



# Potomac Valley Chapter

American Rhododendron Society

www.arspvc.org

Summer Newsletter: August 2013

## Calendar

- \* **September 15, 2013** – Regular Meeting, Potomac Community Ctr.
- \* **September 21, 2013** – White Garden Workday & Picnic: 9am – 1pm
- \* **September 27-29, 2013** – ARS Western Regional, Newport, OR
- \* **October 4-6, 2013** – ARS Eastern Regional, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia
- \* **October 12-14, 2013** – Hooper Bald Planting, Robbinsville, NC
- \* **October 12, 2013** – No.Va. ASA Plant Auction, Springfield, VA
- \* **October 13, 2013** – Mason-Dixon, Ed Reiley Mem., Westminster, MD
- \* **October 21, 2013** – White Garden Workday: 9am – Noon
- \* **October 25-27, 2013** – MAC ARS Fall Meeting, Virginia Beach, VA
- \* **November 2, 2013** – Potomac Valley ARS Banquet, Normandy Farms

### Chapter Officers

**President:** Bob McWhorter  
mcwho@comcast.net

**Vice President:** Dan Neckel  
vaneckel@verizon.net

**Treasurer:** Phyllis Rittman  
prittman@erols.com

## Our Next Meeting:

**John Lonsdale**

**“Woodland Treasures”**

**Date: September 15, 2013**

**Time: 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM**

**Where: Potomac Community Center**

We open our fall season this year with a wonderful speaker on companion plants, John Lonsdale, a specialist in hardy cyclamen species and other alpine plants. Those of us who visit Pine Knot Farms during the annual North Carolina nursery tour in March should be familiar with the long table of John’s cyclamens for sale. John is often there, too.

John has a lovely 1.7 acre private garden he calls “Edgewood” located 35 miles west of Philadelphia. He has been developing this treasure since 1995 when he and his family moved to the area from the UK.

Woodland plants include a wide variety of bulbs, tubers, rhizomes, herbaceous perennials, small trees and shrubs suitable for all conditions from dry shade to vernal moist sunlit woodland edges. The majority will be in flower from February through July, but there is often a secondary show again in September through November. At its peak in April and May, the woodland garden provides spectacular color as well as the more subdued but endlessly fascinating greens and silvers of the quieter but no less valuable plants.

Some genera he will discuss include *Trillium*, *Helleborus*, *Hepatica*, *Erythronium*, *Cypripedium*, *Epimedium*, *Cyclamen*, *Corydalis*, *Asarum*, *Arisaema*, *Anemonella* and *Phlox*. The presentation will focus on methods for their successful planting and cultivation,



**John Lonsdale**



***Cyclamen hederifolium* – A hardy fall blooming species**

as well as propagation by division and seed. Find out how to grow these wonderful plants!

If you are not familiar with alpines, check out John’s award winning website where he has images of his garden but also pictures of many rare plants:

**[www.edgewoodgardens.net](http://www.edgewoodgardens.net)**

This tremendous photographic resource of nearly 10,000 images is organized alphabetically by plant family, genus, and species. Look for Cyclamen in the Primrose family, *Primulaceae*.

John will be bringing a variety of cyclamen species with him that we can purchase. If there are special plants you want, you can also order from his website.

### Refreshment Duty:

Those persons whose last names begin with Q to Z are asked to bring something for the refreshment table.

**Potomac Community Center: Directions next page**  
**Address: 11315 Falls Rd, Potomac, MD**

## **Directions: Potomac Community Center**

From **I-270 North**, stay in the **Local lanes**  
Take exit **#4B/ MONTROSE RD WEST**  
Continue west on Montrose Rd. for **1.7 miles**  
Turn **LEFT** on **FALLS RD** (MD-189)  
Continue **1.4 miles** to the Center (on the left)  
**11315 Falls Rd, Potomac, MD**

## **Upcoming Events**

We have a very busy fall season this year. Because so many of us belong to other local chapters of the ARS or ASA, we have included some key regional events in our calendar. The Columbus Day weekend is particularly busy with multiple activities including a plant sale, a memorial lecture, and an azalea planting.

