

The Rootball News

NEWSLETTER OF THE MIDWEST CHAPTER — THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY



Circle May 10 and 11 on your calendar so you don't miss the Midwest Chapter's annual plant sale and truss show at the Chicago Botanic Garden (CBG). The sale begins at 9:00 AM.

As last year, our event will fall on Mother's Day weekend. This is one of the busiest weekends at the CBG and we're hoping to have the same high level of traffic as we had last year.

John Honkisz, plant sale coordinator, has selected a wonderful assortment of plants for our sale. When selecting, John's goal was to choose as many hardy varieties as possible that will be in bloom for the sale. We have found these are the plants that are most attractive to visitors and sell the quickest.



Cash or Credit? Another new feature that is being added this year is the ability to charge your purchase. In the past, we have been asked if we accept credit cards and since we didn't, we believe we lost some sales. We are now able to accept Visa or Mastercard and it will be interesting to see how accepting credit cards affects sales.

Once again our rhododendrons are coming from Rosebay Nursery in Saugatuck, Michigan, and John Migas will provide some evergreen azaleas from his

nursery. Approximately 25 to 30 varieties are on order and some are in quantities of only three or four, so if there is something on the list that you are looking for, please come to the sale early.

We are always in need of volunteers and if any of you can help out that weekend, please contact John Honkisz <johnkisz@comcast.net>. We generally need people to help set up on Friday and tear the show down on Sunday afternoon.

In addition to the plant sale, our chapter will have its annual truss show which is always a big attraction for our visitors. Many people are amazed by the wide variety of plants we grow in the Midwest and after seeing our display become interested in growing rhododendrons themselves.

We encourage all of our members to take part in the truss show. We have all of the display props so all you have to do is bring your flower trusses. We ask that you arrive with your trusses about 8:30 AM on Saturday morning so we have enough time to set up the display before the sale begins.

The truss show is not a competition but a way to showcase beautiful rhododendron and azalea blooms for our visitors to enjoy up close.

The plant sale and truss show is the most important event our chapter holds and is our primary fund raising event. We urge all to attend, bring some friends and pick up a wonderful rhododendron, perhaps for a Mother's Day gift.

Annual Plant Sale and Truss Show at CBG

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Plant Sale Varieties

Due to availability, these are the rhododendron varieties that are on order for the sale. The list of evergreen azaleas is yet to be determined. Visit our chapter or ARS website for descriptions and photos of most of these varieties.

April Snow

Balta

Big Deal

Black Satin

Calsap

County of York

Delp's Sunshen

English Roseum

Faisa

Holden

Margie K. Hinerman

Olda Mezzit

Pana

Pearce's American Beauty

Pink Pixie

PJM

Purpureum Elegans

Scintillation

Spring Dawn

Tapestry

Thunder

Today & Tomorrow

Tony

Vernus

Weston's Pink Diamond

Letter

from the president

SPRING • 2008



It is an early Sunday morning, April 20 and 39 degrees. Spring is in the air. The only rhodie activity I have is Madison Snow, Mahogany Red, Coral Glow, Shrimp Pink, Rose Elf, Praecox, Pioneer, Mucronulatum, Christmas Cheer, and Vernus, which are starting to show color. The viburnums and magnolias are starting to swell big time. This is truly an exciting time of the year. Earlier this morning, three deer were bumming around and I just sited my first American Goldfinch.

Our plant sale is approaching quickly. Friday, May 9 is the set-up day at the Chicago Botanical Garden at 8:00AM. The sale takes place on Saturday and Sunday, May 10 and 11. The gates open at 9:00 a.m. All volunteers please contact John Honkisz, T.D., or myself so we know who will be there to help set up.

It seems the bud set this past season was outstanding. There should be a great selection of plants from our supplier here in Michigan. John Honkisz is confident the plants will be awesome. Remember, the early bird always gets the worms.

