



The Blue Ridge Review



SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

November/December 2016

Encouragement of the culture of Rhododendrons

December 3rd Outing to the 'Mossery'

Come and join us for an informative adventure on Saturday, December 3rd at 11am. We'll meet at Mountain Moss Enterprises 'Mossery' at 100 Elks Club Road, Brevard, NC. (see page 4) Moss expert Annie Martin, nicknamed Mossin' Annie, will show us and educate us about the qualities, applications, and benefits of some of the 450 bryophytes (plant division *Bryophyta*) that are found in Western North Carolina.

On the company's webpage (www.mountainmoss.com), Mossin' Annie welcomes us to experience the wonders of moss with these words:

"We invite you to peruse and find out more about these fascinating plants that have been "greening" Planet Earth for over 450 million years. The myriad of greens, textures and shapes will amaze you. The translucency of tiny verdant leaves and the contrasting colorful sporophytes provide outstanding appeal. Further, benefits of mosses to our environment will astound you."

Ms. Martin started her business in 2008 to encourage people to create moss gardens for both their aesthetic and environmental appeal. In 2015 she published *The Magical World of Moss Gardening*, which presents tips and guidelines for creating moss gardens.

You may already be familiar with some of the creations that Mountain Moss Enterprises has added to the area: The NC Arboretum showcases a green roof made of moss. It's on a garden shed just outside the Baker Education Center and is an example of the beauty of moss existing in direct sunlight. The Ira B Jones Elementary Learning Moss Garden in Asheville gives students a chance to explore differences between other plants and mosses that have sporophytes instead of flowers, spores instead of seeds, and rhizoids instead of roots.



Moss can thrive with no fertilizer, no pesticides, and no herbicides, so there is no groundwater contamination, and it's a wonderful plant for erosion control. It sounds like it would be advantageous for all of us to learn more about this intriguing plant; so come join us on Saturday, Dec. 3rd, from 11 to 1.

Then we'll go to Square Root in Brevard for lunch. **Please make lunch reservations by 11/28 on www.se-ars.org under Upcoming Events or phone Judy Van Rens** **Directions to The Mossery are on Page 4!**

We'll Miss Frances!

We extend a heartfelt "Thank You" to Frances Jones for her years of service as our SE-ARS secretary. She will be leaving us to begin a new way of life at a retirement community in Florida. We wish her well.

Pamela McCarter has generously agreed to take over the duties of secretary until the next election of officers.

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SUCCESSFUL FALL PLANT SALE



A good crowd!

We had forty people turn out for our fall plant auction on October 16th. Doley Bell was our auctioneer. He was efficient and funny as usual and auctioned a good number of beautiful and healthy plants in a short period of time. Leon Pace and John Kendall helped the auctioneer while Audrey Stelloh spotted successful bidders. Pamela McCarter tabulated and handled the proceeds.

The selection of plants for us to choose from was outstanding. We had a wonderful collection of plants from wholesalers: Ray Head and Jackson McCarter brought 33 large plants from Big Frog Nursery in Columbus, NC; Ray picked up 33 deciduous azalea plants from Vivian Abney's East Fork Nursery in Sevierville, TN; Ken Griffith brought 12 plants from Turtle Creek Nursery in Davidson, NC; and Sieglinde Anderson brought 5 large plants from her wholesale landscaping source (these included *R. yakushmanum* "Mist Maiden" and "Yaku Princess"). Many of our members donated plants as well. Thanks to Doley Bell, Aaron Cook, April Sanborn, Audrey Stelloh, Leon Pace, Chris Whetmore, Jackson McCarter, Richard Becker, Don Haynes, Bob Head, Alan Mizeras, Chuck Van Rens, and Ken Griffith for their generous sharing.



Who got the best plant?

Everyone was pleased to be getting such great plants. Our gardens now have 160 new plants for us to nurture and enjoy. On the financial side the total proceeds were \$2272.50. After expenses, our profit of \$1314.50 was divided between SE-ARS and Vaseyi. The day was a bountiful one in many ways.

by Jean Pace

Renew Your Membership NOW! !

More renewals of SE-ARS Memberships are needed. If your renewal is received after Dec 1, print edition of the winter Journal ARS will be missed.

Thanks to those who have kept their membership active, but a significant number haven't renewed yet. Dues for regular membership are \$40 annually.



