



14 Northwoods Road, Radnor, PA 19087-

Chapter's Website: www.ValleyForgeARS.org

NEWSLETTER **October / November 2018**

Unless specified otherwise, meetings are at Jenkins Arboretum in Devon

Calendar at a Glance

Oct 18 –Cricket Brien, Exec. Director – Tyler Arboretum: “What’s Going on at Tyler”

Nov 11(Sun) - VF Banquet at St. David’s Golf Club, Speaker: Linda Eirhart, Director of Horticulture, Senior Curator of Plants, Winterthur. “Azaleas and Rhododendrons in the Winterthur Garden”

Jan 20, 2019: Dr. Peter Zale, Longwood Gardens – “A Century of Rhododendrons at Longwood Gardens”

President’s Message

Hopefully hot, humid summer weather is behind us and we can now look forward to a beautiful fall season. In spite of the muggy weather, the Chapter’s annual summer events were well attended and very enjoyable.

On August 19th our Cutting Exchange and Auction was held at Sherwood’s Forest Nursery in Nottingham, PA, and Evelyn Gondek and her husband Scott were delightful and enthusiastic hosts. Karel Bernady did a great job as the auctioneer. The District raised \$874.00 which was split and donated equally to the ARS Endowment Fund and the ARS Research Foundation. Thanks to everyone who helped make this a success.

The Greater Philadelphia Chapter’s Plants for Members sale was held at Morris Arboretum on Sept 16th. The selection of seedlings and graftings was excellent. I was again able to pick up some interesting Dexter hybrids that I’ll plant in the Wister Rhododendron Garden this fall.

Next on our agenda is our Thursday October 18th meeting at 7:30 at Jenkins. It will be a bit of homecoming for me as I am delighted that Cricket Brien, the Executive Director of Tyler Arboretum, will be our speaker and she will talk about Tyler and what’s going on outside the Wister Rhododendron Garden.

Our Banquet will be Sunday Nov. 11, at St. Davids Golf Club. This year, Linda Eirhart, Director of Horticulture and Senior Curator of Plants at Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library, will talk about “Azaleas and Rhododendrons in the Winterthur Garden” and how Henry Francis DuPont created the Winterthur garden. Linda recently submitted an article on this same topic to the Journal of American Rhododendron Society. **Please note that this year we will be starting a tad earlier, 11:30 rather than 1:00.** I hope you have these dates scheduled. Bring a friend or two and introduce them to the world of rhododendrons.

Also, a quick reminder, fall is also the time to renew your ARS membership for the 2019 season. I wish everyone a great fall season and I hope to see everyone at our October meeting.

In closing, I would like to mention the sad loss of Bob Stamper. Bob, who was Valley Forge Chapter President from 1996-2000, was a true plant enthusiast and his great presentations on gardening were always inspiring. More importantly, Bob was always kind and soft spoken and a true gentleman in every way; we will all miss him.

Sincerely,

Jerry O’Dell (610) 608-2018,

westdell@verizon.net,

VF ARS website: www.ValleyForgeARS.org

On October 18, 2018, (Thursday), at 7:30 pm:

Cricket Brien:

“What’s Going on at Tyler”

Cricket Brien, Executive Director at Tyler Arboretum since 2015, will bring us up to date on what is happening at Tyler Arboretum outside the Wister Rhododendron Garden. Cricket is inspired by Tyler’s special mix of outdoor stewardship, immersive landscape gardens, and excellent education programs that connect visitors to the history, culture, and the natural systems of this former family farm. She lives in Swarthmore with her husband and kids who all grew up with Tyler’s meadows, butterflies, hammocks, and treehouses, and are now pursuing careers in conservation, research biology, and economics.



On Nov. 11, 2018 (Sunday), Banquet at St. Davids GC at 11: 30 am:

Annual Banquet at St. Davids GC

Social Hour & Cash Bar at 11:30 am (note change), Lunch at 12:30 p.m.

