

The Greater Philadelphia Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society



February 2008 Newsletter

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WHAT'S SO FUNNY ABOUT PLANT EXPLORATION?

Show up at the Uwchlan Friends Meeting House on Feb. 17 and you'll find out. Dr. Alfred E. "Ernie" Schuyler, curator emeritus in botany at the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia, will be the speaker, telling tales of the early botanizers and plant explorers in North America. That dry, old topic, you say? Not in the hands of Dr. Schuyler. Anyone who has attended one of his presentations – and he speaks on a wealth of topics – leaves with a big smile on his or her face.

This is our chapter's annual joint meeting with our sibling chapter, Valley Forge. Arrive as early as 1:30, with the program commencing at 2 p.m. Afterwards, there will be a groaning board of goodies and drinks (if you have a smashing hors d'oeuvre or sweet to contribute, we'd love to have it). Directions to the meetinghouse are at the end of this newsletter.

(Speaking of funny, what's with this name "Uwchlan"? According to www.uwchlan.com – yes, there is an uwchlan-dot-com in this world – the word is Welsh for "upland." Not bad for Welsh – only a 5:2 ratio of consonants to vowels. The Greater Philadelphia Chapter has not sponsored any trips to Wales lately, so we can only report the Pennsylvania pronunciation: UKE-lun.)

Editor's note: In Welsh 'u' sounds like the long u sound, and 'w' sounds like the 'oo' in the word pool. 'Ch' is sort of a soft sound, and the 'a' is soft. Put that all together and you get a word that sounds a bit more like German than old Britain.

TESTING, TESTING

At the November meeting, Kathryn Belville emphasized soil tests so often that it seemed more important than getting one's blood pressure checked periodically. Her office, the Bartlett Tree outfit, uses A&L Analytical Laboratories of Memphis, Tenn. This company has many testing services (such as Domestic Well Water Suitability and a \$200 Putting Green Physical Test), but gardeners should be satisfied with the Soil Fertility Testing Packages (\$7 to \$14.50). A&L can be reached at 1-800-264-4522 or <http://www.allabs.com>.

Both Penn State and Rutgers have soil testing services through the county extension offices. Fees are in the same general ballpark as A&L. In Pennsylvania, look in the White Pages for Penn State Cooperative Extension or go to www.extension.psu.edu. In New Jersey, look in the

Blue Pages government listings for Rutgers Cooperative Extension or go to www.rce.rutgers.edu/soiltestinglab.

WISTER RHODODENDRONS

Haverford College Arboretum is hosting Robert Herald, plant recorder at Tyler Arboretum, as a lecture speaker on the Wister Rhododendron collection on Sunday, March 30th. The program is titled "Old is New Again: Lessons from the Tyler Rhododendron Collection." This free program will take place in the Sharpless Auditorium at Haverford College, 370 Lancaster Avenue, Haverford, PA 19041. The program will begin at 2PM.

Over the past seven years, Tyler Arboretum has embarked on a multi-million dollar restoration program for the renowned Wister Rhododendron Garden. Robert Herald will bring the history of this nationally important collection to life, and will show how many of the lessons learned from this collection can be applied to most gardens- large and small. Rhododendron basics such as: planting, pruning, watering, fertilizing, and companion planting will be discussed.

Karel Bernady reports that as a part of our Plants for Members Program we struck cuttings of cultivars from Tyler in 2006 and 2007. Plants have been given to the arboretum as a part of their restoration effort and the excess cuttings have been distributed to our members through the program.

UPDATE YOURSELF.

Chapter treasurer Myo Myint will soon prepare a new chapter membership list to be distributed to members. If you have changed address, phone(s) or email address in the last TWO YEARS, please let Myo know promptly. It's a help to your officers if we have both a home and office phone number for you. You may mail the information to Myo Myint, 933 Morris Ave., Bryn Mawr, Pa. 19010 or email it to him at myintm933@comcast.net.

CALENDAR

February 17, Sunday – Annual joint meeting with Valley Forge Chapter, Uwchlan Friends Meeting, at 1:30 p.m. See above.
March 2-9 – Philadelphia Flower Show
March 13, Thursday – Chapter meeting, Morris Arboretum, 7:30 p.m. Tom Ahern of the Lehigh Valley Chapter with a hands-on hybridization presentation.
March 30, Sunday – John A. Silver Memorial Lecture, Haverford College (See above)
April 12, Saturday – Annual Banquet Ron Rabideau speaking.
April 16-19 – National convention, Tulsa, Oklahoma
May 7-11 – International Rhododendron Conference, Edinburgh, Scotland
May 8-11 – Chapter Plant Sale, Morris Arboretum
May 10 – Chapter Plant Sale and Truss Show, Morris Arboretum
June 15 – Picnic, Annual Meeting and election of officers. Parade Rest, the home of Cynthia and Rupert Rossetti, Port Deposit, Maryland.

E-MAIL NOTIFICATION- If you want to receive notifications electronically please notify Debby Evans via e-mail (dfevans@msn.com). We will continue to mail notices to those who prefer it. Please contact Debby if you are still receiving paper mailings in addition to the e-mail notice.

Directions to Uwchlan Meeting House:

From the Pennsylvania Turnpike: Exit at Downingtown (Exit 312) and drive south on Route 100. Turn right at the first traffic light onto Sheree Blvd. Turn left at the next traffic light onto Eagleview Blvd. and left again at the next traffic light at Dowlin Forge Road. Go to the stop sign and bear left into the Meeting House parking lot.

From King of Prussia and Main Line: Take Rt. 202 South to Rt. 401 West to Rt. 113.

Turn left and drive south on Rt. 113, past the intersection of Routes 113 and 100, to the second traffic light. Turn right onto Eagleview Blvd. and right at the second traffic light at Dowlin Forge Road. Go to the stop sign and bear left into the Meeting House parking lot.

From points south: Take Rt. 202 North and exit onto Rt. 100 North. Turn left at Rt. 113 and drive south to the second traffic light. Turn right onto Eagleview Blvd. and right at the second traffic light at Dowlin Forge Road. Go to the stop sign and bear left into the Meeting House parking lot.

Please note: There is an exit from Rt. 113 onto Dowlin Forge Road immediately in front of the Uwchlan Meeting House, but no right turn into the parking lot is permitted.