



Potomac Valley Chapter

American Rhododendron Society

www.arspvc.org

Summer Newsletter Part 1: July 2024

Conference
Review!

Potomac Valley Chapter Calendar – 2024

- September 22, 2024: Chapter Picnic, Seneca Creek State Park
- December 4, 2024: Fall Banquet & Speaker, Bradshaw Estate

Chapter Officers

President: Carol Segree
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Secretary: Diane Reinke
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Treasurer: Phyllis Rittman
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Summer Newsletter Part One

District Meeting Recap: Annapolis!

Your editor apologizes for missing the May newsletter and will be sending a double issue in July. Part One will focus on our District 9 meeting in Annapolis. It was hard work but a grand success.

President Carol Segree, a.k.a. “Wonder Woman,” did a masterful job and deserves unending kudos. We chose April 28 – 30 for the meeting since that was when we could get the best hotel rates during our peak bloom. Carol’s criteria for success included low cost, great gardens, good food, and quality plant sale.

Naturally we wanted good weather but we would have to rely on Mother Nature for that. Fate had already dealt Carol a blow in January by bringing down several huge trees from her neighbor’s yard across portions her garden. They crushed many choice plants and barely missed her house.

Carol wasted no time. With a few landscape helpers and assistance from Karel Bernady, they managed to clear the debris and relandscape that area of the garden. Most people who visited her place had no idea that there had been any damage. It really was an amazing transformation in just 3 months! We also thank Karel for encouraging his Delaware Valley Chapter to join us for the meeting. More new friends!

Some plants needed heavy pruning to shape them but others were too far gone to save. Karel did take cuttings of choice clones to root so those rare plants could be shared. They located rhododendrons and azaleas that Carol could use to fill in empty spots and she added choice flowering trees to replace some of the shade she lost in that area. She then filled in with annuals and perennials to complete the design. She managed to rebuild a garden and handle all the other details related to the meeting at the same time.

Considering the parade of vicious storms across the Midwest and Southeast this spring with tornados and massive floods, we certainly lucked out from that point on. When the rhododendrons and azaleas started to open, we were blessed with weeks of cool, dry weather leading up to our conference. The early varieties seemed to last forever but then a few warm days brought on the midseason cultivars, too. Everything seemed to be in flower at the same time and the gardens were the best that we had ever seen. Below is a picture of Carol during the garden tour in same place shown to the left which was one of the hardest hit areas. See more images of the conference and gardens on the pages that follow.



Trees fall in the Segree Garden Photo C. Segree



Segree Garden Repaired Photo D. Hyatt



Annapolis!

Yes, our conference was a grand success. We priced our meeting for 50 attendees and would break even charging \$210 for everything during the three days. That included two days of bus tours, premium box lunches, and complementary wine at two "Happy Hours". On Sunday, we had heavy hors d'oeuvres. Monday night was a catered banquet. A modest plant sale and auctions did help cover expenses. We were limited to 70 people due to the hotel facilities and 70 came. We cleared \$3747.27!



Modest Plant Sale – Brought over 100 plants, sold all but 8

There are so many people to thank. First of all, we must thank the garden hosts who spent years grooming their gardens. London Town closed their garden for our exclusive use at no cost. Richard Bradshaw donated use of the pavilion on his estate, too. Rosa McWhorter made the hotel arrangements. Richard and Carol managed all the food services which included caterers and items they prepared for Sunday night. Carol arranged the buses and also managed the plant sale. We are indebted to Carolyn and Paul Beck for donating many of the plants in our sale. Thanks to Phyllis Rittman who managed the registration desk, collection of plant sale proceeds, and was the bus captain. Your editor handled the program, publicity, auction, and audio-visual needs.



Richard Bradshaw's Floral Arrangement

On Sunday, the marinated turkey breast cooked by Richard's caregiver Pandora who has assisted him since his lung transplant last year was given a final singe over charcoal by his son Matthew. It was the best turkey I had ever tasted. Phenomenal! Below are the professional caterers at Monday's banquet.



Monday Banquet: Richard Mohr picks up his meal



Our keynote, Tony Dove (above left), told how he designed the original gardens at London Town and the history of his own garden. Seated with him is Bill Miller and London Town's new and talented Horticulture Director, Meenal Harankhedhar.

