

Rhododendron

In This Issue:

Cover: George Tomaich Garden

President's Message2

Bits by Bev3

Secretary's Notes4

Erie Times "Buds & Blooms"
On the rhodies again by Sue Scholz
Winner Photos

Truss Show Awards by Harold Berg ...5

News/Views Short Updates6

August Meeting Agenda.....7
Conley Resort

Back Cover: George Tomaich Garden
With commentary

Great Lakes Chapter American Rhododendron Society

Purpose

A Nonprofit organization whose aim is to promote in the Great Lakes region the objectives of The American Rhododendron Society to encourage interest in and dissemination of information about genus rhododendron including azaleas; to provide a medium through which all persons interested may communicate and operate with others of like interest through educational and scientific studies, meetings, publications and similar activities.

Meetings

Meetings are held four times each year, on the third week-end of March, May, August and October, unless otherwise indicated.

Membership

Membership is open to all persons interested in the growth and culture of rhododendrons and azaleas as per the Chapter By-Laws. Those persons interested in becoming a member should contact the Membership Chairman, Dr. L. Gordon Walters.

Officers/Board Members

President	Chas Wagner	814.725.1584 wagsix@roadrunner.com
1st V. Pres.	Dr. Steve Krebs	440.357.5131
2nd V. Pres.	Bert Hendley	740.452.4523
Secretary	Jill Griesse	740.587.3736
Treasurer	Margaret Corbin	814.833.7207
Membership	Dr. L.G. Walters	724.287.2047
Newsletter *	Annette Pizzino	440.248.4583
Web Master	Linda Stull	lmsgardener@yahoo.com

Past President Dr. Jim Browning

Board of Directors

Linda Stull	Kay Walters	6 year term
Karen Wagner	Don Whitney	4 year term
Blanche Browning	Bob Frenzel	2 Year term

Great Lakes Chapter Website

www.greatlakesrhodies.org

Username—great lakes password—maximum

*GLC newsletter posted to website quarterly

Cover:

New GLC member, George Tomaich shares beautiful garden photos of his Lexington KY rhododendron garden with complementary plant companions. Most of his photos, see back cover, good habit, best in dappled shade.

"Steep thyself in a bowl of summer." Virgil
Photo by Paul Halapin

President's Message

What a superb meeting!! The setting was Blossom McBrier's estate consisting of rolling lawns with a canopy of trees sheltering the large array of rhododendron and azaleas. Blossom had been planning this weekend for over a year. The weather cooperated, the catered was ready, the members arrived with their trusses, the plant sale was fruitful, the guests were enthused, and the tent protected us to for a superb evening. Dana Atwood capped off the evening with a scientific presentation on the story of trees. Thank You—BLOSSOM!!

Earlier the Tom Ridge Environmental Center at the foot of Presque Isle State Park was the site for the "better than expected" truss show. With the early spring temperatures, chasing the blooms had us all adjusting our schedules. But along the shores of Lake Erie, the "lake effect" surprised many. Be sure to remember the foliage category when your blooms have disappeared. We had many visitors view the show. The truss show received excellent coverage by Sue Scholz of the Erie Times News Garden section preceding the weekend and following with photos of the winning entrants. (See photos & write-up elsewhere in newsletter.) Thank you Jim & Blanche for the excellent show!

The membership had some significant business on the agenda. 85% of those attending voted to support the "Rhododendron Exploration Garden" at The Holden Arboretum, Kirtland, Ohio with a donation of \$25,000. Also, 82% voted to accept the challenge of hosting the 2014 ARS Annual International onvention near Cleveland, Ohio. Guess where the attendees of that convention will be touring in 18 months?

Thanks to all for the entering and attending the truss show, the evening at Brier Hill Garden Parke and bringing friends along. Several guests have become members. The executive director of the ARS, Laura Grant and Friend, Robert, came from Canada to participate in the weekend's events. Several members' gardens were open the next day and Laura and Robert visited each one. Did you know Laura is also the founder of the Ontario Water Garden Society? So, we have much work to do. With the convention on our doorstep, the August meeting will be a working lunch. We will be meeting at Conley Resort in Butler at 10:00 AM on AUGUST 25TH with our sleeves rolled up!

