

The Greater Philadelphia Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society



March 2008 Newsletter

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BIRDS DO IT, BEES DO IT Even better is when sophisticated rhododendron fanciers do it. Hybridize, that is. Where would our club be without hybridization? Or what would our gardens look like? (For starters, Janet Blair and Trude Webster would just be names in the phone book and Taurus no more than a zodiac sign.) But just what IS the process of hybridization?

On March 13 the veil will be lifted and the mysteries revealed when Tom Ahern gives a presentation and demonstration of hybridizing rhododendrons at the chapter's Thursday evening meeting at Morris Arboretum. We plan to have several forced plants from the Philadelphia Flower Show on which to create some actual out-of-season crosses. (These plants will later be auctioned – winning bidders will get not only a plant but also ripening seeds that may be the next Scintillation.)

Tom has been assiduously hybridizing for many years – he won the Becales Trophy for new hybrid at the 2006 Greater Philadelphia truss show with a 'Whitestone' X 'Sandwich Appleblossom.' In 2003 he registered 'Orange Ruffy,' described as "golden yellow in centre, shading to cream near the margin which is pink tinged orange."

As usual, we gather at 7:30 for conversation and refreshments, with the presentation beginning at 8 p.m.

"THE BOLD AND THE BEAUTIFUL." If you receive this by March 8, and haven't been to the Philadelphia Flower Show yet, you have till Sunday, March 9, to see the chapter's exhibit. Designed by Kim Kopple and installed with major assists by Ted Stecki, Linda Hartnett and Randy Dalton, the 18- by 18-foot space is a burst of color, perfect for mitigating late-winter blahs. Pennsylvania Convention Center, 12th and Arch Streets.

YOU BE THE JUDGE. Literally. The Mason-Dixon Chapter (Baltimore area) will hold a Judges Training School on Saturday, May 10, at its annual truss show in Westminster, Md. Bruce and Marianne Feller, co-chairs of the ARS Shows and Judging Committee (and Sweepstakes winners in last year's Greater Philadelphia truss show) will lead the workshop. Class begins at 1 p.m. There is no charge. There is no question that the society needs more judges; here's an invitation to join the ranks (no, you don't get to wear

judicial robes....). For more information, contact Mason-Dixon president Helen Myers at 410-848-9587 or 323 N. Springfield Road, Westminster, Md. 21158.

FLIP YOUR SEASONS. Diane Weissman, De Anza Chapter, is organizing a trip to New Zealand this fall to attend the New Zealand Rhododendron convention in Geraldine and public and private, Oct. 24- Nov. 10 – spring down under. Full details will be available shortly; contact Diane at diane1030@gmail.com or 650-964-1003. Diane, a licensed travel professional, has previously taken rhododendron groups to Hawaii and Tasmania. Her husband, Bob Weissman, is the ARS Webmaster. **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.

SIX HUNDRED RHODIES ON VIEW. *Joan and Reid Warren* invite members of local ARS chapters to visit their garden in Elverson beginning Monday, May 5, to the end of the month or later. The garden has more than 600 lepidote and elepidote rhododendrons as well as deciduous hybrid and native azaleas and evergreen azaleas. The majority of the garden is located in dry upland woods composed of native trees, viburnum, blueberry, spicebush, as well as introduced species. Wear sturdy shoes (land is flat). Although the Warrens expect to be home most of the time, folks are welcome to wander the garden on their own if the Warrens are out. Call Joan and Reid at 610-913-0005 or e-mail at srwjmw@dejazzd.com for directions.

CALENDAR

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. Reservation form enclosed.

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.