Day 1: Bob & Rosa McWhorter Garden

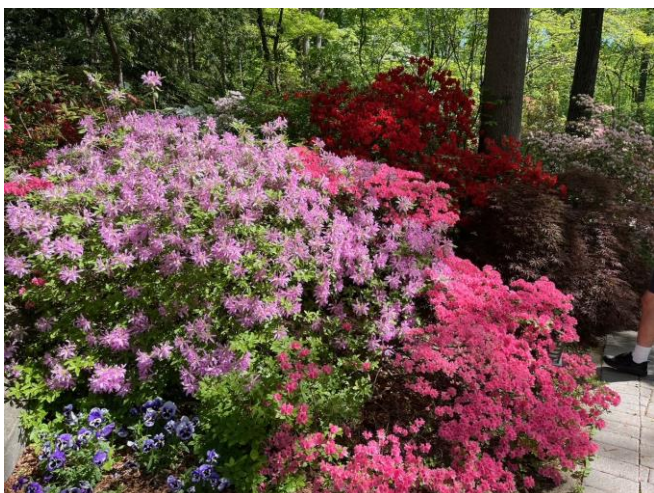


First Stop: The McWhorter Garden

The McWhorter Garden was our first stop and their place was the best we have ever seen. They have an extensive collection of large, mature plants and everything was flowering at the same time with their many dogwoods. What a wonderful display!



Across the front of their garden is a mass planting of the bright pink Kurume 'Tradition'. Favorites like the lavender spider 'Koromo-shikabu' and pale lavender 'Madame Butterfly' are along the drive.



'Koromo-Shikabu' and 'Tradition' mingle together



McWhorter selection - 'Jennifer Marie'



Flower Closeup - 'Jennifer Marie'

Bob has been hybridizing for a number of years and also raising plants from other seed exchanges. Above is one of their favorites that he and Rosa plan to name for their late daughter, 'Jennifer Marie'. The seed came from a cross your editor made ('Scintillation' x 'Apritan') and donated to our Potomac Valley Chapter Seed Exchange. The best plant from a cross will usually be grown by someone else so always share your seed!



Delicate blossoms of 'Madame Butterfly'

Bob & Rosa McWhorter Garden (continued)



The McWhorter's shaded back yard has an open area that connects to trails that wind along the slopes in the ravine at the back of the property. They have a superb collection of rhododendrons and azaleas planted along the paths including many rare Dexter and Cowles hybrids they purchased on Sandwich Club trips to Cape Cod. Evergreen and deciduous azaleas are scattered in the landscape. Along the paths are companion plants including wildflowers, ferns, and tree peonies.



Striking blossoms of Azalea 'Magnifica' a.k.a. 'Sekidera'



'John C. White' with 'Blaney's Blue'



Azalea 'Ellie Harris' at the lawn's edge



Phyllis Rittman and Theresa Brents relax along a trail



Anita Burke from Toronto samples refreshments



Fragrant 'Dexter's Honeydew' mingles with azaleas

Day 1: London Town & Gardens



Historic London Town & Gardens was our second stop. We arrived around noon and went directly to their new outdoor pavilion to have our box lunches. After we finished, their Horticultural Director Meenal took us on a tour. Below is where we stopped to see a pale pink rhododendron that we intend to name 'London Town'. Carol Segree raised the original plant which came from open pollinated seed of ('Odee Wright' x *wardii*). Due to the foliage and flowers, we think that the other parent could have been *hyperythrum*.



Meenal shows attendees the rhododendron 'London Town'



Rhododendron 'London Town'



London Town's new pavilion where we had lunch

London Town has many trails and collections of plants including camellias, rhododendrons, and Marshy Point azaleas developed by Maryland nurseryman, Harry Weiskittel. There are several overlooks of the scenic South River, a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay, and memorial benches.



One of the memorial benches at an overlook



Scenic Vista of the South River

Our chapter has sponsored two memorial benches at London Town. One is for Gray Carter, a long-time member who supported our activities in many ways. The other was for Jean Beaudry whose welcoming personality and dedicated service was unmatched.