Respectfully,
Chas Wagner



Marge & Harry Johnson win Best in Show, beautiful, luminous pink flower truss, 'Pearl Passion.'
View Erie Times article by Sue Scholz on page 4.
Note the absence of stamens (anther sacs, top of stamens produce, store, release pollen grains) very unusual feature. (Commentary by Harry, will tell more) AMP
Photo Tony Pizzino

Bits by Bev

Bits by Bev

Great lakes Chapter Truss Show, Saturday, May 26, 2012 destination the "Tom Ridge Environmental Center" Erie, PA. One could not help but wonder if any trusses would be available to judge, did you already forget the unusual 2012 warm winter and spring? But alas, we all had smiles on our faces as we approached the judging area there stood 113 trusses, as usual the PINK'S were the biggest entry. The judge's awarded 12 first place ribbons and 12 second place ribbons. (In case you're wondering we only acknowledge first and second place winners in our chapter.) Best in Show went to Marjorie Johnson's 'Pearl Passion.' The following members assisted as judges or scribes helping to make the project move along at a very fast pace: Harold Berg, Dr. Jim and Blanche Browning, Harry and Marjorie Johnson, Tony and Annette Pizzino, Felix Robinson, Chas & Karen Wagner and Dr. Spike and Kay Walters and judging facilitator Bev Berg. After the judging was over the show was opened to the general public for the rest of the afternoon. The Environmental Center was a very lovely place to hold our event.

Our plant sale, happy hour, membership meeting and dinner took place at the home of our Hostess, Blossom McBrier, as one would expect, her "Home and Gardens" were spectacular. Blossom is a very talented lady in so many areas. Blossom introduced us to her very special guest from Canada, Laura Grant, Executive Director of the American Rhododendron Society, and also some of her friends and neighbors.

Felix Robinson was back again as our plant auctioneer, assisted by Chas Wagner and Dr. Jim Browning, 45 plants were sold, 6 plants were given away to our visitors, welcome—hope you will join us again.

Dinner: "BBQ" under the tent." My traveling companion and I have been to many "BBQ's" but never under a huge green and white tent, complete with tablecloths, dishes and silverware. The food needless to say was excellent and the rating of the desserts: a perfect 10.

The evening speaker was Mr. Dana Atwood, Director of Goodell Gardens. His talk was about "Big Trees: Their Role in Contemporary Landscape."

Where to start? Several topics were explored, going back 3 1/2 billion years, back to the Dinosaurs,..... Earth's Magnetic fields, Geological time scale, oxidation of the earth, 70% of the earth is water, the content of the earth's oxygen is 20.9% plant evolution of the time table, carbon is the building block of life, plant trees for carbon. Mr. Atwood also talked about trees around Blossom's beautiful setting. Thank You Blossom for a well planned day!

On a very regretful note, "Hurricane" winds struck the Griese home in Granville, Ohio., last Friday in June. Huge trees struck the house, no electricity for days; terrible damage to the daffodil woods—50/75 trees down. "It looks like someone tried to make toothpicks out of our trees—lost most of my rhodies—sad, sad, I'm still shell shocked—neither Paul nor I were hurt."

May "all" the horrific damage—that can be repaired—be on the mend. Every good wish for recovery is coming your way. AMP



The Otto Prycl Award for Best Spray of Deciduous Azalea Cecil GLC Truss Show Hostess Blossom McBrier Photo Spike Walters



Perfect weather, great camaraderie—in the tent—an over the top delicious BBQ!

Photo Tony Pizzino



Mild evening breezes greeted the audience as Speaker Dana Atwood, Director of Goodell Gardens & Homestead, Edinboro, PA, delivered an insightful talk on trees.

Photo Tony Pizzino

Big Trees: Their Role in Contemporary Landscape

GLCIARS Board Meeting, May 26th, 2012, 4:00 pm at Blossom McBrier's, Fairview, PA

In attendance: Jim & Blanche Browning, Margaret Corbin, Spike & Kay Walters, Annette Pizzino, Linda Stull, Steve Krebs, Bert Hendley, Bob Frenzel, Chas & Karen Wagner and Jill Griese. Called to order at 4:00 pm by GLC President Chas Wagner. Secretary's Report accepted as published in GLC May, newsletter.

Treasurers Report: Investments: \$49,035.34 - Checking Account : \$5468.81
Motion to accept by Bob Frenzel, Second by Kay Walters—Unanimous

Old Business: Discussion of possibly contribution to Holden Arboretum (New Rhododendron Exploration Garden) with vote by general meeting later. Vote by GLC Board in the amount of \$25,000 (after much discussion) was 6 yes and 2 nos. Passed at general Meeting later.