Speaker: Linda Eirhart, Director of Horticulture at Winterthur

Program: “Rhododendrons & Azaleas at Winterthur”

Note the early time. We have to be out by 3 pm Henry Francis du Pont created the Winterthur

Linda is the Director of Horticulture/Senior Curator of Plants at Winterthur Museum, Garden and Library. Linda and her staff are responsible for the horticultural care, design, and documentation of the Winterthur Garden. Their goal is to preserve the H. F. du Pont’s original design intent for the garden while enhancing seasonal display and plant collection.



Over her career at Winterthur, she has been responsible for garden interpretation, plant records, and garden restoration and was on the design team for Enchanted Woods. Linda is the project manager to digitally map the garden and update the plant records.

garden, an American version of the “Wild Garden”, in the first half of the 20th century. This presentation will touch on the family history and design ideas that influenced his creation of the garden, concepts such as the “Wild Garden” and the importance of color.

Linda will focus on du Pont’s use of rhododendrons and azaleas in the garden, his goal of expanding his collection and extending the season of

interest while keeping the beauty continuous. The talk will also serve as a review of early 20th century rhododendron history as Mr. du Pont corresponded with some of the leading hybridizers and nurserymen of that time.

*The Valley Forge Chapter of the
American Rhododendron Society
cordially invites ARS Members and Friends to the*

Annual Banquet

Sunday, November 11, 2018

11:30 a.m. - *Note Change*

St. Davids Golf Club

845 Radnor Street Road • Wayne, Pennsylvania

610-688-2010 • www.stdavidsgc.com

Social Hour and Cash Bar at 11:30 a.m.

Lunch at 12:30 p.m.

Speaker: Linda Eirhart

Director of Horticulture, Winterthur

“Azaleas and Rhododendrons in the Winterthur Garden”

RSVP: Please Return Reservation Form on Page 4 • Proper Attire

On January 20, 2019, (Sunday.) at Jenkins at 2:00 pm:

Speaker: Dr. Peter Zale:

“A Century of Rhododendrons at Longwood Gardens”

Dr. Zale is Associate Director of Conservation, Plant Breeding and Collections, at Longwood Gardens where he is responsible for leading curatorial activities, the plant breeding program, the plant exploration program, and the



recently initiated plant conservation program focused on propagating and conserving rare native orchids. He has researched how rhododendrons have played a prominent role at Longwood Gardens for over 100 years and has put together an impressive program. He will entertain us with pictures and information about rhododendrons at Longwood over the past Century.

ARS Membership Renewals Are Due December 1st

Our membership chair, Darlene Henning, mailed out membership renewal forms to all regular and associate members. Details are on the forms, but the dues are the same as last year: \$40 for regular members and \$10 for associate members whose primary membership is with a different chapter.

Early-Bird Membership Renewal Raffle

If you renew before November 1st, you will be eligible to be in a raffle at the banquet for a special plant.

If you didn't receive or misplaced Darlene's mailing or you want to be a new member, use the form on the next page. If you have any questions, contact Darlene at 610-987-6184 or mdhenning@earthlink.net.

Valley Forge ARS Banquet Reservation Form

(Must be received by November 9, 2018)

Please Indicate The Number Of Persons

_____ **Hot Lunch Buffet -- \$35 per Person**

If received before November 1, you will receive a \$5 drink chit for each person

Appetizer: Chicken & Corn Chowder to be served to table.

Chicken Francaise

Atlantic Broiled Salmon

Flank Steak with Wild Mushroom Demi Glace

Seasonal Vegetable Medley

House Salad, Caesar Salad, and Potato Salad

Iced Tea, Lemonade, Tea and Coffee

Dessert: Ice Cream served to table after buffet.