### **ARS Eastern Regional: October 4-6**

Many of us will be heading up to Nova Scotia that first week in October to attend the ARS Eastern Regional Fall Conference in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia. For more information, check out the website for the Atlantic Rhododendron & Horticultural Society:

[www.atlanticrhodo.org](http://www.atlanticrhodo.org)

### **Mountain Trip & Azalea Planting: October 12-14**

We will be having a second Azalea Planting on Hooper Bald, NC, to set out another 200 azaleas this fall. Although a large percentage of the seedlings we planted in 2011 made it through the first winter, they did not fare well the second season and most have died.

J. Jackson and Lindy Johnson of Appalachian Native Plants have raised more *R. calendulaceum* seedlings for us but these are larger and should be able to hold their own. We will be staying in Robbinsville, NC, but will be admiring the fall foliage and collecting native azalea seed, too. Contact Don Hyatt for updates:

[Don@donaldhyatt.com](mailto:Don@donaldhyatt.com)

### **Azalea Auction: October 12**

On Saturday, October 12, members of the Northern Virginia Chapter ASA will be holding their annual azalea sale and auction at the Kirkwood Presbyterian Church in Springfield, VA. Check their website:

[www.nv-asa.org](http://www.nv-asa.org)

or contact Rick Bauer for info: [rickbauer@cox.net](mailto:rickbauer@cox.net)

### **Ed Reiley Memorial Lecture : October 13**

The Mason-Dixon Chapter is holding its annual Ed Reiley Memorial Lecture at the Bear Branch Nature Center in Westminster, MD, on Sunday, October 13. Sally and John Perkins will be the speakers. For more information, check out their website:

[www.mdrhododendron.org](http://www.mdrhododendron.org)

or contact Ray Smith: [LNSRAS@gmail.com](mailto:LNSRAS@gmail.com)

## **PVC Fall Banquet: November 2**

### **Ron Rabideau: Plant Hunting in China**

Please save the date for our Potomac Valley Chapter Annual Fall Banquet on November 2. Once again we will be holding the event at Normandie Farms and will have the same delicious menu (grilled salmon, chicken piccata, or vegetarian) at the same price, \$42 per meal. Our speaker this year will be Ron Rabideau of RareFind Nursery who will discuss his trip to China. Registration details will be mailed in October.

### **MAC Fall Meeting: October 25-27**

The Middle Atlantic Chapter ARS will be holding its fall meeting in Newport News this year. For more information, check out their website:

[www.macars.org](http://www.macars.org)

### **White Garden Work Days:**

We hope some of you can join us this fall for the last two work days at Margaret White's garden, 3301 Hawthorn Lane, Falls Church, VA. On Saturday, September 21, there will be a work session in the morning from 9:00 AM to noon, followed by a picnic from noon to 1:00 PM. Bring a bag lunch. The final workday is on Thursday, October 21. One reminder, electricity at the property has been turned off so there will be no water or restroom facilities.

Mary Olien, the Director of Green Spring who oversees the White Garden now, broke a bone in her foot this summer so she has had to cancel a number of the work sessions. I am sure there is a lot to do over there so we could really use your help!

Mary also wanted us to know that Fairfax County is considering new policy called the Resident Curator Program (RCP). This would allow a person with skills in helping to renovate historic properties that are not ready for wide public use to live onsite at a relatively low rent while they work to improve the facility. Whether the White Garden will qualify is not certain but many of us feel that would be a good idea.