New Business: Request for our Chapter to host the 2014 ARS Annual International Convention. Motion by Bob Frenzel, 2nd Jill Griese Unanimous. Decided to hold on the east side of Cleveland, Ohio. Committee Chairs discussed with list to be available at August Meeting.

Upcoming Dates: August Picnic meeting October 6th, Coshocton, Ohio Village Inn & Suites—\$96.95 + tax —HELD UNTIL SEPT. 5
Rainbow Hills Winery—dinner (steak or chicken, baked potato, tossed salad, bread, dessert @\$35.00 includes wine for 2)

Also Rainbow, has B&B, 3room @\$165.00 - 1 room at \$175.00

2013 Plant sale Holden Arboretum, Kirtland, Ohio, May 2013 GLC Truss Show, maybe, Cox Arboretum, Dayton Ohio.

Adjournment: 5:30 pm Motion by Linda Stull, 2nd Jill Griese.

Respectfully submitted by your storm battered secretary Jill Griese

On the rhodies again

The Great Lakes Chapter American Rhododendron Society's Truss Show was held Saturday at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center. I was impressed at the beautiful rhododendron trusses, or rhodies, for short. The trusses were displayed in green vases on long tables. In addition to the regular rhodie colors of white, pink and purple, there were also the uncommon colors of red, orange, salmon and yellow.

Many trusses won awards, but several of the first-place winners won additional awards, listed below:

■ Marge and Harry Johnson, Best in Show for their pink truss, Pearl Passion.

■ Linda Stull, William Fetterhoff Award for the Best Truss of a Yellow to Orange Rhododendron, the Sir Joseph Hooker Award for the Best Species Azalea for her white truss. Her purple truss won two awards: Orlando S. Pride Award for the Best Proven Performer and the Peter Girard Award for the Best Truss Purple to Near Blue Rhododendron.

Buds & Blooms

Sue Scholz



■ Margaret Corbin, Dr. Tom Ring Award for the Best Truss of a Red Rhododendron.

■ Chas Wagner, Tony Shamarello Award for the Best Spray of a Persistent Leafed Azalea for his rosebud azalea.

■ Jim Browning, Best Foliage for "Xanadu" and Best New Hybrid for his "Blazing Sun by Moser's Maroon."

■ Blossom McBrier, Otto Pryel Award for the Best Spray of a Deciduous Azalea.

I talked to one of the flower show judges, Jim Browning from Pittsburgh. He said that the club members are from western Pennsylvania, Ohio, New York and eastern Michigan. The members not



CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



Winners include, from top left: Marge and Harry Johnson, Linda Stull, Margaret Corbin, Chas Wagner and Jim Browning.

only grow and enjoy rhodies and azaleas; they also create new varieties by hybridizing them.

How do you hybridize a rhodie? It's done by fertilizing one plant with the pollen from another, thus creating a cross between the two plants.

Browning stated that in the spring, the stamens, which are the male parts of the flowers with the pollen on it, are removed from one rhodie. The pollen is transferred to the anther, the female part, of another rhodie.

Thus the seeds are fertilized and a new rhodie is born, so to speak. The hybridizer takes the seeds out of the rhodie in September and grows a new plant. Browning said it takes five years to see what the new rhodie looks like, as it takes five years for it to bloom for the first time. Rhodie hybridizers must be very patient people. It must be exciting to see what the new rhodie finally looks like.

Browning proudly showed me one of his newest rhodies that he created. The

edges of the leaves were wavy and ruffled and felt velvety underneath. Out of all the plants from that one batch of seeds, only one rhodie had the ruffled leaves. To make more, Browning must take cuttings of the new rhodie, as the seeds do not always breed true. Browning named his new rhodie Xanadu.

The chapter is always open to new members, and meets the third weekend of March, May, August and October. See www.greatlakesrhodies.org.

Great Lakes Chapter Truss Show Awards May 26th, 2012

The David Leach Award for Best in Show

Pearl Passion

Marge Johnson

The Joseph Gable Award for Second Best in Show

Blazing Sun x Moser's Maroon

Dr. Jim Browning

The Orlando S. Pride Award for the Best Proven Performer

Dorothy Amateis

Linda Stull

The Sir Joseph Hooker Award for the Best Species Rhododendron or Azalea

The Judges' choice from all the blue ribbon winners of the hardiest, most vigorous, and easy to grow rhododendron

R. viscosum

Linda Stull

The Weldon Delp Award for the Best Lepidote

For the best truss or spray of a hybrid or species Lepidote

R. wilsoni

Marge Johnson

The E. H. Wilson Award for the Best Ironclad Rhododendron

The Best of these "cultivars of extraordinary Hardiness" introduced before 1926

??????