Please send check, made payable to Valley Forge ARS

In the amount of \$_____ to:

Kathy Woehl

143 Old State Road

Berwyn, Pennsylvania 19312

610-688-9173

Name(s): _____

AUTUMN IS RENEWAL TIME! RENEW TODAY

Would you like to make a gift to the General Fund? Amount \$ _____

Remember someone with a gift to the Endowment Fund Amount \$ _____

Who would you like to remember? _____

Would you like to make a gift to Research Foundation? Amount \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____

Zip/Country: _____

Phone*: _____ Email*: _____

Check here only if you do not wish to have your phone, fax, and e-mail address printed in our membership rosters

PLEASE REMIT DUES BEFORE DECEMBER 1

Student (St).....\$10

Regular (R)\$40

Commercial (C).....\$90

Sustaining (SU).....\$75

Sponsoring (SP)...\$150

Commit for Life (L), payable over 3 years (1-\$400 & 2-\$350) \$1000 (individual)

Commit for Life (L), payable of 3 years in increments of \$500 \$1500 (Family)

Memb. type _____ x no. yrs. _____ = Total US Funds Enclosed \$ _____

Check here if you do not wish to receive the Journal ARS

Make Checks Payable to: **Valley Forge ARS**

Mail to:

**Valley Forge ARS
14 Northwoods Road
Radnor, PA 19087**

The power of the internet should encourage commercial membership for our "grower" members. Your free full-page ad will be visited by thousands of people each week during our busy rhododendron season



Best of the Best Rhododendrons

Steve Krebs† recently analyzed the ARS ROY (Rhododendron of the Year) and Good Performer lists and proposed developing a Best of the Best list. He went through both lists looking for plants which were a consensus pick from Chapters in different parts of the US which differ by 4 USDA hardiness zones or more such as 5 to 8 or 6 to 9.

His results provide a first and rather rough cut of ‘top doers’ with national representation. It is not surprising to see some of the better-known plants on the list – e.g. Janet Blair and Gibraltar. But there were some surprises, such as Guy Nearing’s ‘Purple Gem’, a lepidote that was nominated as a good performer only twice, but by Chapters in extremely divergent climates, Toronto and Southern California. Here are the results:

Elepidotes

Ben Mosley, purple*
Calsap, white with strong blotch*
Catawbiense Boursault, purple*
Chionoides, white with blotch*
Crete, rose fading white*
English Roseum, rose pink*
Golfer, pink fading white
Gomer Waterer, lav-white with flare*
Janet Blair, light pink*
Ken Janeck, white*
Mist Maiden, white*
Percy Wiseman, light yellow*
R. degronianum ssp. yakushmanum*
R. makinoi, variable*
R. maximum, variable
Scintillation, medium pink*
Taurus, red*
The Hon. Jean Marie de Montague, red*

Lepidotes

April Rose, rose purple
Dora Amateis, pure white*
Ginny Gee, light pink with yellow*
Mary Fleming, light yellow with pink*
Patty Bee, light yellow
PJM Group, rose pinks to purples*
Purple Gem, pale violet*
R. dauricum, white
R. minus, variable
R. mucronulatum ‘Cornell Pink’, pink
Ramapo, medium violet*

Weston's Aglo, pink
Weston's Pink Diamond, pink
Windbeam, pink fading white

Deciduous Azaleas

Cannon's Double, complex peach
Cecile, pale red with yellow flare
Gibraltar, orange
Homebush, pink*
Irene Koster, white with pink and yellow
Jane Abbott, late pink
Klondyke, orange yellow
Mt Saint Helens, pink with orange flare*
R. austrium, variable
R. calendulaceum, variable
R. luteum, sulfur yellow
R. schlippenbachii, variable
R. vaseyi, variable
White Lights, white

Evergreen Azaleas

Alexander, vivid pink*
Conversation Piece, variable flowers, white and red-purple sectors
Coral Bells, hose in hose rose red
Delaware Valley White, pure white
Elsie Lee, light rose purple*
George Lindley Taber, white with rose-purple center and flare
Girard's Fuchsia, rose purple
Girard's Hot Shot, scarlet*
Helen Curtis, pure white*
Herbert, medium rose-purple
Hino Crimson, strong red
Hino Red, strong red
Martha Hitchcock, white w/rose-purple picotee*
Purple Splendor, rose purple with blotch*
R. kiusianum, variable*
R. yedoense var poukhanense, variable*
Rosebud, medium purplish pink*
Stewartstonian, scarlet red*

—

* indicates [Van Veen Nursery](#) lists these azaleas and rhododendrons on their stock plant list. The Van Veen Nursery is now operated by the ARS Portland Chapter. We hope ARS Chapters and their members will use it.

