites in each category to give us a better pool of candidates.

donaldhyatt@verizon.net

New Delaware Valley Chapter ARS

Two Pennsylvania Chapters recently merged to form the Delaware Valley Chapter ARS. The prior groups were the Valley Forge Chapter and the Greater Philadelphia Chapter. Meetings are often in nearby PA so you might want to become an Associate member. Karel Bernady is their new president.

Regional Activities

We are not alone. Most of our members belong to multiple ARS and ASA Chapters in the region so we provide this calendar of events to help you plan.

September 20 – Potomac Valley Ch. ARS & Ben

Morrison ASA: Picnic, London Town Gardens

October 7 – Middle Atlantic Chapter ARS: Meeting, Roslyn Center, Richmond, VA

October 8 – Mason Dixon Chapter ARS: Meeting, Bear Branch Nature Center, Westminster, MD

October 22 – Northern VA Chapter ASA: Meeting, Kirkwood Presbyterian Church, Springfield, VA.

October 28 – Potomac Valley Ch. ARS: Banquet, Potomac United Methodist Church, Potomac, MD

November 5 - Mason Dixon Chapter ARS: Meeting, Bear Branch Nature Center, Westminster, MD

November 12 – Delaware Valley Chapter ARS: Banquet, St. David's Golf Club, Wayne, PA

December 3 – Northern VA Chapter ASA: Holiday Social, Kirkwood Presb. Ch., Springfield, VA.

Shrine Mont – Orkney Springs, VA MAC and PVC Joint Meeting

Did you make the joint meeting of the Middle Atlantic and Potomac Valley Chapters on May 19-21? It was lots of fun! These multiple day events allow for several speakers, garden tours, plant sales, auctions, and social times where we can talk to our friends.

We stayed at Shrine Mont, a conference center in the Shenandoah Valley that caters to religious retreats. The main building, the Virginia House, used to be the Orkney Springs Hotel. It was built in 1875 but was restored in 1987. Staying there was like stepping into the past. All attendees ate the same menu at the same time, cafeteria style, just like a college dining hall.



They must have had several hundred other people at Shrine Mont besides us. Most were there for prayer and reflection, very well behaved. We were provided a separate building for our meetings and social hours. Plant people can get rowdy. We had wine and cheese, held auctions, and listened to excellent talks. Doug Jolly spoke on Friday. Sally and John Perkins spoke on Saturday. Carol Segree's wine choice was superb!



On Saturday, we carpooled to the garden tours. I don't know how many times we passed an enormous 'Roseum Elegans' (above) in the yard of one home. It was huge and perfect in every way. If there is a National Champion for that plant, it is a contender!



Of the three gardens on tour, the home of long-time MAC member, Hubert Barb, was in peak bloom and shown here. He has deciduous and evergreen azaleas, as well as many newer rhododendrons purchased at MAC and ARS plant sales. Below is George McLellan admiring the huge pink trusses of 'ReileyRidge Bright Day'. The other photos show 'Calsap' and 'America' in the landscape, and the striking blooms of Delp's 'Spot Magic'. Lovely!



Additional images of Hubert Barb's garden and the other places we saw are shown on the next page. The tours were very convenient, only a few miles away from the hotel. That will be the case for the tours we have planned for our District Meeting.

Hubert Barb's Garden

Here are additional photos from Hubert's garden. We all admired the combination of the purple azalea shown below with the variegated euonymus vine.



Seeing the azalea 'Pocono Pink' brought back fond memories of the late Nancy Swell, a former MAC member. She introduced it at a Richmond ASA event.



The tallest rhodo in Hubert's backyard is 'Spot Magic'. The two portraits are 'Solidarity' and Diane's Delight'.



I am fond of yellow so I was first drawn to the bright Knap Hill azalea. Then I found 'Delp's Stardust'. Nice!



Curtis Barb's Garden

Hubert's son, Curtis, lives nearby and he has started growing azaleas and rhododendrons, too. Below, Sandra McDonald is dwarfed by a large Glenn Dale.



Linda Baker's Garden

A nearby neighbor, Linda Baker, specialized in wildflowers but she had many perennials, too. Her peonies and iris were lovely but her bed of pink lady's slippers was the show stopper for me. Awesome!

Those native orchids are almost impossible to transplant because they live in symbiotic harmony with a mycorrhizal fungus in the soil. If the fungus dies, so will the lady's slippers. They also need very acid soil. Yellow lady's slippers are easier since they do not need the fungus and prefer neutral soil.



Potomac Valley Chapter ARS - Newsletter
Donald W. Hyatt, Editor
donaldhyatt@verizon.net



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, send this form with payment to:

POTOMAC VALLEY CHAPTER ARS
PVC-ARS Chapter Treasurer
rittwoman@gmail.com

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

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
P.O. Box 43
Craryville, NY 12521

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

Email: member@arsoffice.org