We need to set a time and place for our summer meeting. Hopefully we can get a member to step up and host this event; something different and possibly a new place to visit. Members, please step forward. Call me at anytime if you want to host the meeting.

Hope to see you all at the plant sale. Have a great and flowerful spring and do bring some trusses to the plant sale for the truss show.

John Migas

BRONZE MEDAL AWARD WINNERS

Two of our chapter members, Kay Moats and Tom Horner, were recipients of The Bronze Medal in 2007 for their many years of service and dedication to the Midwest Chapter. Kay's award was presented on May 7 and Tom's on July 28.



Kay Moats

Among her numerous contributions, Kay served as president of the chapter and for many years assisted with the plant sale and truss show. She is one of our

senior members and has archived many materials that encompass the 45 years of the chapter's existence. Kay made a slide presentation at our recent winter meeting.

Tom Horner

Tom served our chapter as president and treasurer and has been a member of the Midwest Chapter for over 35 years. He has contributed greatly to the chapter in many ways including opening his Wisconsin garden for meetings and tours and assisting with the plant sale and truss show.



Congratulations to both of you for this well deserved honor and thank you for your many contributions that have been so instrumental in the success of our chapter today.

Member's Gardens in the News



Two of our Midwest Chapter member's gardens have recently been prominently featured in garden publications.

Chicagoland Gardening's March/April 2008 Issue features Barbara Wetzel's garden in the cover story "Zeal For Azaleas". Filled with many photos, the reader gets a close-up look at the work Barb has put into her garden with all of her wonderful rare plants, particularly rhododendrons and azaleas.

Ornamentals & Edibles' March/April 2007 Issue features Gene Paschall's extraordinary garden in a similar light, with a story on how Gene began growing rhododendrons. He explains his soil mix, and for those who have not had an opportunity to visit Gene's garden, the photos help capture a glimpse of what he has created.



Congratulations Barb and Gene for creating gardens that merit this well deserved attention.



2007 Spring Garden Tour

On May 7, 2007, our chapter held a spring garden tour of three northwest Chicagoland members' gardens. Although this time of the year is busy in the gardening world with plant shows, conventions etc., we decided to fit in tours of some of our member's gardens while the rhododendrons were in bloom. In the past, our garden visits were usually in the summer or fall.

Three of our member's, Kay Moats, John Golab and Barbara Wetzel graciously opened their very different gardens to our chapter and more than 30 members attended.

It was a whirlwind day starting out in Mt. Prospect at Kay's garden. What a lovely garden Kay has. A myriad of lepidotes and azaleas were in full bloom in this meticulously tended garden. Everyone was impressed by what can be created with a suburban garden, particularly how her garden blended visually with an adjacent garden creating a larger vista.

Next we drove ourselves to John Golab's garden in Barrington. John's garden encompasses an acre and has large undulating beds with an incredible number of rhododendrons and azaleas. All of the trees and shrubs were planted by John years ago on an open lot and have matured beautifully. A newly added highlight of John's garden is a large perennial garden in the front of his home that is spectacular.

With hardly enough time at John's garden since there was so much to see, we headed to our scheduled last stop at Barbara Wetzel's garden, which is also in Barrington.

Barbara graciously had a wonderful lunch waiting for us prior to leading us on a tour of her outstanding garden which encompasses several acres. Her property is wooded and even includes a large prairie. What a tour! Following Barb through her long winding paths in the woods with her identifying all of her plants was exhilarating, to say the least.

Our chapter plans to conduct a similar tour of southwest Chicago member's gardens in 2009 and it will take some doing to match the gardens we visited last spring.

Thanks Kay, John and Barbara! It was a wonderful day and we all appreciated your gracious hospitality.