The Exbury Award for the Best Hybrid of yakushmanum

For the best truss of a first or advanced yakushmanum hybrid

Yak Hybrid

Dr. Jim Browning

The C.O. Dexter Award for the Best Truss of a Pink Rhododendron

Pearl Passion

Marge Johnson

The Robert Blough Award for Best Truss of a White Rhododendron

R. wilsoni ?? R. chionoides??

The Dr. Tom Ring Award for the Best Truss of a Red Rhododendron

Unnamed Red Hybrid

Margaret Corbin

The William Fetterhoff Award for the Best Truss of a Yellow or Orange Rhododendron

Dream

Linda Stull

The Peter Girard Award for the Best Truss of a Purple to Near Blue Rhododendron

Dorothy Amateis

Linda Stull

The Otto Prycl Award for the Best Spray of a Deciduous Azalea

Cecil

Blossom Mc Brier

The Tony Shammarello Award for the Spray of a Persistent Leaf Azalea

Rosebud

Chas Wagner

The Homer Salley Award for the Best new Hybrid Never Before Shown

Blazing Sun x Moser's Maroon

Dr. Jim Browning

The Holden Arboretum Award

The best new named hybrid rhododendron introduced in the past seven years

????

The Best Foliage Award

Xandu

Dr. Jim Browning

Funding Update:

“Save the Azaleas” Campaign

Harold Belcher—Cheverly, Maryland

Source: From an article that appeared in *The Azalean* Fall 2011

The \$1 million endowment from an anonymous donor that saved the Glenn Dale azaleas at the U. S. National Arboretum continues to generate funds that benefit the care and maintenance of a mature and greatly appreciated azalea collection. (2.14.2011)

The \$1 million endowment has produced income of approximately \$28,000. Friends of the National Arboretum now plan to reach out to high income individuals and corporate donors for additional support.

An update from the American Society of Azaleas (ASA) and members of the American Rhododendron Society (ARS) are working with the Curator of the Azalea Collections to identify the undocumented Glenn Dale Azaleas. It was pointed out by Dr. Colein Hefferan, director of the U.S. National Arboretum that in some instances, it may not be necessary to name the undocumented Glenn Dale azaleas in order to appreciate and maintain them.

The spring blooming of the beautifully, colorful Glenn Dales are a major draw, that results in huge numbers of visitors who come to view this spectacular display. AMP

In a world that is losing endangered plant, animal and bird species, the positive event of regeneration is a high note of grace and hope.

Demilitarized Zone “peace park”

“In 60 years, the 155-mile-long DEMILITARIZED ZONE between North and South Korea, where few people ever tread, has become the habitat of countless species of plants, animals and birds, including many that are endangered, and there are international proposals for making it a “peace park” to prevent its development if the two Koreas reconcile.”

Source: Avant Gardener, August, 2004

A BETTER ‘PEAT’

Cries of “Coir! Coir!” are heard through-out the land, not from crows but from gardeners.

Coir, the fiber from the husk of coconuts, is proving to be as useful a soil amendment as peat. The coconut palm, *Cocos nucifera*, which grows in nearly 100 tropical countries, is more than a food plant. Its husk fibers are made into rope, mats and even brooms for local use or export.

What we call coir is actually coir dust, left over after the long fibers have been extracted, and for centuries it was considered a waste product and millions of tons were dumped or burned. Its horticultural values were discovered less than 30 years ago. So now we have a new product, a cheap and very plentiful “coco peat” that in some ways is superior to peat moss.

Coir holds nine times its weight of water, has a ph of approximately 6, and is 70% lignin, which means it breaks down very slowly. It is easier to wet, than peat, and it stays moist longer without shrinkage. The compressed bales, blocks, bricks and pellets sold widely today are easily moistened with warm water. For clay or sandy soils in garden beds, lawns and golf greens, as well as in containers, adding from 10% to as much as 50% by volume of coir creates a sponge condition that holds large amounts of water which is easily available to roots.