†Steve Krebs is the Eastern ARS Vice President and Director of the Leach Research Station, at the Holden Arboretum.

Harold Sweetman to Retire as Jenkin's Executive Director in the Spring of 2019



Born in Las Animas, Colorado, Harold Sweetman moved to Pennsylvania at the age of 8. The boyhood experience of growing up on a small farm where his family grew cash crops, ran a nursery and greenhouse as well as florist business may have influenced his future career path. He attended the University of Massachusetts as an undergraduate, ultimately earning a Ph.D. in biology from Boston University. He then returned to PA in 1986 to assume responsibility for the development of the newly established Jenkins Arboretum from his father, Leonard Sweetman, its first director. Hired as an independent contractor by the trustee, Harold remained the sole full-time employee until 1999, assuming all responsibility of maintaining and promoting a small public garden on the Main Line of the Philadelphia suburbs.

The Philadelphia area is now recognized as North America's Garden Capital. Jenkins was the only public garden in the area conceived and developed in a natural native woodland. Concentrating on ericaceous plants, which were uniquely suited to the highly acidic, well-drained soils of the site, Harold worked to increase the plant collections and expanded them to include other native plant species with the concept that Jenkins Arboretum should showcase the diversity of Eastern North American native flora. The existing undisturbed native woodlands were ideal for creating a naturalistic landscape design.

Because of the limitations of a modest \$600,000 trust established at the Arboretum's inception, Harold created a Friends group to help with funding, maintaining, and growing the garden.

The funding would insure that free admission to the garden, which is open 365 days a year, would continue. Over time, this Friends group ultimately assumed governance of the Arboretum, opening the possibility of membership and today there are close to 1,000 loyal member households. Harold's goal was to provide a place of peace, beauty, and tranquility in a busy Main Line corridor as well as to educate the public about native flora, especially ericaceous plants, with the hopes that many of these plants could be incorporated into area gardens.

Award Winning Collection

Harold has strived to constantly expand Jenkins collection. To that end he has made several trips to the Himalayas of China and India on plant collecting expeditions as well as attending many horticultural conferences around the country. In addition, he has given countless lectures and informational workshops to local garden clubs and community groups, all with the aim of promoting the garden and its collections.

Dr. Sweetman has managed to expand the gardens. He is now working with a dedicated staff of seven, three full time in administration, four full time horticulturists including two endowed Hamilton Fellowships, several part-time staff, and a core group of dedicated volunteers.

Successful capital campaigns led to building the new LEED Gold certified John J. Willaman Education Center in 2009. This extended the scope of the gardens to highlight local artists through gallery exhibitions and garden clubs, as well as four plant society flower shows and public plant sales. Harold has worked tirelessly to promote the Arboretum & Gardens as a "jewel" in the community and to compliment rather than compete with the larger public gardens. This newsletter seemed the perfect time to announce Harold's retirement. The garden has been his life's work and once the Forever Jenkins Endowment Campaign is complete, the garden will be secure and his work done. Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens has been recognized by the Plant Collections Network of the APGA for both Rhododendron and Mountain Laurel Collections.



Award of Merit presentation at the annual APGA Conference in Anaheim, CA. Dr. Casey Sclar, (left), Executive Director APGA, Harold Sweetman, (middle), and Harry Jongerden, (right), Executive Director, Toronto Botanical Garden and awards chair.

At this year's Annual Conference of the American Public Gardens Association, Harold Sweetman was awarded one of the Association's most prestigious honors. The Award of Merit recognizes an American Public Gardens Association member who has performed with distinction in the field of public horticulture and has excelled as a public garden professional at one or more institutions. The recipient's accomplishments encompass some combination of botany, horticulture, conservation, gardening, research, extension, education, development, or administration. It could be considered a lifetime achievement award, as it is intended to be given to an individual during the mid-to-latter part of an illustrious career.

