

# THE BLUE RIDGE REVIEW

*Southeastern Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society*



*Encouragement of the culture of Rhododendrons*

January-February 2011

## "YAKS: History, Horticulture and Homeland" Sunday, February 13, 2:00 PM



**Dr. Jackson McCarter** is the featured speaker for our first meeting of 2011, on Sunday February 13. (No, this is not our usual 3rd Sunday, but this IS the right date for our meeting this time.) .

The program will include a history of yaks (Rhododendron degronianum ssp. yakushmanum) in the garden, how to grow them, and a virtual tour of Yakushima (Yaku Island) in Japan.



*yak x smirnowii*

Jackson H. McCarter, M.D, known to all of us as Jack, has been growing rhododendrons and a member of ARS since 1971. He is a semi-retired surgical pathologist, working in Greenville, S.C., and living in northern Greenville County, north of Travelers Rest. His emphasis in rhododendrons has been on growing rhododendron species, especially Japanese, from seed. Many years ago he lived for a short time in Japan and studied the Japanese language.



*Yak grown from Yakushima seed*

Prior to settling in S.C. in 1969, he was in the US Air Force, stationed in Manila studying tropical diseases. While in the Air Force he traveled over Asia, including Japan, although regrettably never to Yakushima. Previously he was at Duke University Medical Center, University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, Lehigh University, University of Hawaii and Washington-Lee HS (Arlington, Va.). Other hobbies in addition to rhododendrons and azaleas include riding bicycles up famous mountains, photography, reading, listening to music, cinema, and a few others. He has been married to Pamela, who takes care of things while he pursues his hobbies, for 52 years. His mother, Martha, who started his interest in gardening, is also a member of SEARS and lives in Pickens, S.C

## Food, Fun and Fellowship at Annual Christmas Party

Fabulous food was enjoyed by 24 SE-ARS members at the Annual Christmas party on December 5 at the St. John in the Wilderness Parish Hall. Everyone appreciated the diligent kitchen



duty performed by Georgia and Bill Burson and Mary Ann Head. Mary Ann also did the table decorations of beautiful hollies from their yard.

After a wonderful meal, President, Doley Bell, held the drawing for a free membership for 2012 among the members who's 2011 renewal was in by the October meeting. Bill Zipperman of Flat Rock, NC, was the lucky winner. Congratulations Bill!



Georgia Burson made another beautiful Christmas swag for a door prize. Bob and Audrey Stelloh

were the surprised winners. What made it funny was that Jack McCarter was drawing and drawing, and kept pulling names of members who



were not present, so he passed the bowl to Audrey. Her first pick was their own names! Everyone felt it was fair and square, and a wonderful gift for the first Christmas for the newly married couple.

### 2012 Convention Planning Committee Meeting

Sunday, January 23

2:00 PM

Bullington Center

33 Upper Red Oak Trail  
Hendersonville NC 28792

### MAKE IT COUNT!

"What count?" you ask. Your very own membership in the American Rhododendron Society, of course – from helping new members with their rhododendrons, providing goodies or setting up chairs and taking them down for meetings, volunteering for committees, to running for office or the camaraderie of a board position. Think about what you can do to keep the standards high, the joy of gardening with rhododendrons alive, and best of all, finding new friends with a similar passion for gardening with rhododendrons.

*(Adapted from the Eugene Chapter ARS newsletter)*

For a **color** copy of the *Blue Ridge Review*.

## A "Flawless Convention" for 2012 in the Making

The 2012 Convention Planning Committee has had two meetings since our last newsletter, and **another one is planned for Sunday, January 23, at 2:00 PM at the Bullington Center in Hendersonville.**

We met on November 14 at the Bullington Center and on January 3 at the Crowne Plaza Resort. This is a summary of both meetings.



*Chairman, Aaron Cook, April Sanborn, Betty Becker*

As soon as this year's ARS and ASA conventions are over, we want to have our registration form, promotional DVD and flyer out to the

membership of both organizations on a web site, to try to get people to register early. The hotel will have our room block open for registration May 3, 2011. We are challenged to have the full schedule completed by then.

The Plant sale is "muddling along" to quote John Brown, Plant Sale chair. There are over 3000 plants growing at a local nursery and Vivian Abney will support us with tissue cultured deciduous azaleas. The nursery will deliver the plants to Asheville on Thursday preceding the convention, and lots of help will be needed in the afternoon to unload them. The Plant Sale will be in the Mitchell Ballroom with overflow in the adjacent Biltmore Foyer. This is right in the center of most convention activities and there is easy access from outside for incoming plants.

