

THE BLUE RIDGE REVIEW

Southeastern Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society



Encouragement of the culture of Rhododendrons

April 2012

March Showers Bring April Flowers!

Four Fabulous Garden Tours - Sun., April 15, and Tues., April 24

What's wrong with this picture? The winter has been more like spring, and there's less water this year too, but the blooms are just as beautiful as ever!

Three beautiful gardens in South Carolina, not seen by our members in recent years, will be open for us to tour in April, plus one in North Carolina.

Forty Oaks Farm Garden, Campobello, SC - Sunday, April 15, 2:00 to 5:00 PM -- Home of

garden writer Betty and Walter Montgomery. The description and directions are on page 3.



McCarter Garden, Travelers Rest, SC -- Home of our President, Dr. Jackson and Pamela McCarter. Description and directions also on page



3.



Ray Head's White Rosebud 2008 Best of Show

Ray Head's garden, Rutherfordton, NC - Sunday, April 15, any time -- Home of long time SE-ARS member and plant expert, Ray and Mary Ann Head. You can visit all three gardens on Sunday, April 15. The directions and a little about what you'll see are on page 3.

At the home of one of the Southeast's leading horticulturists, William R. Garren, you will see all 141 named Dexter cultivars!

Garren Garden, Travelers Rest, SC - Tuesday, April 24, any time after 1:00 PM. Bill

Garren is a former horticulturist at the Biltmore Estate. More about this spectacular garden is also



440 People have registered for the 2012 ARS-ASA Joint International Convention, May 4-7, in Asheville!

"The Whole Event Was Fantastic!"

.....said one of our newer members, the day after the Banquet and Silent Auction at the Chariot on, March 17, St. Patrick's Day. Forty-two people enjoyed the excellent meal, the flowers, the competitive bidding on the plants "...and the people!" said Hazel Richards.

Everyone enjoyed Tom Ranney as he shared some intimate stories about his home and family with just



a few technical terms, beautiful photos and a touch of humor in his presentation on "Building a Mountain Bald." His son, Nathan, home from New York City visiting for his Dad's birthday, made quite a hit as he drew the winning raffle

tickets. His dad had referred to some of their landscape design ideas as coming from him at a young age.

Our treasurer, John Brown, after reporting a total net proceeds of \$370.50, summed it up like this, "Let's add this all up. Great day, excellent talk, fantastic plants, made money, got 2 new members..." In his usual sarcastic humor, John added, "Guys, we have to straighten up and do better than this!"

Winners of the raffle, which raised \$125, were Glenn O'Sheal, Pam McCarter and David Dethero who won two prizes.



Guests included Sarah Huff and Carl Caudle, who are buying the Cedar Lake property, where Russ and Velma Haag did their extensive rhododendron hybridizing for many years. They are now new SE-ARS members. Welcome!



May Brings International Convention to Asheville May 4-7

The convention planning committee met, with 17 people present, on Sunday, March 25, and worked out many of the final details for the convention. The Sat. and Sun. tours being longer than expected may cause some minor schedule changes. There will be a third bus for the Mon. Bonus Tour, one will leave at 8:00 AM and two at 9:00 AM. A sign up sheet will be at the registration desk for those who wish the 8:00 AM tour.

Our registrars reported that 440 people had registered, and John still had some more. Nearly every event and tour is wait listed more than they thought. An additional bus may be added to each tour to accommodate everyone, if possible. Registrations are now closed. Audrey Stelloh is keeping track of all the workers and their schedules, to be sure every task is covered when needed. The pre-convention mailing is nearly ready to go out to all registrants soon.

The plant sale will be fantastic with some very special, hard to find plants! However, we will not have phytocertificates due to lack of interest in paying the extremely high cost for them. There will be a silent auction each of the three nights, and no live auction during the Sunday banquet program. Plants and other intriguing items are being donated by generous sponsors.

The flower show and photo print contest are all set; we just need entries. The Photo Print Contest flier is included in this BRR, and the Flower Show brochure will be included in the May issue. Please participate by submitting photo entries and/or whatever rhododendrons or azaleas you might have in bloom on May 3 or 4. You do not need to be a convention registrant to do so.

The Hospitality Suite, Rm. 220, for workers' lunches, will be open 11 AM - 1 PM, Thurs. through Mon. A key will be left at the registration desk if anyone needs or wants to get in for food or beverages at other times.

We spent a lot of time determining every detail for each hotel event for the Crowne Plaza Banquet Event Orders, or "BEO's". There are a few guest rooms available due to some cancellations. Call Marilyn, at 828-696-2996, if you still need a room there and have difficulty. Bob Stelloh showed the beautiful "Appalachian Spring" design which will adorn commemorative shirts.

The next meeting will be at the Crowne Plaza on Thursday, May 3, at 1:00 PM. A printed version of the revised schedule and room changes will be in the registration packets. We hope to see **you** with flowers or photos in hand on May 3 or 4!

