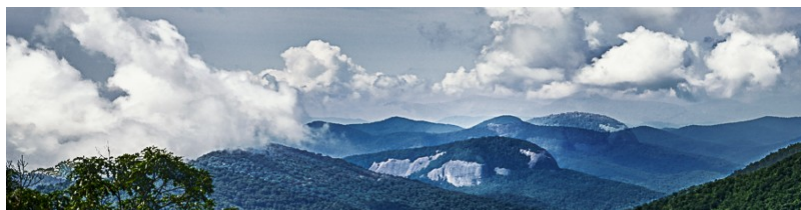




# The Blue Ridge Review



SOUTHEASTERN CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

September/October 2016

Encouragement of the culture of Rhododendrons

## Dr. Larry Mellichamp Presents: Native Plants and Ferns as Companions to Rhododendrons

Sunday, September 11 at 2 pm

Many of us will remember that cold April day in 2015 when we were enlightened and enthralled by the knowledge of our tour guide, Dr. Larry Mellichamp, who wandered with us through the NC-Charlotte Botanical Gardens, a "living classroom" which he helped develop and maintain during his tenure at UNC-Charlotte. **Dr. M will share with us his knowledge about native rhododendrons and azaleas and associated plants in their habitats across the Carolinas.**

Longtime SE-ARS member Dr. Larry Mellichamp is recently retired Professor of Botany and Horticulture at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte where he taught for over 39 years. He was also director of the University's Botanical Gardens which has 10 acres of outdoor gardens including many native plants. Their new Mellichamp Native Terrace Garden, partly sponsored by the N.C. Native Plant Society, demonstrates the use of natives directly for the homeowner. Larry is an expert on native plants of all kinds, including ferns and carnivorous plants, and is a popular speaker on many botanical topics. He is the current president of the North Carolina Native Plant Society.

He has received several teaching awards and has written many technical and popular articles on plants and gardening. He has co-authored five books including *The Winter Garden* (1997 with Peter Loewer), *Bizarre Botanicals* with Paula Gross (2010), and most recently *Native Plants of the Southeast...the best 460 species for the garden* (2014). He has traveled extensively studying plants in the United States and around the world.



### Sieglinde says -

"With the current emphasis on using "native" pollinator plants, this program promises to further enlighten us on using rhododendrons and azaleas in combination with perennials, ground covers and ferns to create a visually pleasing garden."

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## The Blue Ridge Review

### Annual Picnic Brings Smiles and Treasures



Great Selection from Collins' Garden



Choices, Choices!!



Native Plantsman of the Year

This year's picnic and Plants for Members event hosted graciously by Hazel and Byron Richards was a great success. The weather on July 17th was perfect; people brought a variety of delicious food choices; socializing with members is always a treat; and we all went away with some treasured plants from the Collins' garden. Thanks to Audrey Stelloh and Leon Pace for gathering and overseeing the rooting of the group of cuttings from Ed Collins' fabulous collection.

After a short business meeting and a delicious picnic, we all gathered for the *main event*, choosing the cuttings we were interested in from the previously published list. It turned out some of the hoped-for cuttings had not rooted; however, we could choose from starts of 23 different prime plants, with 3 or 4 small plants available in each species. Wisely, Leon and Audrey had us draw colored marbles (4 different colors) to determine our place in line for the selection process.

As the gathering adjourned, it was fun to see smiling faces carrying trays of choice specimens that will add beauty and interest to their gardens in years to come.

### Another Well-Deserved Honor for Dr. Mellichamp

Dr. Larry Mellichamp received the 2016 Tom Dodd, Jr Award of Excellence at the recent Cullowhee Native Plant Conference held at Western Carolina University. This award is presented annually to the North American native plantsman of the year and has been awarded since 1988. Larry was recognized by the conference for his long dedication to the study, propagation and promotion of native plants of North American and more specifically North Carolina. Larry also currently serves as President of the North Carolina Native Plant Society.

