

The Rootball e-News

Newsletter of the Midwest Chapter ARS—VOL 7, NO. 2, November 15, 2017



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Guess What's Coming to Town?

The Midwest Chapter – ARS Christmas Luncheon & Annual Meeting

The 2017 Midwest Chapter Christmas luncheon and Annual meeting is fast approaching. It's time to annotate your social calendar and reserve a few hours for a very special "gala occasion" on Sunday, December 10th.

The time is: 11:45 AM to 2:30 PM.

The place: THE HAPP INN BAR AND GRILL
305 Happ Road
Northfield, Illinois 60093
Telephone – 847 784-9200

The Midwest Chapter, serving as "HOST", has made special arrangements for a private dining room together with A CASH BAR. This is your chance to socialize, pick up a few Rhody gardening tips and be a lucky raffle winner!

"Heads Up": Surprise awards are in store.
We're looking forward to a large turnout!

Please R.S.V.P. to Susan Garland as soon as possible.
Email: s-boatman@sbcglobal.net Phone: 312 543-1502.

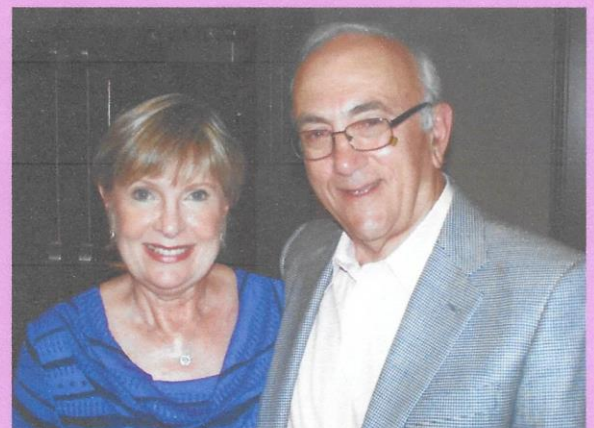
(Directions to this truly unique "North Shore" restaurant are provided on Page 3.)



Tony Greco, a Midwest Chapter "Icon" Passed Away - November 7th

It is with deep sadness that I report the death of Tony Greco in Bonita Springs, FL – he was 77. His passing is a huge loss both to his Family and to his close friends, many of which were Midwest Chapter members.

Tony was a longtime member of the Midwest Chapter (1981) who contributed "big time", his energy and talents. Tony was creative director of THE DESIGN CENTER, a graphic arts business which he founded and which was located in Oak Brook, Illinois. He brought his expertise to edit and produce a superb newsletter, our ROOTBALL NEWS. Tony loved the Midwest Chapter so much that he was the principal organizer/sponsor for the 50th Anniversary Chapter Celebration held at the EDGEWOOD VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB in September 2012.



Barbara & Tony Greco
Midwest Chapter ARS 50th Anniversary Dinner
Edgewood Valley Country Club
La Grange, Illinois—September 8, 2012

Let's be clear however, THE ROOTBALL NEWS, as a "product", doesn't due justice in describing the countless hours he contributed to the Midwest Chapter and the depth of his character.

What now follows on Page 2 is a compilation of "Lasting Impressions" from Society friends who knew Tony well. Their recollections confirm his exemplary character and accomplishments.

“Lasting Impressions” of Tony Greco

“My impressions of Tony are many but I vividly remember the first time I met him at Sid’s Greenhouses in Palos Heights for “rhododendron information table” sponsored by the Midwest chapter under the presiding President, Gene Paschall back in 1991. Tony had come by that day to assist us in staffing a “plant information table”. I was immediately “consumed” by his contagious enthusiasm for plants in general and rhododendron in particular.

He inquired about our Chapter newsletter and immediately volunteered his creative talents to produce a newsletter which soon proved to be of “professional quality”. This was the beginning of what later became THE ROOTBALL NEWS. Through his creative genius, he edited and produced a high quality newsletter which even a Fortune 500 Company could be proud of. In my opinion, he “set the bar so high” that no one could ever reach it!

He stepped into Chapter activities “with both feet”, participating in plant sales and was our “go-to” man when it came to professionally produced publications. I will always remember him for his delight in sharing plants, his classy enthusiasm and the comradery he felt for like-minded people. Above all, I always admired his ability to make things happen seemingly with ease”.