Forty Oaks Farm Garden, in Campobello, SC.

Sunday April 15, from 2:00 to 5:00 PM. Betty writes a biweekly gardening column for the Spartanburg Herald Journal, and sometimes writes for the Spartanburg Magazine and other publications.

The garden contains many azaleas as well as many rare and unusual trees and shrubs. Some of the items usually in bloom mid-April are: Dogwood, Camellias, Native Azaleas, Viburnum, Evergreen Azaleas, Lily of the Valley, 'White' Red Bud, tulips, Chinese Retusus, Kerria, Edgeworthia, Spirea, Dec. magnolia.

Of the Evergreen azaleas that should be in flower in mid-April are Coral Bells, Hardy Gardenia, Hampton Beauty, GG Gerbing, Formosa, Pink Ruffles, George Lindley Tabor, Summerville, plus others.

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McCarter Garden, Travelers Rest, SC, is the home of Pamela and Dr. Jackson McCarter, a semi retired pathologist and avid gardener. A stone main residence is nestled in the forest with other areas including cottages and outbuildings from an earlier country ham farm. This is a natural, informal "garden" in a very hilly setting beneath towering hardwoods, in approximately eight acres of planted area surrounded by 120 acres of natural woodland with walking trails. The effect is that rhododendrons and azaleas appear to have "just grown there". Places to relax include a lakeside gazebo, a garden gazebo and decks. Rhodomania onset was in the early 1970's. Emphasis is on rhododendron species, some hybrids selected for heat and drought tolerance, and American and Japanese native azaleas.

Rhododendron species include mature mass plantings of predominantly R. degronianum ("yak" and "metternichii"), R. hyperythrum, and R. fortunei/ decorum. Other features include an extensive seedling nursery with a solar greenhouse. Be prepared for a good stroll, with sturdy footwear.

We're invited to come any time on Sunday April 15. They're about 30 minutes from Forty Oaks Farm.

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Ray Head's garden, Rutherfordton, NC, is about a 10 acre collection of plants, mainly hollies, native azaleas, camellias and lepidote rhododendrons, plus many evergreen azaleas and eleipode rhododendrons that represent the hardiest of these groups. Ray also has a collection of native trees, shrubs, and wild flowers from the southeastern states, some of which are rare plants. Practically everything was grown from cuttings or seed.

Garren Garden, Travelers Rest, SC, is the home of one of the Southeast's leading horticulturists, William R. Garren. Bill is a retired nurseryman and the former Director of Horticulture at the Biltmore Estate. He was at Biltmore in the 50's, when the Dexter committee was formed by John Wister and visited Biltmore to check the validity of Charles Dexter's work. Although that committee found nothing of interest there, their efforts were rewarded with 141 named hybrids. Bill made it his personal goal to acquire all 141 named Dexter hybrids for his property! And of course he achieved it. He hires some gardening to be done, now, but he says "Mother Nature is my number one gardener."

Bill and his wife, Pat, have invited us to come on **Tuesday, April 24, any time after 1:00 PM.**

Southeastern Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society

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**Deadline for the May Blue Ridge Review
is April 20. April 20. April 20. April 20.
Please send info.**

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## Four Spectacular April Garden Visits Described Inside - -

### Two More SC Gardens to visit, April 14

The Vaseyi Chapter, ASA, is having a field trip to Richard and Betty Becker's Garden, Seneca, SC, and Marilyn Grist's Garden, Travelers Rest, SC. SE-ARS members are welcome.

Rich Becker is an active hybridizer and wins many ribbons at the SE-ARS flower shows. Dr. Marilyn Grist's garden is on the Sunday convention tour, and is written up on page 33 of the Winter ARS Journal.

For a **color** copy of the *Blue Ridge Review*, please send an e-mail to [mphaynes@juno.com](mailto:mphaynes@juno.com).

## Mark Your Calendar, Now!

**April 15, Sunday - 2:00-5:00 PM Visit to Betty Montgomery's Garden, Campobello, SC**

**April 15, Sunday - any time - McCarter's Garden Visit Travelers Rest, SC**

**April 15, Sunday - any time - Ray Head's Garden Visit, Forest City, NC.**

**April 24, Tuesday - After 1:00 PM Visit to Bill Garren's Garden, Travelers Rest, SC.**

**May 3, Thursday - 6:00 AM - 6:00 PM Convention Setup, Crowne Plaza Resort, Asheville.**

**May 4-7, Friday-Monday - ARS-ASA Joint Convention, Crowne Plaza Resort, Asheville.**

**May 12, Saturday - Visit to Haag RhodoGarden, Brevard, NC.**

**May 26-27, Saturday-Sunday - Garden Jubilee Festival, Main St., Hendersonville, NC.**

**July 15, Sunday - 2:00 PM Annual Picnic and Plant Auction, St. John in the Wilderness Parish Hall Parking Lot.**