2007 Summer Meeting

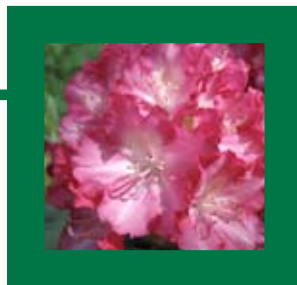
Last summer, our chapter held it's summer meeting on July 28, and instead of conducting it at one home, we visited three Wisconsin member's gardens throughout the day.

We began by visiting Tom Horner's garden in Waterford, Wisconsin where we were served light refreshments before our tour of his large property. Tom even had some late blooming azaleas flowering for us to enjoy. How thoughtful of him!

We then drove to Burlington, Wisconsin and visited Barbara Behrend's lovely home and garden. Barbara served a wonderful lunch and after a brief chapter meeting we were given a tour of the grounds. Barb's professional landscape design expertise is clearly evident as one walks through the many gardens she has created.

As the afternoon wound down, the last stop was at George Gray's home in Williams Bay, Wisconsin where George showed us his propagation beds and described his hybridization work. We then had a chance to relax and enjoy some excellent desserts.

It was a very full day and we all enjoyed seeing these lovely Wisconsin gardens with fellow members and friends.



cutting Workshop

Last fall, several of our members gathered at John Migas' nursery to root some cuttings of rhododendrons and azaleas from our gardens.

After receiving some preliminary instructions from John, the dozen or so of us dug in and rooted approximately 700 cuttings.

John provided all of the materials including his hoop house to keep the cuttings over the winter. So far, with the exception of some minor critter damage, our report is the cuttings are doing real well.



We will next pot up the cuttings later this summer to continue their development.

Thanks John, for conducting this fun workshop. It was very informative and we look forward to the next phase this coming summer.



GET THE Scoop

Email Communications

In an effort to reduce expenses and get information out to our members quicker, The Midwest Chapter has started sending out communications via e-mail. The announcement for our winter meeting was the first time we used electronic mail. *The Rootball News* will continue to be mailed to each member as in the past.

All of our announcements as well as current and past editions of *The Rootball News* will continue to be posted on our chapter website <www.midwestars.org>.

Please confirm your e-mail address with Tad Dauksza <iltkyao@yahoo.com> or let him know if you don't have e-mail so we can make other arrangements to get news to you.

Many other non-profit organizations and even some mail order nurseries are moving in this direction due to the increasing postage costs and time it takes to do a mailing.

Chapter Members Receive \$10.00 CBG Discount!

All Midwest Chapter members are entitled to a \$10.00 discount when joining or renewing their Chicago Botanic Garden membership.

To receive the discount, include a note on the form, stating you are a member of the Midwest Chapter of The American Rhododendron Society and are entitled to the discount since our group has a chapter membership.

A membership includes many benefits including free parking which is currently \$15.00.

Visit www.chicagoBotanic.org for more information.

Calendar of Events

May 9-10

Plant Sale and Truss Show

The Chicago Botanic Garden
Glencoe, Illinois

9:00AM - 4:30PM

July/August

Summer Meeting

TBA

THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY MIDWEST CHAPTER



Purpose

A non-profit organization whose aim is to promote in the Midwest region the objectives of The American Rhododendron Society, which are to encourage interest in and to disseminate knowledge about rhododendrons and azaleas. To provide a medium through which all persons interested in rhododendrons and azaleas may communicate and cooperate with others through education, meetings, publications, scientific studies, research and other similar activities.

Meetings

Meetings are held 4 times a year, generally in March, May, August and October. Members are encouraged to attend and participate in the transaction of business at these meetings and to profit by the knowledge gained from our knowledgeable members and Guest Speakers. *Visitors are always welcome!*

Membership

Membership is open to all persons interested in the growth and culture of rhododendrons and azaleas as provided by the Chapter By-Laws. Membership includes one year (4 quarterly issues) of the ARS Journal and affiliation with the chapter of your choice. Annual membership dues for an individual is \$35.00. Anyone interested in becoming a member should contact the Membership Chairperson whose name and address appears below.

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