Time did not allow to include everyone who might have offered a “lasting impression” of Tony. I have included “the Impressions” of several Chapter members who considered Tony their close friend. After reading through all of them, I’m sure you will pick up on the “Tony Refrain” - time after time.” Roger Dunlap

“On May 6, 2011 Tony and Wayne Pearson drove up to Michigan to pick up plants at my house (Saugatuck, MI) for the CBG (Chicago Botanic Garden) plant sale/truss show. I remember Tony saying the trip was worth it for the cause but never again for the traffic!” John Migas



Tony Greco & Wayne Pearson
“trucking” rhododendrons from
Saugatuck MI to the Chicago
Botanic Garden, Glencoe, IL
May 6, 2011.

“Everybody in the Chapter was impressed by the newsletter he produced – the best by far.

He was also known for his generosity pertaining to plants. He would think nothing of digging up one of his own plants and giving it to you. On one occasion, I was touring his garden when I happened upon a gorgeous blooming “rhody” named: ‘Abraham Lincoln’. He said: “you gotta try it”!

Tried as I might, I could not find the plant “in the Trade”. The next time I visited Tony’s garden and explained to him my difficulty in acquiring the plant, he (without hesitation) dug up the 40” tall plant and gave it to me on the spot exclaiming : “you gotta have it”! John Golab

“Tony was renowned for producing our Chapter newsletter which was among the BEST in the American Rhododendron Society.

I recall attending a summer meeting which he hosted at his home in Indian Head Park, Illinois. Upon arrival, I was immediately impressed by a ribbon of large, fragrant Hosta Plantaginea ‘Grandiflora’ (aka August Lily) surrounding his backyard deck. He told me the name and said: “You gotta try it!” When I saw him again about a month later, he kiddingly admonished me for not acquiring it yet and exclaimed his own enthusiastic way: “you gotta have it!” The one attribute I will always remember however, was his warm, friendly manner.” Tom Horner

“I was deeply saddened to learn the passing of Tony Greco, a true professional and a friend. I met Tony when I joined the Midwest Chapter of the American Rhododendron society. After I was elected President of the Chapter, Tony was a key member who I relied on to fulfill our responsibilities to the members. He was widely regarded as providing us all with the best newsletter in the ARS. He demanded professionalism and insisted that all contributions be submitted on time.

He loved his garden and sharing his knowledge. Above all he was a devoted family man and spoke often of his wife Barb and his children. During his illness he always accepted my calls and was upbeat and cheerful despite his diagnosis. I shall think of Tony often and miss him greatly.” Ted Nyquist

"Lasting Impressions" of Tony Greco (continued from Page 2)

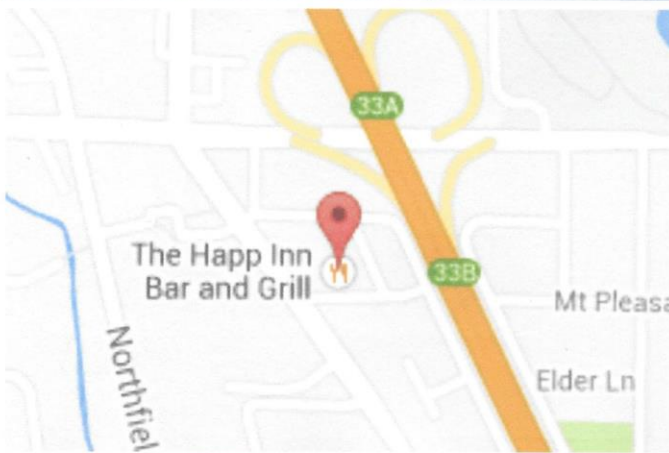
"My life and that of many others are richer because of having known Tony through our membership in the Midwest chapter of the ARS. He was a very friendly person who loved gardening and rhododendrons. His very artistic abilities not only showed in his garden arrangements where his rhododendrons were placed with other plants in a way that drew you into his space wanting to see more; his arrangements were not shotgun placements but done with great thought. His artistic ways were also very evident as editor of The Rootball News which was done in a very beautiful way. His newsletters served as a very wonderful way of bringing Chapter members closer together. Tony walk well: we'll miss you."

Gene and Beth Paschall are not able to respond to this call for condolences on Tony's passing. But they also feel richer for having known Tony both as friend and fellow gardener with a passion for rhododendrons.

Ken Kasza

(Directions to THE HAPP BAR & GRILL)

Map:



Roger Dunlap, Barbara & Tony Greco, Angie Dunlap
Angie's Birthday - Sam Snead's Restaurant,
Naples, FL
March 10, 2010.

