

The Greater Philadelphia Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society



April 2009 Newsletter

President: Linda Hartnett lhartnett@gpchapterars.org Vice President: Tom Lloyd tlloyd@gpchapterars.org Treasurer: Myo Myint myintm@gpchapterars.org Recording Secretary Jon Villaume Corresponding Secretary Betts Layman Past President: Michael Martin Mills mmmills@gpchapterars.org Newsletter: Debby Evans dfevans@gpchapterars.org Plants and Propagation: Karel Bernady & Linda Hartnett	Director: Karel Bernady karelbernady@gpchapterars.org Director: Sue Camp Director: Debby Evans dfevans@gpchapterars.org Director: Robert Harper rharper@gpchapterars.org Director: Kim Kopple kkopple@gpchapterars.org Director: Jonathan Wood Truss Show: Michael Martin Mills Phila. Flower Show: Ted Stecki tstecki@gpchapterars.org
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There once was a bush o'er all Britain,
With which dukes and viscounts were smitten.
On the banks of the Tweed
It grew like a weed
Till lower-floor windows were hidden.

For giant estates that was fine,
Such as those a mile-long sight line.
But for regular folks,
Little yards without oaks,
Monster bushes were hardly divine.

Now Harold has views to depend on
(Not one could be labeled an end run):
Hybridizers got smart
And perfected their art.
Yes, they downsized the old rhododendron.

Michael Martin Mills

If you aren't in line to inherit something on the order of the Rothschilds' Exbury Estate, you'll be pleased to hear what Harold Sweetman has to say in his presentation "The Democratization of the Rhododendron or Coming Down from the Mountains," the marquee event of the Greater Philadelphia Chapter's Annual Banquet. In addition to being director of Jenkins Arboretum for 20 years, Harold is chair of the ARS Research Committee, a trustee of the ARS Research Foundation, and a plant explorer of exotic terrain. As many know, he is a profoundly "expectant father" just now, with Jenkins' expansion nearing completion.

Attached (e-mail) and included (USPS) you will find a copy of the banquet invitation that was sent in the last news, just in case you have misplaced your original. All particulars regarding time, location, and plant exchange for the **April 18th** event are there.

Flower Show, Mother's Day, May 10 @ Jenkins Arboretum, Devon, PA

GPC members are cordially invited and encouraged to participate in the 2009 Flower Show of the Valley Forge Chapter, held as always at Jenkins Arboretum on Mother's Day. See <http://valleyforgears.org/events.html> for details and for a map to Jenkins Arboretum.

As you may know, the GPC and Valley Forge Chapters have agreed to alternate years for their respective flower shows. VF Chapter goes this year; and GPC goes next. The members of both Chapters are urged to submit trusses in both shows. We hope that, by alternating, each Chapter will achieve greater participation and more entries for their respective shows, while imposing less on the folks that both Chapters count on for judging.

We have an all star list of judges for this year's show: Patricia Walton, Allan and Shirley Anderson and Frank Furman will make the trip down from New Jersey, and Allan Glassman and John Doppel will join us from Lehigh County, PA. Between them, this group of judges has contributed some of the most interesting hybrids for our region in recent years.

The VF Chapter Flower Show is held at Jenkins Arboretum, which is just completing construction on a new and larger building. Come see the new digs at Jenkins! And reacquaint yourself with the fabulous collections at Jenkins while you are at it. And bring a camera, because Jenkins is at its peak of bloom on Mother's Day.

Hundreds of visitors, most of whom start or end their tour of Jenkins with a visit to our Flower Show, will pass through and enjoy your rhody and azalea flower trusses. It's a great way to promote our favorite plants to the public in the SE Pennsylvania and Delaware region.

Please bring your entries – the more the merrier – to Jenkins any time between 7:30 and 10 am on Sunday, May 10. The commitment of time is modest – a few minutes to select and cut your trusses, and a few minutes more to drive them over to Jenkins. You are of course welcome to stick around and collect your winnings at the end of the day, but if you have other plans for Mother's Day, no problem. We'll get your ribbons and trophies to you.

Please see the attached brochure for the VF ARS Flower Show. If you have any questions, email or call me. I hope to see you on May 10, and I look forward to entering trusses from my garden in next year's 2010 GPC flower show.

Cordially,
Jim Willhite
West Chester, PA

GPC Assoc. Member & VFARS Flower Show Chair
jwillhite@comcast.net

THE NORTHEAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE

The conference is scheduled to run from October 23 – 25, 2009 and plans are continuing to move forward. The title for the conference is, "Rhododendrons in Penn's Woods." There will be several speakers, a plant sale consisting of plants with a Pennsylvania heritage, and discussions about Rhododendrons. For the latest information on the conference, go to the new Web site at: <http://arsfall2009.org>. The site is current and updated regularly. Contact Karel Bernady or Linda Hartnett to volunteer. (Phone numbers can be found in the header of this newsletter)

BOARD MEETING REMINDER – The meeting will take place on April, 21st, 7:30 p.m., at the home of Betts Layman. RSVP to Linda Hartnett or Betts.

CALENDAR

April 18 – Saturday, Annual Banquet at the Whitemarsh Valley Country club– Harold Sweetman will speak on “The Democratization of the Rhododendron”

May 8 – 9 – (Friday to Saturday) Plant Sale – Morris Arboretum

May 10 – Sunday, Valley Forge Chapter Rhododendron and Azalea Flower Show – see above for information.

June – Picnic – TBD

E-NEWS – If you'd like to switch over to electronic newsletter delivery contact Debby Evans.
dfevans@msn.com