This is an incredible achievement and recognizes more than 30 years of hard work, perseverance and dedication to the field of horticulture. For Harold to have done it all at one place makes it even more impressive.

The Sweetman Heritage

There has always been a Director at Jenkins with the name Sweetman. It started in 1974 when Leonard Sweetman was hired at age 60 to begin the initial plantings before opening up to the public in 1976. Leonard was assistant director of Scott Arboretum under John Wister. After being selected to start Jenkins Arboretum from scratch, Leonard worked tirelessly for the last 12 years of his life to grow Jenkins from a master plan into an

amazing scientific and educational arboretum. He planted thousands of plants on what was previously an undisturbed woodland. These were according to the plan, mostly azaleas, rhododendrons, mountain laurel and other ericaceous plants.

Leonard retired in 1986 at the age of 74 and sadly died from a stroke the week following his retirement.

The trustees turned to Leonard's son, Harold Sweetman who held a doctorate in biology from Boston University to replace his father as the only full-time staff gardener. This arrangement lasted until 1999. Harold had not only inherited his father genes, he also had a lifelong education from his father in the practical side of converting a natural woodland into expression of his love for the natural world.

Harold Sweetman, over the past 32 years, continued planting with each growing season. In addition to growing the gardens, he grew a staff of dedicated horticulturists. Maggie Knapp was the very first full-time gardener in 1999, followed by remarkable Hamilton Educational Fellows, including Steve Wright, Director of Horticulture and Maddison Paule, current Head Horticulturist.

With the Forever Jenkins - Endow an Acre Endowment Campaign well underway and approaching the \$20 million goal, hopefully by 2020, Harold felt it was time to make way for a new director. Undoubtedly the new Executive Director, along with passionate gardeners, staff, and community members all dedicated to the special mission of Jenkins Arboretum & Gardens, will ensure that Jenkins will continue to flourish and be a vibrant public garden "Forever."

VF ARS Clubhouse

On January 21, 1988, the Valley Forge Chapter of the ARS had their first meeting at Jenkins. Chapter President, Fred Winter reported that Harold had offered for Jenkins to be the meeting place for the VF Chapter. We met in the house that preceded the John J. Willaman Education Center. Harold often refers to Jenkins as the Valley Forge Chapter's clubhouse.

Thank You Harold for the VF ARS clubhouse!

Protecting the Gardener:

Keep Bugs From Bugging You

Gnats pester us, chiggers bite us, ticks bite us and spread disease, and mosquitos do all three. These pests have been especially bad this year.

Gnats are probably the most benign, but are the peskiest of the four pests. They can spread pink eye, and are extremely annoying.

Chiggers don't spread disease, but can cause a very annoying and sometimes dangerous allergic reaction that seems to last forever.

Mosquitos and ticks can spread dangerous diseases. Not only can ticks spread disease, the bite of the Lone Star tick can cause [alpha-gal syndrome](#), an allergy to red meats such as beef and pork, an allergy that doesn't go away with time. A member of the Potomac Valley Chapter is a victim of this allergic response. It makes her allergic to proteins found in red. The fat is OK but not the milk since it has the proteins. There is no cure and the allergic reaction can be life-threatening. What's even more disconcerting is that the Lone Star tick has been spread by deer throughout our country.



A Lone Star Tick

Avoiding the bite

Avoiding tick bites is very important, especially in areas near where deer are prevalent. When working outside, it is important to wear long pants tucked into your sox, a long-sleeved shirt, a hat and gloves. Fortunately, there are [permethrin sprays for clothing](#) that safely kill ticks and mosquitos that climb on your clothes. These clothing sprays last through about 4 to 6 washing cycles. You can also buy pre-treated clothing that has been tested and proven to be effective at up to 25 washing cycles. This works for chiggers also. Chigger may not be dangerous, but their bite sure is annoying. Note,

permethrin sprays are ineffective when applied to human skin. They are only effective on clothing

For protection from mosquitos and gnats, and additional protection from ticks and chiggers, you can use any of the better insect repellants on the market. These include ones with a minimum concentration of [20% picaridin](#), [20% DEET](#), or [30% Lemon Eucalyptus](#). Tests have shown most products made with these concentrations have shown to be effective in preventing insect bites.