London Town & Gardens (continued)



Azalea 'Marshy Point Annapolis'

London Town is a Legacy Garden of the Azalea Society for the Marshy Point Azaleas. These hybrids were developed by the late Harry C. Weiskittel III who is pictured below. He had a wholesale nursery on the shore of the Chesapeake Bay near Baltimore and introduced many hybrids like 'MP Annapolis'. London Town is maintaining a collection of his azaleas that are featured in their landscape.



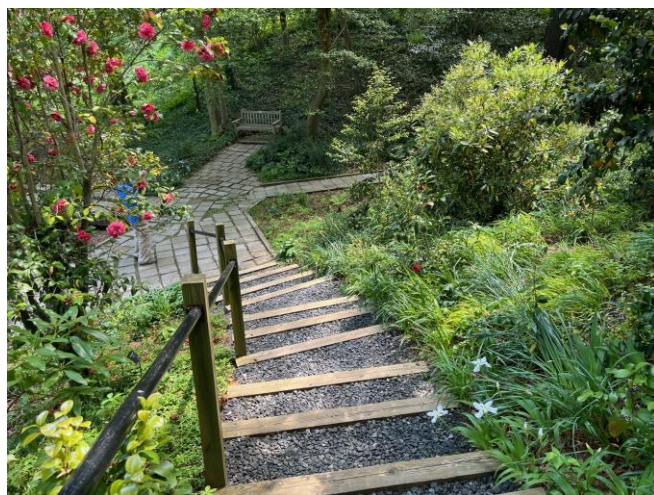
Harry Weiskittel holding Azalea 'Marshy Point Annapolis'



Visitors heading toward the Gray Carter Memorial



Gray Carter Memorial Bench



Camellias along the steps descending to the lower level

London Town Gardens has many trails and some of them descend from the upper level where they have commanding views of the South River to the lower portion of the garden that is closer to the water's edge. The memorial bench for Jean Beaudry pictured below is on a lower level under a large oak but still has a magnificent view of the water. Seated on the bench from left to right are George McLellan, Karel Bernady, and Phyllis Rittman.



Site of the Jean Beaudry Memorial Bench

Day 2: Carol Segree Garden



Our first stop on Tuesday morning was the garden of Carol Segree. It really was spectacular. Carol was professionally a graphics designer and it is easy to see that she uses her artistic talent in designing her garden. In the above photo, Carol seemed to color coordinate her outfit to harmonize with deciduous azaleas along her driveway. The red azalea is 'Crimson Tide'.



'Sunny Side Up' puts on a show as 'London Town' fades



'Jack Cowles' and an open pollinated *R. makinoi* seedling



'John C. White' with double-flowered 'Whitestone'



Above is a second patio Carol added to her garden under her oak where the grass was difficult to grow. The water tumbling down the fountain in the center gives such a nice sound and I am sure the birds appreciate the water source in the current drought. The patio serves as central point where most of the garden paths in her backyard converge.



'Secret Wish' is a perfect companion with 'Ingrid Mehlquist'

Carol Segree Garden (continued)



'Dexter's Giant Red'

Carol finds room for all the best varieties and grows them to perfection. She doesn't waste time on plants that do not perform well. She either gives them away or threatens to throw them into the ravine at the back of her property. Her plants must know that they need to flourish or will end up in the compost heap. Her many rare companion plants are spectacular, too.



Bob Furman hybrid 'Atlantic Gold'



Sandra McDonald hybrid 'Venus' Baby'



Pink Lady's Slippers – Native orchid *Cypripedium acaule*



Werner Brack hybrid 'Janet's Flair'



Delicate blossoms of azalea *R. serpyllifolium*

Tour 2: Richard Bradshaw Garden



Our second stop was at Richard Bradshaw's estate, Hidden View Farm. He owns about 100 acres with 10 of them fenced around his home and garden. The property has a large barn that he converted into a pavilion he rents for weddings and corporate events. He kindly offered that facility for us to use. The glass walls make it seem like you are dining outside but the air conditioning lets you forget that it is a hot day.