### **Dues are Due!**

With this issue of your PVC newsletter, we have also included your dues notices for the coming year. Membership in the ARS which includes the affiliation to one local chapter (a.k.a. Potomac Valley) is \$40. Associate membership is only \$10 but you must already belong to another ARS chapter. Associate membership is a real bargain! Please return your Potomac Valley dues to our treasurer:

**Phyllis Rittman**

[prittman@erols.com](mailto:prittman@erols.com)

## Williamsburg 2016: *Convention Ideas*

Yes, our District 9 has taken on the task of hosting a Joint ARS/ASA Convention in Williamsburg from April 20 – 24, 2016. We have established a core committee with at least two representatives from each of the participating chapters. Those members are:

### **Mason Dixon Chapter ARS**

Ray Smith: [lnsras@gmail.com](mailto:lnsras@gmail.com)

Sonny Coble: (no email)

### **Middle Atlantic Chapter ARS**

Dave Banks (Registrar): [dfbanks@earthlink.net](mailto:dfbanks@earthlink.net)

George McLellan: [gmclellan38@gmail.com](mailto:gmclellan38@gmail.com)

### **Potomac Valley Chapter ARS**

Don Hyatt (Co-chair): [don@donaldhyatt.com](mailto:don@donaldhyatt.com)

Phyllis Rittman: [prittman@erols.com](mailto:prittman@erols.com)

### **Northern Virginia Chapter ASA**

Rick Bauer (Co-chair): [rickbauer@cox.net](mailto:rickbauer@cox.net)

Carolyn Beck: [carolyn.f.beck@gmail.com](mailto:carolyn.f.beck@gmail.com)

Paul Beck (Treasurer): [pabeck@gmail.com](mailto:pabeck@gmail.com)

We currently plan to offer a tour of Williamsburg



**Williamsburg – Governor's Palace**

prior to the opening of the meeting on Thursday, April 20. The schedules for Friday and Saturday will be very similar with workshops offered in the morning followed by tours with a box lunch in the afternoon. In the evenings, there will be a banquet each night with keynote speaker, one night featuring the ARS and the other the ASA. Sunday will have a few activities before people head home. Anyone unable to take the Thursday tour to Williamsburg could visit then.

As for tours, we will have a lot of flexibility due to the location. We do expect to showcase local projects at the Norfolk Botanical Garden including the McDonald Azalea Garden that features the hybrids of Dr. Sandra McDonald. The Northern Virginia Chapter ASA also has a project with the NBG enhancing their other azalea collections. We intend to tour gardens in Gloucester, VA, and probably Richmond, too. If you have some suggestions for outstanding gardens or attractions in the region, please let us know.

The plant sale will be the key to success. In 2006, we raised 900 rhododendrons and sold most of those but 2000 azaleas and had half of them left over. We will use those figures for planning purposes. We want to emphasize the legacies of our local hybridizers at this meeting. We want to offer other rare varieties, too, so if you can share some cuttings, please let us know. If there are plants you anxious to get, let us know.

We are also seeking suggestions for speakers that people want to hear, either keynote address or workshop. Have you heard good speakers recently?

Please share your thoughts and ideas with us. We hope you will volunteer to help us out, too!

## **Coming to Your Garden: ELK?**

Many of us plagued by deer ravaging our gardens were surprised when we heard that the Great Smoky Mountains National Park planned to introduce elk into the ecosystem. Elk were native to the east at one time, but were last seen in the 1700's. They're back!

Apparently, the park introduced 25 elk in 2001 and brought in another 27 of them in 2002. The first few years, many calves were lost to predators but females have learned how to protect them so numbers are



**Bull Elk Grazing along a Roadside in the Smokies**

increasing steadily. At last count there are 140 elk.

Elk are huge! Females average about 500 pounds each. They can be aggressive, especially when their calves are threatened. The males, or bull elk, can weigh upwards of 700 pounds each. They can measure 8 to 10 ft from nose to tail and stand 5 ft tall at the shoulder. Antlers can spread 5 ft across. During the rutting season in September and October, bulls have one thing on their mind. Be careful all year long!

During our native azalea treks this June, we saw several elk and they were not necessarily in the park. They eat on the average 20 pounds of vegetation a day so how long before they are feasting in your garden?

## **District 9 Director's Report**

*By Donald W. Hyatt*

As your Director, I will be attending the fall ARS board meeting in Nova Scotia on October 4th. If members of District 9 have any concerns, please let me know so I can present them at that time.

