

# MID-ATLANTIC RHODODENDRON NEWS AND NOTES

A Publication of the Middle Atlantic Chapter of the American  
Rhododendron Society

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June 2007

## CALENDAR OF UPCOMING MAC MEETINGS

Oct 12-14, 2007	MAC Fall Meeting, Lynchburg, VA
Oct 12-14, 2007	ARS Eastern Regional Meeting, Mentor, OH
Apr 16-19, 2008	ARS Annual Convention, Tulsa, OK
May 7-11, 2008	International Rhododendron Conference, Edinburgh, Scotland

### Rhododendron Web Site Addresses:

<b>American Rhododendron Society</b>	<a href="http://www.rhododendron.org/">http://www.rhododendron.org/</a>
<b>MAC Website (*UPDATED*)</b>	<a href="http://www.macars.org/">http://www.macars.org/</a>
<b>U VA Science &amp; Engineering Libraries</b>	<a href="http://www.lib.virginia.edu/science/guides/s-rhodo.htm">http://www.lib.virginia.edu/science/guides/s-rhodo.htm</a>
<b>UVA Special Collections</b>	<a href="http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/">http://www.lib.virginia.edu/small/</a>
<b>Henry Skinner Website</b>	<a href="http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/collections/projects/rhodo/skinner/">http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/collections/projects/rhodo/skinner/</a>

### FALL MEETING IN LYNCHBURG AT THE LYNCHBURG RAMADA INN

Save the dates of Oct 12-14 for our MAC Fall Meeting. Jim Brant, Theresa Brents, and Sharon Horn are planning an entertaining, laid back weekend for MAC members with visits to Duis Nursery, the D-Day Memorial, Slim Lockerman's garden and Richard Wroncy's garden. Paul James is working on Friday night's program. Watch for more information later on.

### RECAP OF DISTRICT 9 MEETING IN RICHMOND by Sandra McDonald

The ninety-six attendees at the District Meeting in Richmond on April 12-15 had a wonderful time, visited some very special gardens, heard entertaining speakers, and enjoyed a free plant swap.

Most of us saw for the first time the garden of Charles Reed based on the English park design by Charles Gillette. There were many "rooms", formal flower beds, shrub garden, rose garden, and more.

The Junko Liesfeld garden was also a new one for MAC members. The acreage was quite large, and the garden had artistically combined the five elements of Japanese gardens (stones, water, plants, ornaments, and structures). It was a very peaceful garden.

The Greene garden was smaller, but full of interesting plants landscaped on a steep hillside with a stream at the bottom.

Rosalie Nachman's garden was as beautiful as ever. She manages to artistically arrange a lot of plants in a rather small space.

And of course, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden was lovely and is getting even better as it matures.

On Friday evening Rosalie Nachman's talk was humorous and her slides were beautiful. We also saw a good movie about gardens and gardeners in the Richmond area. Rosalie was interviewed in that as well as several of the other gardeners.

Barbara Hall's new activity, a plant swap, took place on Friday evening. People were excited about getting different kinds of new plants.

Buddy Lee gave an interesting presentation on breeding for heat tolerant azaleas and rhododendrons. He had photos of several breeders with this goal and their work.



Rosalie Nachman. Photo by Walt Przypek.

Some announcements were made including George McLellan's receiving the Silver Medal in San Francisco.



Lunch at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Photo by S. McDonald

Bill Bedwell conducted a very successful plant auction that included a number of rare Japanese



Bill Bedwell conducting the plant auction. Photo by S. McDonald

maples and magnolias donated by the David and Mary Lay.

We had our usual book sale with Theresa Brents as chairman, and our Flower Show with chairman Sharon Horn. Winners of the flower show were:

- D.D. Withers Best Rhododendron Award–Bill Bedwell for ‘John C. White’
- Clemmer trophy for Best Evergreen Azalea–Sandra McDonald for ‘White Surprise’
- Kennell Trophy for Best Native Azalea – Sandra McDonald for *R. alabamense*
- Best Elepidote – Jon Wallenburg for ‘Taurus’

- Przypek New Hybrid Azalea trophy–Sandra McDonald for unnamed orange evergreen azalea
- Best Lepidote and Wheeldon Best in Show trophy – the Fellers for ‘Ambrose Light’