And as a bonus, it’s easier to carry home several 10-pound blocks of coir than the same number of 40-pounds bales of peat-moss. Chunks of coir, incidentally, are replacing bark in growing mixes for epiphytes such as orchids, and hydroponic growers are using long-fiber coir as a substitute for non-recyclable rockwool.

Source: *Avant Gardener* (article from publication no date noted)

*** *Coir may be useful for those rhodos growing in raised beds.* AMP

GLC Members— Tell the Story of Your Garden

In the first of a series of requests Great Lakes Chapter members are asked to, “tell the story of their gardens.” Every garden— from those who have acreage to postage-sized side yards — whether you are formal, casual or a blend of rhododendrons/azaleas companion plants—every garden is unique. How do you handle the deer situation? Drought? Name your “good doers” or the rhodo that you’ve bought three times, have done everything “right,” and this your third attempt— it looked so good,— even won a blue ribbon, when suddenly it gets stem die-back. Three strikes—OUT! Share your stories, great photos— maybe someone knows how to cure stem die-back? Send your stories, & photos A lot of interest in other members gardens share your stories. annettepizzino@roadrunner.com (address back page)

August 25, 2012 Great Lales Chapter/ARS Summer Meeting

Date: Saturday, August 25th, 2012

Place: Conley Resort
740 Pittsburgh Road (route 8)
Butler, PA 16002
800.344.7303 or 724.586.7711

Host: Spike & Kay Walters (724.287.2047)
spike1932@zoominternet.net

Time: 10:00 AM All MEMBERS WELCOME

All Activities are at Conley's Resort

This meeting will be devoted to organizing the
GLC 2014 Annual International Rhododen-
dron Convention.

There is so much to decide NOW so that com-
mittees can get busy!

Noon:

We will break for our "ALMOST PICNIC" lunch.

1:00 PM

The presentation of
our May Truss Show
Winners followed by a
continuation of this
mornings agenda.

Places to Stay

Conley Resort

800.344.7303

Comfort Inn (located 5 miles north on Route 8)
724.287.7177 (Includes a hot continental
breakfast)

Two double beds (AARP rate) \$107.99 + tax
Regular rate & 119.99 +tax

Days Inn

724.287.6761

Use Discount card (AARP) \$89.10 + tax
Regular rate \$98.10 + Tax

*There is nothing permanent except change.
—Heracitus*

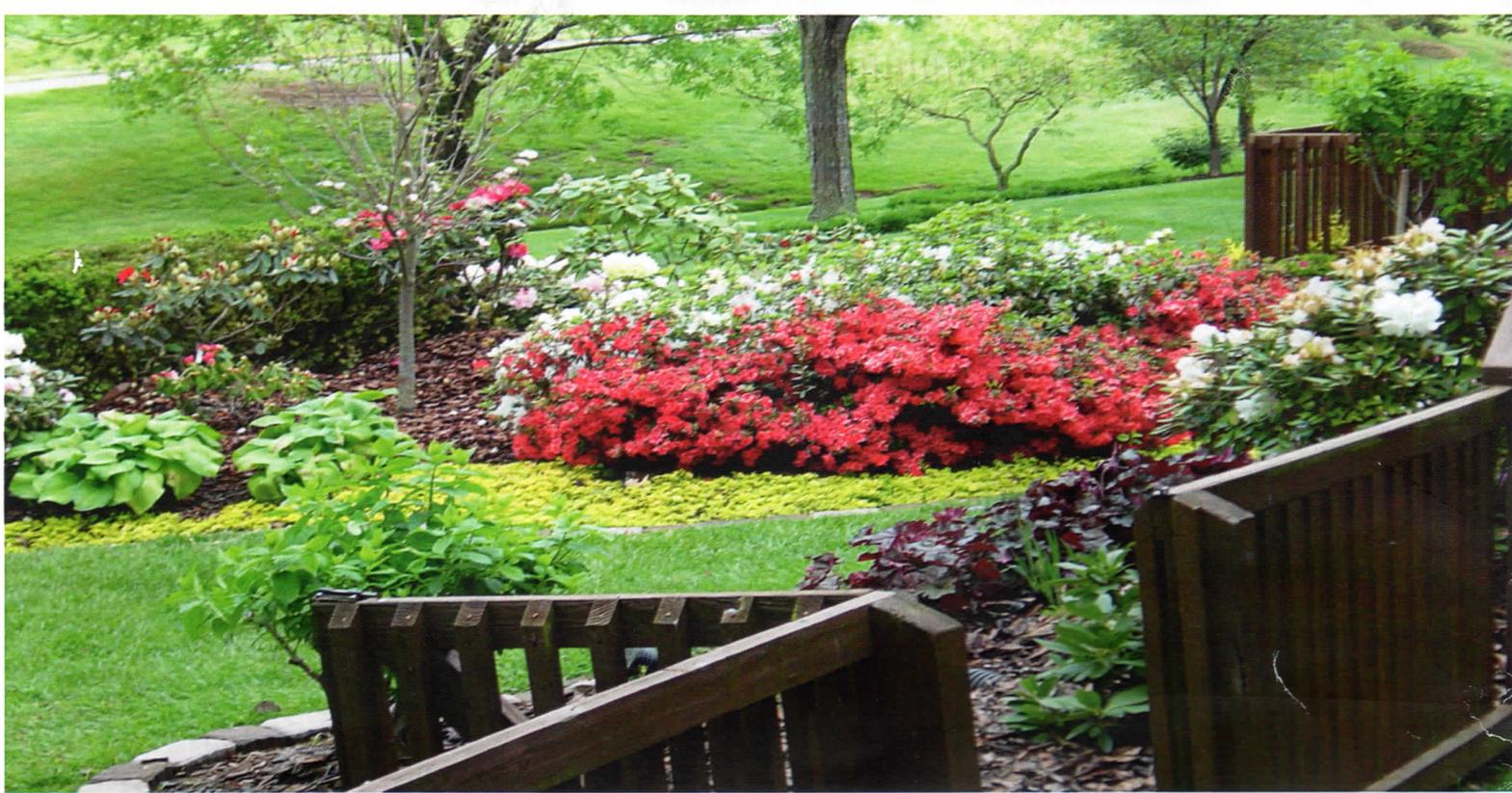
Send Lunch Reservation to:

