

May, 2016 Volume 57 Number 1

Rhododendron



Great Lakes Chapter
American Rhododendron Society

Chas & Karen Wagner Grimshaw Glen Garden North East, PA
Bronze Medal Award Winners

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 weekend 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, | Steve Krebs | 440.602.3831 |
| | skrebs@holdenarb.org | |
| Secretary | Karen Wagner | 814.725.1584 |
| | wagsix@roadrunner.com | |
| Treasurer | Margaret Corbin | 814.833.7207 |
| | gramcl@aol.com | |
| Membership | Dr. L.G. Walters | 724.287.2047 |
| | l932@zoominternet.net | |
| Newsletter | Annette Pizzino | 440.248.4583 |
| | annettepizzino@roadrunner.com | |

Past President Dr. Steve Krebs

Board of Directors

| | |
|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Kay Walters | 6 year term |
| Karen Wagner | 4 year term |
| Chas Wagner "rhodo mentor" | wagsixroadrunner.com |

Great Lakes Chapter Website

www.greatlakesrhodies.org

Username—greatlakes password—maximum
To be updated



President's Message

Hello Fellow GLC Members,
This spring promises to produce an outstanding rhododendron display in our gardens. My plants at home and at the Leach Research Station are heavily budded, and unlike the past two winters there appears to be no damage to the flower buds or the foliage. For the public at large there will be an open house at the Leach Station on Sat-Sun May 21-22. organized by The Holden Arboretum. Information about the tours and registration (which are free) are available from Holden's website under 'Events': www.holdenarb.org. This is a rare opportunity to visit an unusually

mature and diverse plant collection.

Our chapter will be selling rhododendrons and azaleas at the annual Holden Plant Sale, starting Fri May 13 (uh oh) Noon-6pm and continuing Sat May 14 and Sun May 15 from 10am-4pm. We hope you can join us there for the general excitement (there are lots of vendors and activities) and help out for a bit with our sales, truss show and answering general questions from the public. The hope is to use the sale to draw attention to the GLC/ARS and recruit some new members. If it rains, it rains, but at least we'll have a tent over-head...

Please stay tuned for future club events. There is a plan afoot to hold a Fall Meeting at WW Nursery in Indiana, PA. The nursery is under new ownership after Ray Walyko passed away, and will continue to propagate rhododendrons and azaleas. More info: Rhodiesrus.com. New owner LeeAnn Mravunich Cell 724.388.1025, custom propagation in fall 2016. This is a real boon to our chapter, as it is getting harder and harder to find regional sources of specialty plants. Come and visit the nursery and bring any cuttings that you would like to have rooted. Thing spring! Steve Krebs, President.



Karen Wagner & Chas Wagner Bronze Award John Heinze

Cover:

Chas & Karen Wagner, receive a very well deserved, Great Lakes Chapter Bronze Medal, on August 22, 2015.

Chas & Karen are enthusiastic and knowledgeable rhodophiles, plus overall great gardeners. They are pictured in their beautiful diverse "collectors' garden" which includes a rolling, fresh-water brook, who's destination is nearby Lake Erie. Congratulations on many jobs well done! More info right...

"Heaven is under our feet, as well as over our head."
—Henry David Thoreau

Great Lakes Chapter Bronze Medal Award

Before a sizeable group of Great Lakes Chapter members assembled for a fun-filled August gathering and guided tour of the many, beautiful gardens of Kingwood Center, Mansfield, Ohio—with John Heinze* officiating, - Chas & Karen Wagner received the Chapter's highest award, The Bronze Medal.

A full write-up of the award will appear in an upcoming issue of the Journal of The American Rhododendron Society reflecting their numerous volunteer positions: Chapter president, secretary, meeting hosts, truss show hosts, plant sale organizer, GLC/ARS Convention 2014 Chairman/Secretary—a generous couple with a can-do spirit. Congratulations.

*John Heinze longtime District Director, Chapter 11. (ret.)

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BITS BY BEV Notes August 23, 2015 Kingwood Center

I'm back. Due to circumstances beyond my control, it's the first Great Lakes Chapter Meeting I have attended this year.