### NEW OFFICERS

A short general meeting was held on Saturday morning at the District Meeting for MAC to elect officers. New officers are:

President Jim Brant  
 Vice president Celia Dollarhide  
 Secretary Doug Jolley  
 Treasurer Deborah Sauer

Directors:

2008: Richard Wroncy filling the remaining year for Celia Dollarhide  
 2010: Theresa Brents, Lloyd Willis, Dave Banks

### WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS:

Robert Bittle, 230 East Pinecrest Dr., Fayetteville, NC 28305  
 Hugh & Pat Greene, 9410 Sir Barry Court, Richmond, VA 23229-3931  
 Junko & Joe Liesfeld, 12346 Casco Mill Lane, Montpelier, VA 23192-3045  
 Rosalie Nachman, 205 Westham Parkway, Richmond, VA 23229  
 Mr & Mrs Charles Reed, Redesdale Estate, 8603 River Rd, Richmond, VA 23229

### NEW ADDRESS:

Kendon Stubbs, 1448 Gate Post Lane, Charlottesville, VA 22901

### DECEASED MEMBERS

#### Merl Audra Aitken

Longtime MAC member Merl Audra Aitken of Charleston, WV, died on February 2, 2007. He is survived by Margaret W. "Maggie" Aitken to whom he was married for 64 years, two sons, a daughter, several grandchildren, great grandchildren and other extended family.



Merl Aitken. Photo by W. Przypek

Merl had a BS in chemistry and was employed at Union Carbide from 1942 to 1982. He was Staff Manager of Quality Assurance Laboratory Coordinator.

In addition to his MAC ARS membership, Merl belonged to the North American Heather Society, St. Andrews Society, Boy Scouts of America scout master and commissioner of the Buckskin Council, co-founder of the Charleston Civic Chorus, Kanawha State Forest Foundation board member, former President of the Recreation Board of South Charleston, and the International Club of Charleston.

Jeanne Hammer describes Merl as warm-hearted and upbeat, and remembers the story about Merl encouraging his son to ask someone to the prom, saying there were lots of girls waiting for someone to ask them. The son dutifully did so, taking the easy route and asking the girl next door and ended up marrying her.

### Robert C. Reisweber

Robert Reisweber of Williamsburg, Virginia, died May 13, 2007. He had been a member since 1998. He had worked at Computer Sciences Corporation in Hampton, Virginia before his retirement. His special interests were trains and azaleas and rhododendrons. He is survived by his wife of 50 years and one son.

### FROM THE MIDDLE OF MAC by Jane McKay



Jane McKay

Despite the vagaries of weather very, very early spring, mid March thru the first week in April, was great. Lepidote rhododendrons ‘Lynne Robbins Steinman’, ‘Landmark’, ‘Aglo’, ‘New Patriot’, and azaleas ‘Allure’, ‘Dayspring’, ‘Dream’, ‘Festive’ and ‘Pennington White’ were all in bloom. Deciduous azaleas *R. dilatatum* and *R. vaseyi* were also in full bloom. Many others had buds showing color and ready to open. We had warnings of a freeze coming so we hauled 35 or 40 very large pots (thank heaven for hand trucks) containing lilies and hosta into the garage (these plants are grown in pots to protect from voles). We covered a few other

things, kicked leaves over a few others, picked a large bouquet of blooming azaleas and rhododendrons to enjoy inside and hoped for the best. Four mornings followed with below freezing temperatures.

All flowers that were in bloom froze EXCEPT *R. dilatatum*, all 6 or 7 *R. vaseyi*, and our four plants of *R. ‘Pennington White’*. Plants that had buds showing color, mostly Kurumes and early Glenn Dales had frozen flower buds. A few exceptions were ‘Girard’s Caroline’, ‘Girard’s Rose’ and Sandra McDonald’s ‘New Generation Red’. The first two Girard’s escaped damage completely and ‘New Generation Red’ had partial damage. All *Pieris* had new growth frozen but have since recovered.