Margaret Corbin
1802 Millfair Road
Erie, PA 16505
814.833.7207
gramcl@aol.com

Lunches.....\$15.00

Total.....\$_____

Deadline Tuesday August 21st



George Tomaich Garden

August GLC newsletter cover and above are photos by George Tomaich,, a new GLC member of Lexington Kentucky. A long time rhododendron collector, over a thirty year period, he has grown many hybrids and writes an interesting story of his experiences, observations and adventures with the genus. Rhododendrons first captured his imagination when he lived in Greenville, SC. Work dictated he move from time-to-time, and he has grown rhododendrons in : Holland, MI, Chanhassen, MN, and now in Lexington, KY. George remembers and writes the following story of the ups/downs of growing rhododendron hybrids.:

I grew them in Holland, MI, Chanhassen, MN and now in Lexington KY. Holland, MI is ideally suited for rhodos and all my plants prospered there. Chanhassen, MN was a bit challenging in that I had to build a temporary shelter over the plants to protect them from the wind during the very long and cold winters. Thus protected, they survived the winters handily. Now in KY I'm faced with ugly soil, heat and abundant phytophthora sources. Even growing plants under near ideal conditions in raised beds, last year I lost plants. It was an especially wet and hot year. The ideal combination for rampant phytophthora growth.

I don't have any big objectives like hybridizing new varieties. I'm basically a collector, who enjoys the blooms and plants in general. I'm interested in finding out better ways of growing them and determining what varieties can take the heat in this area. **I definitely think digging a hole and putting a rhodo into it is a death sentence.** I try to convince the landscapers and garden shops to advise their customers to surface plant their rhodos.. It's discouraging to buy a plant for \$15 to \$50 and have it die a short time later. I like plants with big trusses, like Trude Webster. But I also want a plant with a great shape, because it's the shrub shape that fills the landscape. For this reason I'm a big fan of yak hybrids. They are extremely hardy, hold their shape well and don't over grow their space rapidly. (Ken Janek & Today & Tomorrow)...Another plant that is taking the sun and heat is an old hybrid Minnetonka. It's a profuse bloomer and hold its shape well. I have two raised beds made from landscaping timbers that are about twelve inches deep and filled with milled pine bark. George also grows: Halfdan Lem, Phyllis Korn, Rocket, Marketta's Prize, Trilby, Capistrano and Skookum. and many more in his "farm area." We have encouraged George to make a Garden Pictorial for the GLC website. He has 400 varieties, including many 1 to 3 year old plants. AMP