As you probably know, at the spring board meeting on May 2, the board unanimously approved our offer to host a joint ARS/ASA convention in 2016. We have decided on Williamsburg, VA, as the site and the dates will be April 20 - 24, 2016. We expect to sign with a hotel soon. I sincerely thank members of District 9 for showing such strong support for this meeting. It will be hard work, but we can have fun hosting a party for our friends. We will be asking for volunteers soon, so please help. Our next focus will be the plant sale.

In recent years, chapters have been reluctant to host national meetings and that made it difficult for people to plan. Fortunately, that trend has changed now. The reality is that each District should be responsible for hosting a convention about once every 10 years. Since we hosted the convention in Rockville, MD, in 2006, it was our turn again in 2016. Conventions now on the docket include Painesville, OH,(Cleveland) from May 16-18, 2014, Sidney, British Columbia, (Victoria) from May 6-10, 2015, our Williamsburg Convention in April of 2016, and Eureka, CA, in 2017.

There are some international meetings and activities on the ARS calendar, too. Following the ARS Convention next spring, a group is planning a trip to gardens in Northern Europe leaving from Cleveland on May 20 and returning June 3. Contact William Heller ([william.r.heller@boeing.com](mailto:william.r.heller@boeing.com)) for more details. Space is limited. There will also be an international conference hosted by the New Zealand Rhododendron Association in Dunedin on the North Island from October 20 - 25, 2014.

Dues notices should be going out soon, but I haven't seen the form yet to see if one innovative change approved the board is listed as an option. There should now be a new Student Membership category. The membership cost will be only \$10, half of which will stay with the local chapter. The chapter must validate student status and age set at under 25 years. Student members will not receive a hard copy of the Journal but must access the online version instead. All ARS members have access to the online Journal but it is rarely used. I am sure that will be discussed at the fall board meeting.

Last year's budget shortfall of \$13,000 was alleviated due to generous contributions to the general fund by our members. Treasurer Bill Mangels said that 403 people gave a total of \$25,000 to that fund. We

will again be working with a slight deficit of about \$3000 for the current fiscal year so we need to continue to look for ways to reduce expenses and increase income. The big problem is that our membership has dropped severely. As of May, we had only 3058 members whereas we had well over 5000 members a decade ago. Many of the society's expenses are fixed costs, and most of those are related to the Journal publication costs which have actually increased. Escalation in postage fees is a major problem, especially with international memberships. Laura Grant reported that a single Journal can cost as much as \$12 to mail to Germany. Overseas members still pay the same membership fees as those in the US, so something must change. We may require online access to the Journal for them.

There was discussion regarding secure ways to invest ARS funds to increase income, but that will require more study. Potomac Valley Chapter member Sam Burd has agreed to take over as ARS Treasurer in May of 2015. We expect he will be working with Bill Mangels prior to the transition.

There were three Endowment Fund grants approved including a request by the Mason-Dixon Plant Development Committee. Amounts requested exceeded available funds, so awards were set at 75%. The Research Committee awarded several grants but they did not need board approval. Both grant programs will be continued since those independent funds, unrelated to operating expenses.

The ARS is anxious for better educational materials and is looking for ideas. The website may need to be modernized, shifting some content to electronic distribution methods. In October, the board will revisit some confusion as to the roles of the Journal Editor and the Editorial Committee due to inconsistencies in the Policies of the Board.

There was a suggestion that the official name of the American Rhododendron Society be changed to something that would better reflect its international stature. Currently, 877 of our 3058 members are from other countries. One suggestion was just "The Rhododendron Society." A committee headed by past Director Mary Parker from Canada will investigate ramifications and costs of a name change. I'd appreciate your opinion.

Thank you again for your support. It is an honor to serve as your representative.

