



The Blue Ridge Review



SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

March/April, 2018

Encouragement of the culture of Rhododendrons

STEVE PETTIS WILL EDUCATE US ABOUT PESTS AND DISEASES IN RHODODENDRONS AND AZALEAS

Join us for the next SE-ARS meeting at 2:00 PM on March 18, 2018 at St. John in the Woods Parish Center when Steve Pettis will enlighten us about *Pests and Diseases in Rhododendrons and Azaleas*. Steve is a Commercial and Consumer Horticulture Agent at the NC State Cooperative Extension Service in Hendersonville, NC, where he consults on horticultural topics with homeowners, business owners and government officials; he also manages the **Henderson County Master Gardener Program**. He earned an undergraduate degree in horticulture from the University of Georgia and Masters Degree in Integrated Pest Management (MPPPM) from the University of Georgia. He specializes in plant health care, integrated pest management, natural resources education, nursery/greenhouse management, arboriculture, sustainable agriculture, and green industry education.



Steve has been in the green industry for the past 24 years, including 14 years working as a cooperative extension agent in 2 Georgia counties. Fortunately for us, he came to Henderson County to work at the NC State Cooperative Extension Service a year ago in January. With his vast experience teaching others about agriculture and natural resources as a County Extension Agent, he excels in making complex scientific ideas understandable for green industry

professionals, government officials and homeowners.

If you look at the NC State extension website, you will get a sense of Steve's expertise in the area of horticultural pest control: he seems dedicated to educating the public about pest control with articles about Anthracnose in dogwoods, Mountain Laurel Leaf Blight, and Spotted Wing Drosophila Pest in Berries. He also recently taught a credited class entitled *Identifying and Protecting Beneficial Insects while Controlling Harmful Insects* to professionals at the Horticultural Industry Integrated Pest Management Symposium. If you look online, you will see that he has a history of sharing his expertise in the pest management area at similar events in the past.

In addition to his passion for horticulture, Steve is a former Marine and also is a musician who plays Americana music. We welcome his expertise!

Steve Pettis says

"One of the interesting aspects of local horticulture is its variety of growing environments. There are really four distinct growing regions for plants in the county, from the shady side of high mountains to the lower lands by the river."

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On the Mountain Crop Improvement Lab website, Tom Ranney lists his areas of specialization:

Plant breeding, new crop development, and daydreaming.

Enjoys horticulture, photography, traveling, and hiking.

Tom's Responsibilities: Research (100%)

Evaluation and improvement of new crops.

Major Research Areas

1. Development of new nursery and bioenergy crops with greater adaptability, pest resistance, and commercial potential.
2. Enhancing production efficiency and quality of crops
3. Basic research in plant science, cytogenetics, and reproductive biology.



TOURING WITH TOM RANNEY — APRIL 14!!

On Saturday, April 14, 2018, we will have a tour of the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research and Extension Center, at 455 Research Drive, Mills River, NC. We will meet at the Center at 10 AM. Dr. Tom Ranney (a SE-ARS member) will provide a behind-the-scenes tour of plant breeding and new crop development at the Mountain Crop Research Center. These scientists work on a broad diversity of landscape and bio-energy crops and in 2018 will unveil 2 newly developed rhododendron hybrids.

Tom's preparation for becoming an expert started with a B.S. degree from The Ohio State University followed by a M.S. and Ph.D. from Cornell University. He has been a faculty member at North Carolina State University since 1989 and is currently the JC Raulston Distinguished Professor, North Carolina State University, Department of Horticultural Science, Mountain Horticultural Crops Research and Extension Center. At the Center he leads a research program associated with the Ornamental Shrub Group; his research group focuses on the evaluation, selection, and development of new landscape and bio-energy crops. These efforts involve an ongoing search of new plants that provide economic opportunities for the green industry and a foundation for further plant breeding. Recent plant developments from his program include new hybrid *Albizia*, *Calycanthus*, *Chaenomeles*, *Clethra*, *Exochorda*, *xGordlinia*, *Hydrangea*, *Hypericum*, *Illicium*, and *xSchimlinia*. He also has done research on polyploidy in deciduous azaleas. He has published more than 230 research and popular articles on diverse horticultural topics.