The weather returned to normal and later blooming plants started to open. The garden was beautiful again for a few weeks until petal blight struck. It has been horrible, some flowers only open a day or two, some still in bud but all turning to mush. I did not spray this year because I have nothing to spray with. Years ago, while still in New York, I was able to purchase Bayleton and I had enough to last almost 20 years. I kept a small refrigerator in the garage exclusively to store the Bayleton.

Petal blight is not a new problem, it has been around for years. It is a major problem in the eastern part of the country. I’m now out of Bayleton, apparently it is no longer available. Now I have nothing to fight petal blight with. It never was a 100% cure but it did a pretty good job. I’ve tried to locate something that would help control the problem and I’ve heard names like Strike, BannerMaxx, Heritage, and Compass. Sounds good but try to buy these products at your local garden center and they look at you like you have two heads. Where do I, or any other rhododendron gardener go for help? Why is it the ARS rarely mentions petal blight. It seems to me petal blight is like a sexually transmitted disease, nobody talks about it and I know a few who deny they have it (who are they kidding, I’ve been to their gardens). When was the last time we saw an article in the *Journal* regarding petal blight and what the average gardener can do about it? Petal blight will not affect the casual gardener who has a few azaleas and maybe a ‘Roseum Elegans’ or two but consider a new member who starts to collect some early, some mid season and some late blooming azaleas and rhododendrons. It may not happen right away but sooner or later ‘old mushy’ will rear it’s ugly head.



He will soon stop growing our favorite plants and try something new that he can actually see bloom and drop membership in the ARS. We all worry about declining membership has anyone considered petal blight as a contributing reason? If I've opened a can of worms so be it.

**REPORT TO ARS DISTRICT 9 CHAPTERS** by Kenneth McDonald, Jr.

Welcome to the new chapter officers and to those carrying over, especially our dedicated chapter secretaries, treasurers, newsletter editors and other committee people who keep our chapters functioning.

Outgoing ARS president Len Miller concluded his term in South San Francisco and presided at the April 12<sup>th</sup> board meeting. The incoming president is Fred Whitney and the new western vice president is Don Smart. Ted Stecki remains as eastern vice president. June Walsh would like to be relieved of her duties as ARS secretary in two years. ARS is seeking volunteers for this position.

The board meeting was fairly well attended. Some business could not advance due to the absence of the budget and membership chairs. (Ted Stecki's wife was very ill at the time.)

Laura Grant presented sample postcards and posters of the Rhododendrons of the Year 2007 (ROY) which are now available for sale: 25 postcards for \$12.50 and 5 posters for \$5.00 or \$2.00 each plus postage. These should be available soon from our chapters or can be ordered directly from Laura Grant at OARS whose address, telephone number and email are in the front of the *Journal*. I had a sample at the District 9 meeting in Richmond. They are very attractive and should be a great asset at shows, etc. Laura hopes to have ROY 2008 available earlier next year for spring meetings and shows.

Old *Journals* are available for the cost of shipping. Also, 'Fundamentals of Culture', 'Guide to Planting and Care' and 'Invitation to Join' brochures are available.

OARS (Laura Grant, Executive Director) would like to complete a reference set of old *Bulletins* from 1945 through 1970 #1.

Life memberships are now available for \$1000 payable: \$300 the first year (less any current dues paid), \$300 the second, and \$400 the third. Deposits would be forfeited if the full sum is not paid. Individuals only may apply.

Future ARS meetings are listed in the calendar on page 88 of the Spring 2007 *Journal* with possible excursions to Edinburgh, Scotland, from May 7 -11, 2008, and to Bremen, Germany, May 20-24, 2010.

A program DVD library is getting under way. The cost to ARS chapters is \$15 for one or \$25 for two. The first program is 'Garden walks 2006' featuring Marshy Point Nursery, U.S. National Arboretum, Hudgen's garden 'Fern Dell', Ed and Mary Reiley's garden, Mike and Deb White, Norman and Jean Beaudry's garden and the McCrillis garden. Members can order personally for \$15 for the DVD with an official slimcase cover and table of contents. Shipping and handling is \$2.00 for one; \$2.50 for two, payable to the American Rhododendron Society.

**GEORGE MCLELLAN RECEIVES ARS SILVER MEDAL IN SAN FRANCISCO**

The following is the Silver Medal Citation George received in South San Francisco on April 14th:

You have done all the usual things an ARS award recipient has done—served as chapter president, director, and committee chair; put on meetings, given talks and slide shows, written newsletter and *Journal* articles with photos, had garden tours, and more.