**Don Hyatt**  
**ARS District 9 Director**

## Two West Coast Hybridizers: *Frank Fujioka and Jim Barlup* By Don Hyatt

Every time I travel to the West Coast and see the work of hybridizers out there, I am in awe of what they have accomplished. The array of flower colors and leaf forms found in their hybrids is truly amazing. It also makes me realize that we East Coast hybridizers still have a lot of work to do. The color page in this issue highlights just a few creations of two great West Coast hybridizers, Frank Fujioka and Jim Barlup.



**Frank Fujioka**

I had visited Frank Fujioka's garden in 2005 prior to the ARS Convention in Victoria. When I attended the ARS Convention in Seattle this May, I had a chance to see his garden again. He has a lovely home on Whidbey Island perched on a high cliff overlooking Puget Sound. Some of his garden has fallen into the water over the years and one day his lovely home may follow suit. For now it is a beautifully landscape with choice rhododendrons and carefully positioned Japanese maples, conifers, and companion plants. Frank has an artist's eye, so every vista is carefully arranged so that all the colors are in perfect harmony. Glance in another direction and color scheme may change but the scene is still perfection.

Across the street, Frank has another 1.5 acres of land where he grows and tests his seedlings. He has expanded his display garden into that region. Frank will often make as many as 250 crosses a year. As they grow, he carefully evaluates his seedlings on foliage and plant habit long before they bloom, and ruthlessly eliminates anything that doesn't measure up.

Jim Barlup is truly amazing. I had never been to his garden until this spring, but it is located under a canopy of tall Douglas fir trees in Belleview, a suburb east of Seattle. The property is not large, perhaps a half acre, and the house sits down from the street. It looks like a typical suburban home in his community but he has used rhododendrons generously in the landscape. It was not what I had expected for



**Jim Barlup**

one of the most prolific hybridizers in the United States. Where was the clutter?

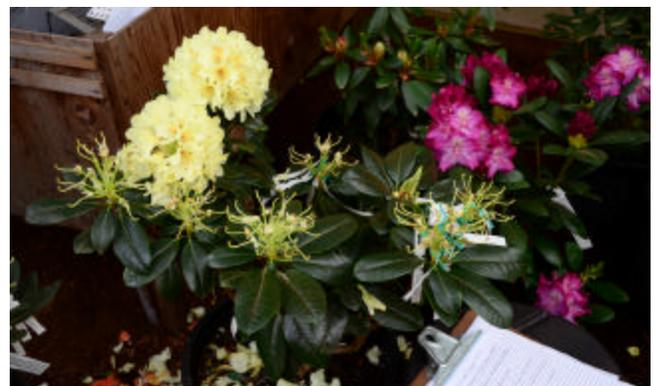
The front yard is meticulously landscaped with choice rhododendrons and features along the curving driveway. Large clumps of sword ferns that were just expanding seemed to be the dominant garden plant.



**Barlup Garden: Karel Bernady and 'Invitation's Gift'**

Barlup's 'Invitation', a lovely blend of cream and pink with yellow undertones was just opening. Its parentage is ((Crest x Hotei) x Lem's Cameo) and since none of the parents will take our summer heat and humidity, its success in our area is doubtful. 'Invitation's Gift', a descendent of 'Invitation', is a lovely light yellow and it was stunning.

In the backyard is where Jim does his hybridizing and that is where he has his vast collection of rhododendrons. Jim grows almost all of his plants in pots and he has a vast field of them neatly arranged at the back of the property. He has rows of seedlings, plants getting ready to bloom for the first time, others under continuing evaluation, and larger specimens, too. There is hope for us all who feel cramped and think we do not have room to hybridize rhododendrons. Jim often makes 1000 crosses in a year! Below is a plant he has prepared for crossing by emasculating flowers.



**Trusses emasculated in preparation for making crosses**

At the back of one corner of the lot, there is a small greenhouse structure covered in plastic, and that is

where Jim makes all of his crosses. He brings potted plants in there to open up so he can use them in hybridizing regardless of weather. He has a chair



**Inside the Barlup Greenhouse: Hybridizing Central**

where he can sit and a clip board nearby where he will record the crosses. By doing his crosses inside the greenhouse, he doesn't need to be concerned about bumblebees interfering with his work.