What a perfect setting for the August Meeting. A picnic at the 'Kingwood Center Gardens', Mansfield, Ohio, Saturday, August 22, 2015

After enjoying good conversation and a box lunch - John Heinze our awards chairman presented the Chapter's Bronze medal to Chas and Karen Wagner, for all the hard work they have done, and continue to do so for our Chapter. Well deserved!

Charles Gleaves the Director of the Center, presented a slide show, and lecture on the history of the Center.

In case you are wondering, Charles Kelley King accumulated his wealth as President and Chairman of the Board 'Ohio Brass Company'. He and his wife began creating Kingwood in 1926, the Mansion and the surrounding grounds surrounding it. Following his death in 1952, he left an endowment, the largest source of financial support for the operations of the garden.

What can be said about the gardens? One could use any adjective: spectacular comes to mind. Manicured to perfection were: perennial, rose, Daylilies, and herb gardens, the list goes on. There are 30 full time staff members, along with 250 volunteers. 47 acres of land, and another 15 acres across the street. Sorry to say - Rhodies are no longer grown there.

We were treated to a tour of the mansion, along with the gardens. All the staff was knowledgeable, and shared with us little tidbits like: Mr. King was married twice, he had no children. He had just a small household staff. In his will, his two maids were allowed to stay in the mansion until their deaths.

Only touching on a few things in the gardens, two weddings were performed, the day we were there. There are greenhouses, duck pond, meeting hall, and so much more.

A big thank you to Tony and Annette Pizzino for hosting the meeting. It was a perfect day all the way around. As a bonus - sunny skies.



Beautiful gardens of Kingwood Center

**CEO Charles Gleaves – Speaker
“Kingwood Center: Past, Present, Future”**

Assembled to tour mansion

SUMMARY OF October 3, 2015

Great Lakes Chapter/ARS

Leach Research Station, Madison, Ohio

Attendance; Spike & Kay Walters, Gail Potter, Steve Krebs, Chas & Karen Wagner, John Guyton, Tony & Annette Pizzino, Dave Walylko, Dan Baughman, Blossom McBrier, LeeAnn Mravunich, Frank Myers, Don & Linda Barnard.

Discussion centered around the May 2016 meeting, plant sale and truss show to be held at Holden Arboretum, Suggestion was to make it —a 2 day event. There is interest in joining the existing Holden plant sale event rather than making it a separate weekend, as their plant sale draws many interested gardeners. Steve Krebs will inquire with Holden about the date and terms for a possible joint plant sale. There would be remaining W.W. Nursery stock held at Leach Station to sell, and the possibility to add to that from various sources, if desired.

The meeting was followed by lunch and an auction of W.W. plants held at the Leach Station.
Karen Wagner

January 30th 2016

Spike & Kay Walters' Hosts, Butler, PA

Attendance: Bert Hendley, Leigh Ann Mravunich, Annette & Tony Pizzino, Helen & Bob Kotson, Spike & Kay Walters, Dave Walylko, Dan Baughman, Eric Oesterling, Chas & Karen Wagner.

An informal meeting of GLC/ARS members gathered in a response to faltering membership and participation numbers. Bert gave that present opportunity to share suggestions for the future of the organization. Steve Krebs was unable to attend, but sent suggestions about participating with Holden and becoming the

"experts" on specific rhododendron weekend Kotsons, along with Annette suggested GLC/ARS scholarship memberships for at least a year with two plant purchases. Also mentioned was making "how to" videos for YouTube, Power Points and linking websites effectively.

The GLC newsletter could be delivered online. Chas gave dates for the plant sale at Holden, May, 13-15, 2016. See agenda for more info & times. Members could make purchases on Friday. Outreach would be made to buyers. Also, since Chas is making presentation at Hosta College regarding rhododendrons, he would like to link those with questions to a local member rhodo mentor for consultations and advice. Kay & Spike provided a membership list; they pointed to the difficulty that the large geography of members present in the GLC/ARS. Would online solutions be available? Plant auctions/format is too long.

Dave W. proposed joining with the Azalea Society: promotion and training in rhodos is necessary—developing speakers

He suggested a change in format of meetings to afternoon sessions and eliminate the dinner and evening event.

Tony encouraged understanding our product and therefore our market; need for workshops and education. Dan suggested updating the communication method, and reinforced the draw of plants for sale.

Eric would like to encourage Master Gardeners to see rhodos as a companion plants; there is also the social aspect of meeting which could be met by smaller, local meetings within the GLC/ARS.