Tom is definitely abiding by the motto of the Horticultural Research Center which is ***Meeting the Agricultural Research Needs of Southern Appalachia.***

CHANGE OF VENUE FOR ANNUAL FLOWER SHOW

Our Flower Show chairman, April Sanborn, has found a better place to hold this year's flower show. It will be held on Saturday, April 28th from 8 to 4 or 4:30. This year we'll hold the show at the new St. John in the Wilderness Parish Hall. April says she thinks this will be a good move for us because of the easy access and the size of this new facility. Details will follow in the next newsletter.

March/April, 2018

BOUNTIFUL DECEMBER TOUR OF BOTANICAL TREASURES WHOLESALE PERENNIAL NURSERY

On a beautiful Saturday in early December, nine of us visited Botanical Treasures Wholesale Perennial Nursery in rural Fletcher. The nursery has a very natural feel, with large open areas exhibiting numerous groups of potted plants thriving among the trees; more plants were sheltered under greenhouses, and others were in orderly rows surrounding the greenhouses. As we browsed the numerous areas, we were all intrigued by abundant varieties of hosta, ferns, wild ginger, sedum, perennials, heucherea with various leaf colors, even trillium.

Our gracious host, Plant Expert Robert Stine, walked with us,

sharing information and stories about various species. It was also good to have Sieglinde with us sharing her preferences.

As we wandered, each of us chose a side area to store our finds. We could chose plants grown in flats, quarts, gallons and 2-gallon containers -- all

offered to us at wholesale prices. Members typically spent \$50, \$60, or \$70 on treasure; one of us spent \$160. I got twelve plants averaging \$6 a-piece; I checked prices online and found that most of my purchases sell for around \$20 a-piece.

We enjoyed having lunch together at Tupelo Honey where we discussed our finds in this glorious assortment of treasured plants. Robert Stine said we could return as a group in the spring -- sounds appealing!

WE SAY GOOD-BY TO KENNETH HARVEY ANDERSON

Former SE-ARS member Kenneth Harvey Anderson passed away on January 8, 2018. Originally from Superior, Wisconsin, he spent many years as a Research and Development chemist for Union Carbide in South Charleston, WV. Ken was an avid naturalist. His interest in ornithology, botany, and horticulture was expressed in active membership in the Brooks Bird Club, Native Plant Society and other organizations. He completed the Master Gardener courses in West Virginia and North Carolina and served as the Chairman of the Landscape Advisory Committee at Carolina Village for twelve years. He also contributed many volunteer hours at the Bullington Gardens Center. At age 95, knee problems forced him to curtail his gardening activities, but he remained ever engaged in accordance with his motto: "Keeping moving is what keeps me moving."



**Southeastern Chapter of
American Rhododendron Society
280 Trammell Rd.
Travelers Rest, SC 29690**

Officers and Directors

(beginning July 1, 2017)

President: Sieglinde Anderson

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Directors until 2019—
Wayne Hutchins, Jay Jackson,
Chuck Van Rens

Secretary: Pamela McCarter

Editor: Judy Van Rens

Mark your Calendar

Sunday, March 18, 2 p.m.
**Steve Pettis — Pests and
Disease in Rhododendrons
and Azaleas**

St. John in the Wilderness Hall

Tuesday, March 20, 6 pm —
Sieglinde Anderson —
Gardening Under Shade Trees
Henderson County Library

Saturday, April 14, 10 am —
Tour Mountain Crops
Improvement Laboratory
with Dr. Tom Ranney

Saturday, April 28 - 8 to 4
Annual Flower Show
St. John in the Wilderness
New Parish Hall

Articles for next newsletter due April 15

**SIEGLINDE'S PROGRAM AT THE LIBRARY —
HOW TO HAVE A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN UNDER AND
AROUND SHADE TREES**

On Tuesday, March 20, at 6 pm at the Hendersonville Public Library Auditorium on Washington St, you are invited to attend this educational program presented by our own Sieglinde Anderson, landscape architect and interior design expert, and Ruthie Rosauer, tree expert and photographer.

Are you curious about what types of plants work best underneath the trees that shade your home or landscape? You can learn helpful hints and find inspiration from the knowledge of these two experts: Ruthie Rosauer will show a number of magnificent photographs of trees and discuss the power and spirit she finds in trees. Then Sieglinde Anderson will use her extensive botanical knowledge to discuss the various options available for gardening with shade to help preserve your trees.

The free program is sponsored by Hendersonville Tree Board.