The tour on Saturday will include the four private gardens in Hendersonville with a buffet lunch at one of the famous Hendersonville camps. The Monday tour will feature one private garden, the NC Arboretum and Biltmore Estate Gardens with lunch at Deer Park in Biltmore Estate. A breakfast buffet will be provided in the hotel Ballrooms on the tour days. We're still working on finalizing plans for the Sunday tour, plus a possible post convention tour on Tuesday.

The evening meals will include heavy hors d'oeuvres at the Welcome Reception on Friday night, a Banquet Saturday night and buffet dinners on Sunday and Monday nights. We will have speakers on all four nights, and try to end the evenings by 10:00 PM.

The Flower Show and Photo Show will both be located in the beautiful Overlook Ballroom, where we may invite the public in on Saturday to view.



*Lane Hollifield, John Brown and Glenn O'Sheal discuss the Flower Show.*

We are still grappling with the financial decisions, awaiting more negotiations on meal prices and overhead costs. We'd like the registration fee to be \$40.00 with a \$25.00 add on after a specified date yet to be determined. We also need to get information from some of the ARS officers to determine the timing for the two Annual Meetings.

Stay tuned, or better yet, get involved and help. E-mail updates and discussions are shared at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/2012convention/>. And plan to come to our next meeting on **Jan. 23rd!**



*Bob & Audrey Stelloh; Glenn O'Sheal; Ed Collins; Don & Marilyn Haynes; Lane Hollifield, our Crowne Plaza Meetings Manager; and Aaron Cook at the Crowne Plaza on January 3, 2011.*

## National Arboretum Plans to Destroy the Azaleas on the Mt. Hamilton Azalea Hillside

"An appeal ... save the azaleas in National Arboretum", writes Marty Anderson in the latest edition of ARS's Rhododendron and Azalea News, Winter 2010, Vol. 13 No. 3, posted at <http://www.rhododendron.org/news/gardensv13n3.htm>



"This is an important concern about the azaleas in the National Arboretum, Washington, D.C. The message comes from Steve Henning, (*President of the Valley Forge Chapter, ARS*) and gives a sincere appeal for all to become involved. Here are a few facts:

"On November 8, Scott Aker, the garden leader for the National Arboretum, had received approval of his plan to remove most of the azaleas on the Glenn Dale hillside. (*The National Boxwood Collection and the co-located Perennial Collections are slated to go as well.*)

"This Glenn Dale Hillside is the marquee exhibit for The Arboretum when it bursts into bloom each Spring and is a national treasure. What makes this more tragic, is that only one horticulturist manages the 20-acre azalea section with a group of volunteers that work year-around. This means that Scott Aker's plan is to spend extra money to bring in a crew with saws, axes, and herbicides in this troubled economy. Then, the Arboretum will still have to restore the ravaged hillside and maintain it anyway...but without the help of the volunteers who love azaleas.

"**We can stop this insanity.** How? We need your help. We need overwhelming pressure from all sides.

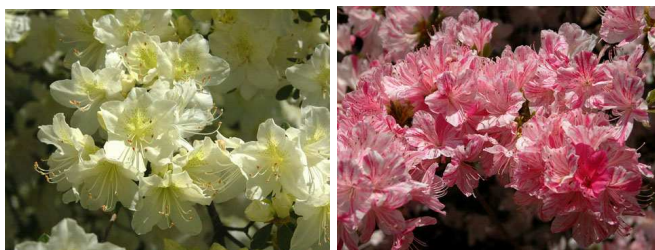
"Of course, U.S. Congress has ultimate control. The U.S.D.A. Administrators run the National Arboretum. The Washington Post is the D.C. area newspaper and reaches both the local population and national news sources. And, the Friends of the National Arboretum are influential in providing private funding and wield serious power in what is done.

"Write a letter in your own words to your: Senators, Congressmen, U.S.D.A. Administrators, and to... The Washington Post, Letters to the Editor, Adrian Higgins, Gardening Columnists, [higginsa@washpost.com](mailto:higginsa@washpost.com) and

Friends of the National Arboretum  
Kathy Horan, Executive Director  
3501 New York Avenue, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002  
[www.fona.org](http://www.fona.org)

"Tell your azalea and rhododendron friends, your garden-lover friends about the web site... **SaveTheAzaleas.org**... and Don Hyatt's, Save The Azaleas Fact Sheet (*found at this site*). Don Hyatt created the one-page, Save The Azaleas Fact Sheet, to include when asking other people to help or a RTF document version that any editor can open to help in preparing your own letter."