More importantly you have taken on the long-term project of locating Eastern North American native azalea species and forms, and documenting and photographing them in their natural habitats. You have traveled from New England to Florida, along the coast, and in the mountains in often difficult and dangerous locations; you have led many tours and described these plants through talks, writings, photos, and personal interaction thus rekindling and enhancing interest in and preservation of these *Rhododendron* species here and throughout the world.

Signed Leonard Miller, President ARS  
April 14, 2007



ARS President Len Miller and George McLellan. Photo by Ken McDonald





Charles Reed in his garden. Photo by Dennis Barnes



Paul James & Alton Hall in Nachman garden. Photo by S. McDonald



Reed garden. Photo by S. McDonald



Liesfeld garden. Photo by W. Przypek



Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. Photo by S. McDonald



Liesfeld garden. Photo by S. McDonald



Don Hyatt operating the MAC digital projector with his laptop. Photo by S. McDonald



President Sybil Przypek. Photo by W. Przypek



Flower Show Chairman Sharon Horn. Photo by W. Przypek



Speaker Buddy Lee. Photo by S. McDonald





George McLellan after receiving his Silver Medal in San Francisco. Photo by S. McDonald



Best in Show 'Ambrose Light' entered by the Fellers. Photo S. McDonald



Charles Reed speaking to group at his garden. Photo by S. McDonald



Kenneth McDonald, Jr. and Ray Doggett. Photo by W. Przypek



Jim Brant, Paul James and Buddy Lee. Photo by W. Przypek



Margaret & Lloyd Willis, Celia Dollarhide, EvaMaria Neumaier. Photo by S. McDonald.



Shirley Gillenwarter, Kathie and Bill Constable, and Sybil Przypek. Photo by S. McDonald.



## MAC RECEIVES OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN SAN FRANCISCO

MAC was presented with this award recognizing the greatest growth of chapters in the 100 plus member category at the Saturday night banquet and awards ceremony. The certificate states:



Ken McDonald accepting the Outstanding Achievement Award for MAC.

In keeping with its commitment to the American Rhododendron Society, the Middle Atlantic Chapter has demonstrated the spirit of teamwork and dedication by working toward membership development during the period from March 1, 2006, and February 28, 2007. With 71 chapters in the Society, the Middle Atlantic Chapter realized the greatest growth of chapters in the 100 plus member category.

Dissemination of information on rhododendrons and azaleas, coupled with the promotion of interest in the genus *Rhododendron*, comprise the major part of the mission of the Society. The Middle Atlantic Chapter has identified itself as an outstanding participant in the accomplishment of this goal.

## MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

**George Breiding:** MAC life member Mike Breiding's father, George Breiding, a West Virginia naturalist and educator, passed away February 2, 2007. He had been Director of Nature Education and Naturalist at Oglebay Institute Nature Department, Oglebay Park in Wheeling. He published in ornithology journals and nature magazines. He was State Program Leader for Outdoor Recreation with the WVU Extension Service in Morgantown. This was reported in *Friends of Blackwater*, another organization to which George Breiding belonged.

Mike maintains some Web pages of his outdoor activities. Below are URLs for a couple of them.  
<http://epicroadtours.us/2007/winter/march/mctrail/>  
<http://www.epicroadtours.us/>

**Harry Wise:** The University of Virginia Library recently received some uncommon rhododendron books from the library of Harry Wise. Frank Pelurie had catalogued the books that Harry wanted to bequeath to the library and the list was sent to the library for them

to select the books they wanted. Frank then delivered the books to the library.

## MORE MEETING PHOTOS

To see our photos in color, go to the our Web site <http://macars.org> and click on "newsletter" in the left hand column. Then go to the issue you want to see.



Meeting co-chair Debby Sauer. Photo by S. McDonald



Meeting co-chair Barbara Hall. Photo by S. McDonald



Walter Przypek & azalea. Photo by S. Przypek



Joe & Junko Liesfeld in their garden. Photo by Dennis Barnes



Elmer Lapsley



Pat Greene during open garden.

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