Auctioneer Doley Bell and his team

Mail your check to SE-ARS, c/o Jackson McCarter

Or renew online at www.se-ars.org

Dr. Mellichamp Enlightened US

On sunny Sunday, September 11, SE-ARS members had the opportunity to learn about 'Native Plants and Ferns as Companions to Rhododendrons' from Expert Botanist and Horticulturist, Dr. Larry Mellichamp. He told us that using native plants in gardening is a smart choice for several reasons:

- They are better adapted to the heat and humidity in our climate.
- They give us a sense of place.
- They are a natural source of food for birds and butterflies.
- They add new choices of **plants** .

One of the advantages of having native trees is that they provide most of the caterpillars and other insects that feed the birds; large native trees like oaks, birch, and maples are among the main sources of bird food, especially for mothers nurturing their young. Dr. M provided a specific example of this phenomenon when he discussed one of the *10 best small flowering native trees*, the paw-paw (*asimina triloba*) which is the only food for the caterpillar of the zebra swallowtail butterflies. The big-leaf magnolia (*magnolia macrophylla*) is another flowering tree that Dr. Mellichamp recommends; with its 40-inch-long leaves, large May flowers, and huge seed cone that birds love.

We enjoyed an enthusiastic recommendation for some of the best native shrubs.

- Red Buckeye (*aesculus pavia*) has two advantages - bright red flowers in the spring and nut clusters in the fall.
- Bottlebrush Buckeye (*aesculus parviflora*) has white flowers, attracts butterflies, and has beautiful fall color.
- Dwarf Witch Alder (*fothergilla gardenii*) boasts spring flowers and fall color.
- Oakleaf hydrangea (*hydrangea quercifolia*) is the best native shrub with its large flowers, fall color and it's affinity to producing cultivars.

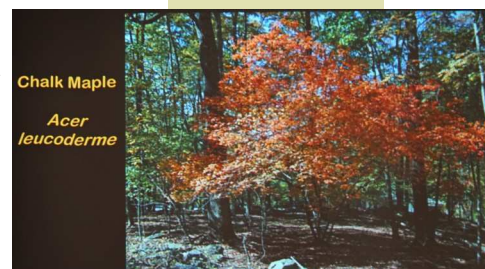
A few of Dr. Mellichamp standout recommendations for woodland wildflowers are worth mentioning:

- Cardinal Flower (*lobelia cardinalis*) has a long bloom-time and beautiful red and yellow tubular flowers that attract butterflies.
- Wood Poppy (*stylophorum diphyllum*) has yellow flowers which will re-bloom if they are dead-headed.

A glimpse at the knowledge and recommendations shared with us by Doctor Mellichamp should encourage all of us to read his recent book, *Native Plants of the Southeast: A Comprehensive Guide to the Best 460 Species for the Garden*. He even gave us reference to Botanical Treasures Nursery, a wholesale nursery in Fletcher, NC, which he says has the best collection of native plants he's seen; Perhaps we can visit there as a group sometime. Thanks to Dr. Mellichamp for his generous sharing.



Dr. Larry Mellichamp is an excellent teacher



**Southeastern Chapter of
American Rhododendron Society**

Officers and Directors

President: Ray Head

Treasurer: Jackson McCarter

Vice President: Sieglinde Anderson

Directors until 2017—Wayne Hutchins, Audrey Stelloh, and Chris Wetmore

Directors until 2018— Doley Bell, John Kendall, and Leon Pace

Secretary: Pamela McCarter

Editor: Judy Van Rens

Mark your Calendar

**Saturday, Dec. 3, 11 to 1
followed by Lunch —
visit to Annie Martin's
Mountain Moss Enterprise
Pisgah Forest, NC**

Lunch afterwards at *Square
Root* in Brevard

**April 27-30, 2017 — Annual
ARS Convention
in Eureka, California**

*Please submit articles for next
newsletter by January 15.*

Directions to Mossery for Dec. 3

Directions: Take Exit 40 (Airport Rd) off I-26. Head on NC 280 to Brevard. After you pass Brevard College, turn LEFT on E. French Broad St. When it dead-ends, take a left onto Park Rd. (ignore the 'road closed' barrier and drive through anyhow). Then take an IMMEDIATE RIGHT on Elks Club Road (rock house on corner). Drive past building on left to back of parking lot. Mossery is located in the pine grove. *Note: If you use GPS, it will lead you into the road construction area from the Chestnut Road/Neely Road direction (which is blocked) and will create confusion. Submitted by Annie Martin*

(Adapt above directions to fit your preferred route to Brevard, NC)

RHODODENDRONS IN THE REDWOODS

ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
EUREKA, CALIFORNIA — APRIL 27-30, 2017

www.eurekarhody.org
(More information in next issue)