The web site, **SaveTheAzaleas.org**, also contains a wealth of correspondence and opinions of many concerned individuals, including our own Aaron Cook, who is now President of the Azalea Society of America, and Bob Stelloh who is the web master for the Azalea Society's web site. It also includes the contact information for members of Congress who serve on Agriculture committees, and other possibly influential people. Don't just stand by and let this happen. Please be sure **your** voice is heard!



Southeastern Chapter  
**AMERICAN  
 RHODODENDRON  
 SOCIETY**  
**Membership Sign-up Form**



Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERSHIPS ARE ON A CALENDAR YEAR BASIS. 18 months for new members joining after April 1st. New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Membership dues include chapter and national membership, plus the quarterly *ARS Journal*.

- Regular.....\$40.00
- Commercial.....90.00
- Sustaining.....75.00
- Sponsoring.....150.00
- Commit for Life (Individual).....1,000.00
- Commit for Life (Family).....1,500.00

Send this form with your check payable to "SE-ARS" to:

John Brown, SE-ARS Treasurer

Welcome! ...and Thank you for joining the...

**Southeastern Chapter**  
**AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY**

*Commit for Life, Individual, is payable over a 3 year period in one increment of \$400 & two of \$300. Commit for Life, Family, is payable over a 3 year period in increments of \$500. ♥ Encourage a friend to join!*

**Reflections about Velma Haag**



*Last issue we told you about the loss of Velma Haag in October just days short of her 100th birthday, and didn't have room to include all the memories that people sent.*

*Velma in 2002 at her home in Cedar Mountain*

"A non-related memory: Tom Ranney was doing some stress physiology research 15 or more years ago. He needed *Ilex rugosa* but could not find a plant anywhere. We learned that the Haags allegedly had a plant but they were to be away . . . they gave me permission to come to their property and take as many cuttings as I wanted . . . it was a small plant. Tom was able to complete his research and confirm that it was probably the *Ilex rugosa* parent that gave blue hollies their intolerance of flooding conditions . . . if I remember correctly.

"I think this is reflective of their generosity. They did not know Tom at all. They barely knew me but they trusted me to come to their garden when they were not home and take as many cuttings as I wanted." *Dick Bir*

"I will always remember the day Velma invited SE-ARS to have a meeting at her home. She told us about her first trials and tribulations growing rhododendrons. We then toured her garden. I had the good fortune of having Ray Head lead my group and I was overcome with the depth and beauty of her collection. She was an inspiration to me." *Betty Montgomery*

*I asked Velma's son, Curt, what was happening with the beautiful Haag RhodoGarden in Cedar Mountain. "We are in the process of selling the property to a local architect who has intentions of nominal development (9 small home sites scattered throughout the 170 acres) with the majority of the land eventually ending up in conservation easement." The buyers have "verbally agreed that Ed Collins can continue to come here to lead tours, take pictures and cuttings," he said.*

# Southeastern Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society

## Officers and Directors

**President:** Doley Bell

**Treasurer:** John Brown

---

**Vice President:** Georgia Burson

**Secretary/Editor:** Marilyn Haynes

**Past President:** Don Johnson

**Directors 'til 2011:** Don Haynes,  
Glenn O'Sheal, Leon Pace

---

**Directors 'til 2012:** Aaron Cook,  
April Sanborn, Jackson McCarter



---

## Welcome New Members:

Kenneth H. Anderson

Hendersonville, NC 28792



Barbara J. Neal

Hendersonville, NC 28739

## Membership Directory

Our next issue will include our annual membership directory. If your address, phone number or e-mail have changed in the last year, please let us know, so we can continue to notify you of our activities and have everything right in the directory. If you haven't renewed by Feb. 1, we'll miss your listing!

**Deadline for the March/April Blue Ridge Review is February 15.**

## Mark Your Calendar, Now!

**January 23, Sun., 2:00 PM - 2012**

**Convention Planning meeting**, Bullington Center, Hendersonville, NC

**February 13, Sun., 2:00 PM - "Yaks: History, Horticulture and Homeland"** with Jackson McCarter, St. John in the Wilderness.

**March 19, Sat. - Annual Banquet/Silent Auction** - "Delbert Brim's Nursery and Hybridizing Program" with Stan Southerland of Chapel Hill, NC, the Chariot, Hendersonville.

**April 17, Sun. - "Beware the Green Invaders: the invasive non-native plants of WNC."** with Alan Mizeras of Horseshoe, NC, St. John in the Wilderness Parish Hall.

**April ?** Date to be determined - **Garden tours at Ray Head and Wayne Hutchins**, Rutherfordton and Forest City, NC.

**April 30, Sat. & May 1, Sun. - Flower Show**, NC Arboretum.

**May 28-29, Sat. & Sun. - Hendersonville Garden Jubilee**, Main Street, Hendersonville.