The Cullowhee Native Plant Conference has been held annually at Western Carolina University since 1984; it began with a grant from the Tennessee Valley Authority to underwrite a "Plant Utilization" meeting. Since then it has spawned many regional conferences as the native plant movement has gained more recognition and interest. The conference draws academic leaders, landscape architects, horticulturists, botanical garden directors and staff, ecology and environmental leaders and garden enthusiasts from across the Southeast, from Delaware and Pennsylvania to Florida and Texas.

The 2017 Cullowhee Native Plant Conference will be held from July 19 to July 22, 2017.



### Annual Plant Auction — Sunday, Oct. 16

The Plant Auction at the October 16 meeting promises to be full of tempting choices for members' gardens. Join us at 2 P.M. at the St. John in the Wilderness Hall Parish Hall. Please bring prime plants from your personal collections to add to this year's auction selections. Everyone in this group is interested in trying new varieties and increasing their own collection. Members of Vaseyi will also be participating in this auction. Share what you love!! Start potting your plants for the October auction today!!



Doley Bell — Master Auctioneer

### Farewell to Dr. Russell Gilkey

Russell Gilkey died on Friday, June 10, 2016, at his home in Lawrenceville, Georgia at the age of 95. Dr. Gilkey was a retired research chemist from Tennessee Eastman Co. He received his PhD from the University of Illinois in Organic Chemistry. He had been a member of ARS (Southeastern Chapter) since 1972. Once he commented, "I have been involved in the whole catastrophe from rooting cuttings to growing seedlings to hybridizing." Dr. Gilkey was sometimes called "Yakman" because he has given away so many "R. yakushmanum" seedlings as door prizes at chapter meetings.



Russell and Gloria Gilkey

Here is a history of Dr. Gilkey's involvement with SE-ARS:

- 1969-Became an ARS member
- 1972-Started attending Southeastern Chapter meetings
- 1980-Species Study Group chairman
- 1981-Flower Show chairman
- 1983-ARS Research Foundation Research Committee member.
- 1986-1987-Chapter president
- 1994-National Convention Plant Sale chairman
- Awards: 1990 Bronze Medal
- 2005 Life Time Achievement Award

Gloria Gilkey passed away in 2015. Their rhododendron and azalea garden still survives at the home in Kingsport where Russell and Gloria lived for 43 years.



2005—Russell Gilkey receives SE-ARS Lifetime Achievement Award

**Southeastern Chapter of  
American Rhododendron Society  
P.O Box 1438  
Flat Rock, NC 28731**

**President:** Ray Head

**Treasurer:** Jackson McCarter

**Vice President:** Sieglinde Anderson

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Hutchins, Audrey Stelloh, and  
Chris Wetmore

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

**Secretary:** Frances Jones

**Editor:** Judy Van Rens

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### **Mark your Calendar**

**Sunday, Sept. 11, 2 p.m.**

**Dr. Larry Mellichamp presents  
*Native Plants and Ferns as  
Companions to Rhododendrons***  
St. John in the Wilderness Hall

**Sunday, Oct. 16, 2 p.m.**

**SE-ARS Plant Auction with  
participation by Vaseyi**  
St. John in the Wilderness Hall

**Saturday, Dec. 3, 11 to 1**

**followed by lunch — Visit to  
Mossin' Annie Martin's  
Mountain Moss Enterprise**  
Pisgah Forest, NC

*Please submit articles for next news-  
letter by October 15*

### **Visit Mossin' Annie's Mossery**

Sieglinde Anderson has arranged another fascinating and educational outing for us on December 3rd. We will gather for a tour and instruction about moss production presented by Moss Expert, Annie Martin.

Mark your calendars so that you can learn about the joys and advantages of moss gardening. Here's a quote from Mossin' Annie that should pique your interest:

"Moss landscapes offer a magical appeal with verdant expanses that seem to encapsulate our spirits with a sense of serenity. Yet, the environmental advantages of eco-friendly mosses add another element of magic through the creation of outdoor living spaces that complement natural ecosystems. As Planet Earth's oldest living land plants (450 million years old), bryophytes – mosses and their cousins, liverworts and hornworts – are native to all parts of the world."

*From Making Magic with Mosses,*

*published in Ecological Landscape Alliance-6/20/14*