From the South-

Any expressway/Tollway to get to Edens Expressway North (I-94)

Take I-94 North to Willow Rd West. After exiting I-94 on to Willow Rd West go less than a block to Happ Rd (traffic light).

Turn left onto Happ Rd until you hit the first shopping center on the left (500 yards) .

Turn into center. You have arrived.

From the West -

Look for Palatine/Willow Rd. Go East on Palatine/Willow until approx. One block before Edens Expressway (I-94). This will be Happ Rd. Turn right. Go 500 yards to shopping center on the left. Turn into shopping center, you have arrived.

From the North-

Take I-94 South to where Highway 41 splits off. Take this to Happ Rd.

Please consult google maps for detail as I-94 does not have an exit at Willow Rd going south.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Chapter Annual Meeting/Party

DATE: December 10, 2017
 PLACE: THE HAPP INN BAR & GRILL
 Northfield, Illinois 60093
 TIME: 12:45 AM to 2:30 PM

Midwest Chapter Officers (CURRENT)

Susan Garland, Acting President
[<s-boatman@sbcglobal.net>](mailto:s-boatman@sbcglobal.net)

Tom Horner, Treasurer
[<psalmxl@aol.com>](mailto:psalmxl@aol.com)

Susan Garland, Membership
[<s-boatman@sbcglobal.net>](mailto:s-boatman@sbcglobal.net)

Roger Dunlap, Secretary
[<Koukla18833@yahoo.com>](mailto:Koukla18833@yahoo.com)

Roger Dunlap, Newsletter Editor
[<Koukla18833@yahoo.com>](mailto:Koukla18833@yahoo.com)

Rhody 101 Workshops Rated A Success!

Our readers may recall in the 2017 spring issue of THE ROOTBALL NEWS, an article concerning a series of three Rhody workshops scheduled at Tom Horner's Waterford, WI home for the months of May, June & July. The objective of these "workshops" was to provide accurate information regarding the cultivation of rhododendrons and to dispel the notion that "you can't grow them here in the Midwest". Think of this Event as one manifestation of our primary "mission" which is to educate the gardening public on the culture of rhododendrons.

All workshop dates were "filled" in advance. A limit of 20 attendees per session was set. Tom served as moderator for each event. He was assisted by several Midwest chapter "docents". John Golab gave a

The Midwest Chapter—ARS

WEBSITE: MIDWESTARS.ORG

FACEBOOK: ARSMIDWEST

INSTAGRAM: ARSMIDWEST

a thorough, "illuminating" demonstration on how to prepare the soil and properly plant a container grown rhododendron. (His demonstration ultimately led to a separate planting demonstration on a later occasion at Millaeger's Garden Center located in Racine, WI). Others made themselves available to answer questions.

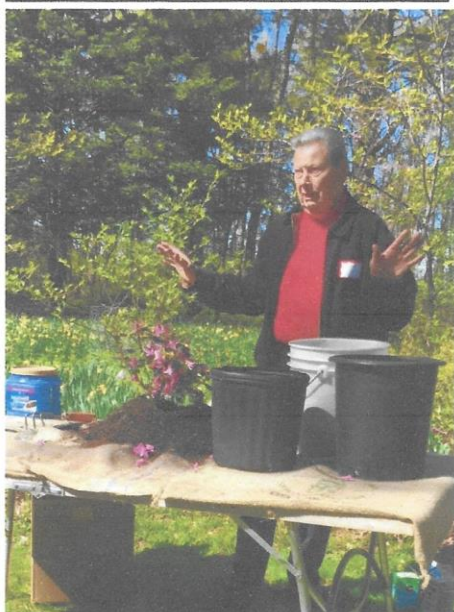
The feedback from attendees was immediate. As Tom looked upon his attentive audience, he couldn't help but notice subtle changes in their facial expressions as they realized the customary advice they had been given previously was inappropriate. At the conclusion of these 2 ½ hour sessions, many attendees expressed profound gratitude for the advice they had been given.

The consensus among Chapter members is that these workshops are worthwhile particularly since they target gardeners who could best benefit from accurate rhododendron cultural knowledge. He would encourage others in the Society "to engage" the gardening public in a similar manner. Tom can be contacted via email: psalmxl@aol.com.

Roger Dunlap



Tom Horner (left) is shown moderating the first Rhody 101 Workshop. May 7, 2017 – Waterford, WI.



John Golab demonstrating proper rhododendron soil preparation and planting technique. May 7, 2017 – Waterford, WI