

**Southeastern Chapter
American Rhododendron Society
Membership Meeting and Program
February 15, 2015**

St. John in the Wilderness Parish Hall, Flat Rock, NC

President Ray Head opened the meeting at 2:03 PM. 20 members and 2 visitors were present. Mr. & Mrs. Schwor, visiting the area from New York for about a month, were guests.

Ray commented on our wonderful web site, SE-ARS.org, with Jackson McCarter as webmaster. Jackson explained that Google gives a free ad. All you need to do is type "rhododendron" in the Google search bar and you will find it. A password is only needed to see the member roster, which is a rule of the national ARS. Jackson said the he can monitor who looks at the site and found there were many people from Russia and Asia looking at the site, looking for e-mails for scams. Ray also mentioned the photo contest that we can read about on the web site. Jackson will check in to adding a question and answer section to the site.

A question was asked about security for making dues payments and banquet reservation payments. Jackson explained that the site is protected by Stripe, the credit processing company, and its own SSL security. We pay \$10.00 more per month to get more security. Chris Wetmore stated that Weebly is a very secure company.

Sieglinde Anderson reminded everyone that the banquet is March 21 at the Chariot in Hendersonville, and reservations need to be in by March 14. Ed Davis, the Horticultural Director of the UNC-Charlotte Botanical Gardens will speak about the Mellichamp Native Terrace Garden which he recently designed and supervised its development. In April our group will go to Charlotte to see the project. More information will be at the banquet.

Ray announced that the Flower Show is the first weekend in May and April Sanborn is the chairperson. She will have entry cards at the banquet. Ray encouraged all to enter flowers in the Flower Show. Ray also encouraged members to subscribe to the newsletter by e-mail to receive it in color. Just send an e-mail to our Secretary, Marilyn Haynes.

Sieglinde told about a Mr. Maple Festival at their nursery in East Flat Rock on Memorial Day, May 25, from 9:00-5:00. If we want to attend as a group, they will recognize us and be sure to reserve space for us during their presentation on New and Exciting Japanese Maples at 11:00 AM. A show of hands yielded 9 people who would like to go, and Sieglinde will tell about it again at the banquet. The Hendersonville Garden Jubilee will be on Fri. & Sat., May 23 & 24.

Sieglinde also said we will be visiting East Fork Nursery sometime this spring, instead of garden visits. The date will be on a weekend and depends on weather and bloom times. Our June meeting will be a roundtable of our own experts. In September we may have a joint meeting with Vaseyi Chapter with Betty Montgomery speaking.

Sieglinde encouraged members to participate in chapter activities, and provide input. Also, new people will be needed on the Board to be elected in June.

Ray led a Question and Answer period. Q: What is the best fertilizer for rhododendrons in containers?
A: Bob Head recommends Polyon, made by Harrells, available at Southern Ag, or Osmocote available at the big box stores, or go to someone in the nursery business. Be sure not to scorch it in the summer

months. Leeann Sherouse suggested we could buy it as a group to use multiple times. Gypsum is also needed for a source of calcium. Half of superphosphate is gypsum, calcium sulfate. Magnesium as a liquid feed from Epsom salts is needed for good bud set.

Bob Head is a good speaker, and it was also suggested to get the Harrells guy to come and do a program for us.

Our program was Jackson McCarter speaking on Yaks. He opened the program by telling about the fire in their front yard during the night, started by tree limbs falling on the power lines. Fortunately, only dried leaves and brush were affected, but they hadn't had much sleep.

R. yakushmanum is noted for the fuzzy under surface of the leaves and fuzzy new growth. Most have 10 flowers to the truss. They are slow growing, slow to flower, and are a beautiful foliage plant. Jackson showed us beautiful photographs of the many varieties in his own garden.

Yaks are found naturally only on Yakushima, the smallest and southernmost island of Japan, which is only 17 miles in diameter, of which Jackson gave us a virtual tour through lots of photos. It has 40 mountain peaks up to 5800 ft, and receives 350 inches of rain per year! It's a 2 day hike to see the yaks.

During the Q & A, we learned that it's easier to raise Yaks from seed than cuttings, as they take longer to root.

The meeting adjourned at 3:50.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Haynes, Secretary