These repellents can also be applied to clothing and are more effective than the permethrin sprays sold for that purpose, but must be reapplied after each washing. However, always test DEET on a small spot before applying to clothing since it will damage plastics, rubber, leather, vinyl, paint, and some synthetic fabrics such as acetate, rayon, spandex and Gortex. It does not damage cotton, wool, or nylon. Picaridin and Lemon Eucalyptus can also be used on clothing and will not damage fabrics.

Avoiding swarming pests

The repellents that prevent bites from mosquitos and ticks don't always prevent gnats and mosquitos from being a pest and swarming around your head. If you would rather avoid putting DEET and other chemicals on your skin, do what bee keepers have been doing for centuries, use a head net.



Head nets have been refined and come in a \$10 model by [womanswork.com](#), left, and many other models. They usually come as netting that goes over a broad brimmed hat or baseball cap. It may seem like overkill to use a head net, but anything that keeps the gnats and more dangerous insects at bay is OK with me.



The Philadelphia Story 2019

Rhododendrons In America's Garden Capital

The 2019 ARS Convention Needs You!



The 4 ARS chapters in District 8, Greater Philadelphia, Lehigh Valley, Susquehanna Valley & Valley Forge, will host the ARS 2019 Convention from Wednesday May 15 to Sunday, May 19, 2019, at the Desmond Hotel in Malvern. Details are at ARS2019.org.

We need volunteers from all 4 chapters to help welcome ARS members coming from all over the world. To volunteer contact one of the co-chairs, Karel Bernady at bernadk@verizon.net or Steve Henning at rhodyman@earthlink.net. It would help if you can tell us your preferences and which days you can help.

Here are some areas where we need volunteers.

Please check to see where you can help!

Help District 8 Welcome the 2019 ARS Convention to America's Garden Capital!

ARS Fall Meeting in Chattanooga

The Fall ARS Meeting in Chattanooga, TN, runs from October 19 to 21, 2018. On Friday and Saturday evening it will have banquets with

outstanding speakers. Saturday it will offer tours to the most beautiful spots in the scenic Chattanooga area. Full details are posted at:

ARSStore.org/Fall2018

Registration: Linda Hartnett needs help handling registration, welcoming registrants, and providing hospitality during the convention.

Bus Tours: Steve Henning needs help loading the buses and bus captains on each bus.

Tour Lunches: Debby Schmidt needs help setting up box lunches for the Longwood Gardens tour and helping with catered lunches.

Banquets: Debby Schmidt needs helpers preparing for the banquets.

Sale Plants: Karel Bernady can use helpers in prepping the plants and getting them to the sale.

Plant Sale: Joan Warren and Ron Rabideau need help setting up and running the plant sale.

Plant Inspection: We could use a person who has worked with the plant inspectors for Phytosanitary inspections and certificates.

Flower Show: Bob Smetana needs helpers to take-in, arrange & care for flowers in the show.

Photo Show: Bob Smetana needs helpers to take-in, arrange & care for photos in the show.

Auction(s): We need people to care for the auction items and help with the auction(s).

Sponsorships: Maris Ogg needs help working with our sponsors and stuffing goody bags.

AV Equipment: Jerry O'Dell needs help to work with our speakers and the AV Systems.

Other Help: If you know of some other way you can help, please let us know.

**American Rhododendron Society
Valley Forge Chapter
14 Northwoods Rd
Radnor, PA 19087**

FIRST-CLASS MAIL



NEWSLETTER

October / November 2018

*Where every purchase benefits the
American Rhododendron Society*

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Please contact us with email changes or if you receive this **newsletter** by letter carrier rather than email, even though you have e-mail. Please inform Steve Henning of any changes (rhodyman@earthlink.net).