Bert gave examples of success at Mission Oaks with symposiums on gardening and developing mini symposiums on rhododendron by dynamic and gifted speakers that teach, not preach. He also suggested a need to budget for IT and make a committee, not just a person. He encouraged the convenience of PayPal as a payment method. Lee Ann is "jumping in" to rhododendrons at WW Nurseries with Dave as a mentor and gave updated websites.

Karen mentioned the chapter includes great public gardens (Holden/Cle. Botanical Garden, Mission Oaks as an example) as well as rhododendron experts like Steve Krebs at Leach Station, and also a grower/supplier of plants at WW Nursery. We have many hybridizers that have developed plants specifically for success in the Great Lakes areas. There are many fine private member gardens to enjoy. We can promote rhodos as a plant of year around interest.

For the short term, the plant sale and May meeting/truss show How to were discussed. Some discussion had come from the precious truss show that it be discontinued, continue as a display with only a couple of awards, or keep the usual format.

Dan, Tony, Annette, other GLC members will assist with truss show and plant sale.

Jim Browning honorarium to ARS, completed, Tony inquiry.

Chas & Steve will coordinate plant sale, with help from Tony, Annette, GLC members to set-up flower truss show & plant sales. Another meeting was set for the same location on March 5th at 11:00 a.m. at Spike & Kay Walters', Butler, PA.
Karen Wagner

March 5th informal meeting Spike & Kay Hosts

Steve, Chas, Dave- discussed the pros/cons of plant purchases/availability from Rosebay & WW Nurseries.

A combined GLC truss show & plant sale May 13-15 at Holden, will display uncommon rhodo/az plants for sale. NOTE: GLC members entering flower trusses for exhibition/display only, no ribbons, see agenda for time

Bob Kotson is developing GLC website, open to suggestions; add your ideas. rkotson@gmail.com
Chas as "rhodo mentor" available to answer questions; more info contact, wagsix@roadrunner.com.

For additional updated info see President's message and GLC May meeting 13-15 agenda page.

"You can not perceive beauty, but with a serene mind." Henry David Thoreau

ERIC'S Notes

Great Lakes Chapter/ARS member Eric Oesterling, shares horticultural and Master Gardening updates...

Dieback on Rhododendrons

Eric Oesterling

The name is a mouthful but botryosphaeria is a very common fungus disease that causes dieback on rhododendrons and many other woody plants including dogwood, redbud, apple, beech, oak, pine and others. This disease takes advantage of plants that are weak due to stress caused by drought or other factors. Where I live in southwestern Pennsylvania last year we were complaining about all the rain from mid-June to mid-July. But then it was dry as a bone from mid-July to November. So I will be watching for signs of dieback.

Botryosphaeria is always around and gets into the plant through natural openings or wounds such as those caused by pruning, breakage or stress. Once beneath the bark the fungus kills cambial tissue - forming a dead area (canker) beneath the bark. If the canker encircles the stem then the branch dies from that point out. The cankered areas turn dark brown or black and if you look closely you can see tiny raised black pimples on the bark. Those pustules produce spores that spread the disease. Leaves on girdled branches wilt and die. Severity can vary from a branch or two dying back to large parts of the plant wilting and dying.

Fungicides are not effective against botryosphaeria. All you can do for diseased plants is to carefully prune out all affected branches. Pith and wood of infected branches will turn a dark brown color. Prune when branches are dry and sterilize pruning tools frequently to minimize spread by pruning. I use good tools that I plan to keep for the rest of my life so I rely on rubbing alcohol as my disinfectant. A mixture of 10% chlorine bleach and 90% water is often recommended and is an excellent disinfectant, but it is very corrosive to pruning tools.

Reduce stress (and therefore susceptibility) on plants by mulching, watering as needed and making sure they have the best possible conditions for growth. If plants are healthy and growing well they are very resistant to the disease but if they are stressed they become much more susceptible.



Rhododendron plants above & right exhibiting stem dieback.

Photos Eric Oesterling

Rhododendron 'Mary Fleming'

Rhody info: Share with friends who love and enjoy plants.