Attendees enjoyed premium box lunches in the pavilion



The floor to ceiling glass windows provide great views



The deer fence allows Richard to landscape with hostas



One major feature in Richard's fenced garden is a large pond with a fountain and waterfall. There is extensive seating on rock walls and chairs on the brick patios that surround the pond. A wide bridge that crosses at the waterfall provides great views and restrooms are in the pool house. A succession of bloom begins with spring bulbs and progresses to other perennials and annuals throughout the season. He has tropical plants in containers including citrus trees.

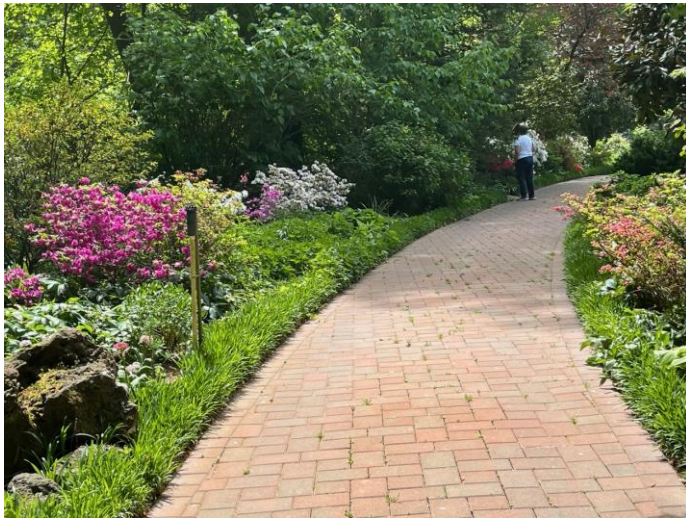


Pond and bridge at the waterfall area

Richard Bradshaw Garden (continued)



Transition area between fountain, waterfall, and pond



Wide brick walkways near the manor house

There is a wooded area behind the manor house planted with azaleas, camellias, bulbs, wildflowers, and other treasures. Once beyond the fenced area, Richard maintains a network of dirt roads to access the rest of his property. It is filled with kalmia, hollies, and native azaleas under the tall trees. Other portions of his formal garden have beds of mixed perennials, tree peonies, hellebores, lilies, and spring bulbs. He is now adding more rhododendrons and azaleas to them.



Visitors find seating on stone walls near the bridge

Richard is like many of us, a serious plantaholic. He wants to grow everything he sees and seems to be doing a great job at meeting his goals. One of his plantings I particularly admired this year was his “Primrose Path” below. Strolling along a trail flanked by azaleas and camellias, I was suddenly amazed by a bed of pink and red primroses (*Primula japonica*) at my feet. The yellow ornamental Japanese grass (*Hakonochloa macra* ‘All Gold’) was a nice contrast.

It was such a great meeting. We had fun, we saw pretty flowers, and nobody died. Thanks for coming!



ARS Bronze Medal Award
Karel F. Bernady



Karel Bernady, an Associate Member of our chapter, has been an invaluable supporter for many of our group's key activities. He is a popular speaker and presented workshops on propagation and grafting. For the 2016 ARS/ASA Convention in Williamsburg, Karel organized a grafting initiative to propagate rare and difficult to root rhododendrons for our sale. He has generously donated plants for other events, too. Karel played a vital role in the planning of the Jean Beaudry Memorial Garden at Historic London Town & Gardens and has been the driving force for uniting the newly formed Delaware Valley Chapter with our District 9 activities this spring. It is with deep appreciation that we acknowledge Karel's many contributions to our chapter with the ARS Bronze Medal.

Annapolis, MD April 29, 2024

ARS Bronze Medal Award
Richard E. Bradshaw



Richard Bradshaw is an enthusiastic board member who has added a new dimension to our Potomac Valley Chapter. His 100-acre estate, Hidden View Farm, has been a horticultural attraction and popular venue for weddings and corporate events in the Annapolis area for many years. We are extremely grateful that Richard has generously opened his garden and facilities for our chapter activities including garden tours, meetings, and plant sales. We have been very impressed watching him artistically update his landscape to feature new rhododendrons and azaleas. We are truly indebted to Richard for his expertise in catering and food preparation which has helped us stage our District 9 conference this year. It is with our deepest appreciation that we award Richard Bradshaw the ARS Bronze Medal.

Annapolis, MD April 29, 2024

Potomac Valley Chapter ARS - Newsletter
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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, 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:

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