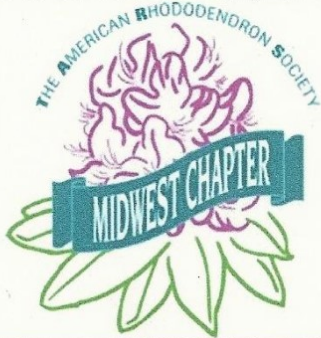


The Rootball e-News

Newsletter of the Midwest Chapter ARS—VOL 10, NO. 2, November 1, 2020



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Midwest Chapter Events on "Hold"
until the Spring due to Covid-19.
Membership Chairman needed.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

When I was little, my Dad always made big plans for the coming year on January 1st, which included where we were going to go on vacation that year. I have tried to keep up that tradition. And planning the year's events for the Midwest Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society was no exception. So, as you recall, we were in the process of planning our 2020 schedule when on January 31st, we learned that flights from China were embargoed due to some kind of contagious illness.

Out of an abundance of caution, we cancelled plans until October figuring that all of this would be in the rear view mirror. That was then and this is now. Not only are we not out of the woods on what we now call Covid 19, but we have learned that it is most lethal in folks over 65, which constitutes a measurable number of our membership. To make matters worse, we as a Chapter, and me personally, have lost two linchpins of our Chapter since I last visited with you.

SUSAN MORRISON GARLAND. Susan was our membership chairman. Even if you never met her, you were touched by her kindness and civility. She was one who took the time to write each of us a personal note on our renewal letters. I have kept my last one as a remembrance. But she did much more for the Chapter. An accomplished professional writer, she had a way with words and the rhododendrons she cherished. When back problems made walking difficult, she braved back surgery to walk again. And she was on her way to recovery when a tragic accident took her life. I have lost a friend and the Chapter has lost a priceless asset.

ISA GOROFF. Isa was one of the founding members of the Midwest Chapter. I met Isa when I joined the Midwest Chapter in the 1960's, over 50 years ago. We were a fledgling organization and rhododendrons in Chicago were as rare as flamingos. (In the 60's, EVERYBODY had a plastic flamingo in the garden as if it would somehow scare off the cold winters). Isa and I would carpool to the meetings at the Morton Arboretum. Back then, the newest big things were the Tony Shamarello hybrids. We were anxious to try out on Chicago winters. Isa also believed that the Dexter's were more hardy than conventional wisdom though and was going to try 'Todmorden'. I was fortunate to visit with Isa at our July 2019 meeting in Wisconsin where he accepted our invitation to give a presentation on the last 50 years of the Midwest Chapter. Isa mentored many current members and left a permanent place in the hearts of Midwest Chapter members.

MEETING CANCELLATION: Because of continuing concerns over Covid 19, the Midwest Chapter Board has reluctantly, but prudently decided to cancel our live meeting originally scheduled for October 3rd. We are currently exploring the feasibility of conducting "virtual meetings" from the comfort and safety of your homes. Details, including agenda, time and date, will follow.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIRMAN VACANCY. Meanwhile, we are in desperate need of Membership Chairman. If you are interested, please contact me at rjbara72@gmail.com or Roger Dunlap at koukla18833@yahoo.com.

It would be apostasy to end this letter without mention of what we are all about—rhododendrons and the care/feeding thereof. This summer has been the hottest on record for the Denver metropolitan area. We have had over 76 days of temperatures exceeding 90 F degrees. This heat has taken its toll on my garden, not to mention the dangerous air quality occasioned by destructive wildfires. In face of environmental challenges, I have compiled a list of 75 "Survivors" which will be featured in the spring issue of THE ROOTBALL NEWS.

(CONTINUED ON THE BACK PAGE.)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

IN PERSON EVENTS
SUSPENDED
INDEFINITELY DUE TO "VIRUS"

The following new members joined
the

Midwest Chapter this year:

Ross Becker

Grasston, MN

Connie Landers

Hillsdale, MI

Steve & Maureen Thoren

Elgin, IL

The Midwest Chapter—ARS

Website: www.midwestars.org

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Midwest Chapter Officers
(CURRENT)

Richard Bara—President
<rjbara72@gmail.com>

Tom Horner, Treasurer
<psalmxl@aol.com>

**Membership Chairman
(Position Vacant)**

Roger Dunlap, Secretary
<Koukla18833@yahoo.com>

Roger Dunlap, Newsletter Editor
<Koukla18833@yahoo.com>

(Continued from the Front Page)

Likewise, I assume you have been keeping track of your rhodies from this past summer. We would like to hear from you. Since we cannot meet in person, drop us a note (or send us an email) and we will share your experiences with the other members. Thanks in advance for your help.

Until next time, I remain your President,

RICHARD BARA

P.S. Stay safe and happy gardening!

Len Buzyna Tribute

I would like to inform the chapter of the loss of another member during the same year we lost Iza Goroff and Susan Garland. Len Buzyna, husband of Nina, passed away from a sudden heart attack. Len and Nina resided in Deerfield, Illinois and have been staunch supporters of the Midwest Chapter.

I remember the first time Len and Nina visited my garden, I had asked Len if he was the one interested in Rhododendrons. He responded: "Oh no! Nina was the primary and I'm just here to support her." As it turned out, in the ensuing years, Len was a tremendous contributor to chapter events. Whenever a call went out for volunteers, Len was there. When we needed to unload the truck at the Botanic Garden, Len was there. When we needed to set up the tables and price the plants the Friday before Mother's Day, Len was there. When we distributed plants from a members home, Len was there. He was a quiet soul with a gentle demeanor, and always willing to help. Our sympathies go out to Nina. Len will be sorely missed by all of us.

John Golab