Historical Note:

Mary Fleming, hybridized by Guy Nearing (R. racemosum X R. keiskei) X R. Keiskei, is a tidy, floriferous early blooming lepidote, With luminous, creamy-yellow bisque flowers, tipped in a soft salmon color, it is wonderfully hardy (-25), and is covered with 2" glossy, pointed green leaves, attractive all season (tinted wine in autumn). It is a moderate grower, achieving a 3'4' upright growth habit in 10 years. Mary Fleming is a great early spring bloomer for the modern space- restricted garden. Mary Fleming blooms in our garden , and its bisque flowers compliment, nearby PJM plants. When introduced, it received The Award of Excellence, October 1978. Excuse the pun,—“An oldie, but a goodie.” Guy Nearing, originator of the “Nearing Frame” an early, and very popular and successful rhododendron propagating system. Guy Nearing named this hybrid after the secretary of the ARS/New York Chapter.

David G. Leach & Kenneth Cox, Comment on G. Guy Nearing:

Lauded by Leach: for his "accomplishments in hybridizing, Nearing also a botanist, an artist, a chess master, a poet, an inventor and a folk dancer. He is the most remarkable man to appear on the horticultural scene in this generation."

Kenneth Cox: "Mary Fleming" Semi-dwarf-low EM, "This is one of the best hybrids of this type for Eastern US."



Photo Steve Krebs

GREAT LAKES CHAPTER TRUSS SHOW & PLANT SALE

“UNDER THE TENT”

AGENDA: All ACTIVITIES HOLDEN ARBORETUM

All GLC members invited to help with sales & give Rh. info.

PLACE: **Holden Arboretum (Times open, see below)**
9500 Sperry Road
Kirtland, Ohio 44094-5172
Holdenarb.org 440.946.4400

DATE & TIME:

Friday, May 13th Noon - 6:00 pm (open)

***Enter GLC flower trusses Fri. 9:00 am—Noon**

Saturday & Sunday 10:00 am - 4:00 pm (open)

***Enter GLC flower trusses Sat. 10:00 am—Noon**

EXHIBITION/DISPLAY FORMAT, NO RIBBONS

‘PEOPLES CHOICE’

HOST: GLC members —Steve Krebs, President

LUNCH ON YOUR OWN: Tasty food selections available from several food vendors.

**VENDORS: Holden’s Wildflowers, large variety
Ornamental shrubs & trees
Perennials, herbs, wide assortment
Annuals, plus basket/pot arrangements
Garden artifacts, etc., etc., much more!**

ACTIVITIES:

Helen S. Layer Rhododendron Garden, acres of mature rhodos elegantly displayed in a park-like wooded setting.

Paine Rhododendron Discovery Garden

Tour the RDG, view colorful info panels displayed artfully through- out the garden: rhododendron history, species, hybrids, hybridizers, culture more. View rhodo companions

Corning Library, View rare book, Joseph D. Hooker’s “The Rhododendrons of Sikkim-Himalaya” hand-crafted, vividly illustrated by Walter Hood Fitch.

(Hooker’s Himalayan expedition 1849-51—historically the most important book about rhododendrons.)

**NEW—CANOPY WALK SEE LAKE ERIE TOP OF TOWER
(Purchase \$4.00 ticket Corning Visitor Center)**



Pearce's American Beauty

R. 'Pearce's American Beauty'
R. 'Florence Park's'
Available



**The Judith and
Maynard H. Murch IV
Canopy Walk with the
Kalberer Family
Emergent Tower**





For Sale

In the rolling hills of eastern Pittsburgh, a rare opportunity to own a lovely 5 bedroom, 3 bath brick on 3 acres. Home overlooks a well-established garden of rhododendrons and azaleas, both species and hybrids of Dr. Jim Browning.

For more information,
please call:
412-373-8689
or e-mail:
whippoorwill7@verizon.net

“Garden Open”

In the scenic Penn Hills area of Pittsburgh, a superb mature three acre plant collection of rhododendrons/azaleas—thrives. In a park like setting among stately trees and companion plants-view, hybrids by: Pride, Gable, Nearing, Browning, Konrad, Delp, Blough, Leach, Shammarello, Girard, Hachmann, more. It’s like a stroll through a colorful spring blooming plant catalog.

Please call Blanche & family, before visit—see info above,

Great Lakes Chapter/ARS
34900 Lakeview Drive
Solon, OH 44139-2027