It is amazing to think what hybridizers have been able to accomplish. Starting with a relatively small subset of species, many of which had average sized flowers and rather pale or muted colors, they have been able to concentrate those pigments and improve both flower size, shape, and color. It is true that some of the best foliage forms on hybrids are probably not as spectacular as the species from whence they came, but hybridizers are still working on that aspect.



**Yellow flowered species: *R. wardii***

For instance, there are yellow species like *R. wardii*, *R. campylocarpum*, and *R. lacteum* that have been frequently used in hybridizing for yellows, but their blossoms are generally quite pale in comparison to what is available now in many modern hybrids. Frank Fujioka's 'Saffron Silk' (see color page) has 4-inch flowers of deep canary yellow. Frank had a large plant

in his new display garden that was stunning. A red Japanese maple in the distance flanked by a blue *R. augustinii* made a perfect landscape grouping. Frank does use many blue and deep purple lepidotes in the garden like his own 'Vibrant Violet' (*augustinii* x *impeditum*) which is a wonderful flower color contrast.

The blossoms of 'Saffron Silk' do remind me of "BFBY", Bob Furman's Big Yellow, one of the best yellows we have seen on the East Coast. The late Bob Furman used to say that hybridizers need yellow genes on both sides of the primary cross to concentrate the color, and indeed they have. 'Saffron Silk' came from the cross (Nancy Evans x (Crest x Odee Wright)). Since none of those parents will grow in the eastern US for very long, their seedlings may be questionable, too. "BFBY" has a complex lineage with genes for yellow on both sides but also genes for hardiness. Good idea!

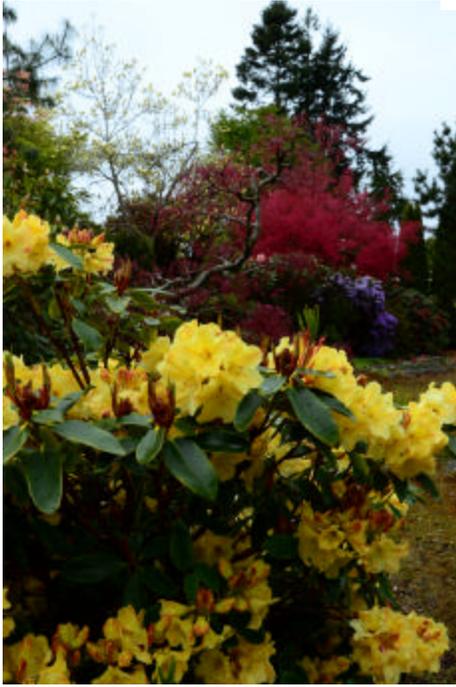


**Orange flowered species: *R. dichroanthum***

Orange flowered species like *R. dichroanthum* have been frequently used in breeding to help intensify the yellows or to breed for orange color. However, it is tender, too, and its relatively small flowers hang in a loose truss as pictured above. It is amazing to see descendants of *R. dichroanthum* now, some with huge orange trusses like Jim Barlup's 'Orange Prelude' or 'Wild Ginger'. Frank Fujioka has some wonderful orange flowered hybrids like 'Seaview Sunset' that opens orange and eventually turns to shades of yellow.

'Seaview Sunset' has wonderful plant habit and superb foliage, so it has become a very popular landscape plant out there. It has survived here if given the right microclimate but I must admit that mine has perished. Frank Fujioka has a seedling of 'Seaview Sunset' that has all the same plant habit qualities but more pink in the flower with a light center that just seems to glow. He plans to introduce that one soon. We admired a lovely pale yellow version of 'Seaview Sunset' along his driveway that would make a great landscape trio. He hasn't introduced that one yet.

# West Coast Hybrids



Fujioka Garden with 'Saffron Silk'



'Saffron Silk'



Fujioka hybrid soon to be named:  
Seedling of 'Seaview Sunset'



Fujioka Garden with 'Seaview  
Sunset' and 'Vibrant Violet'



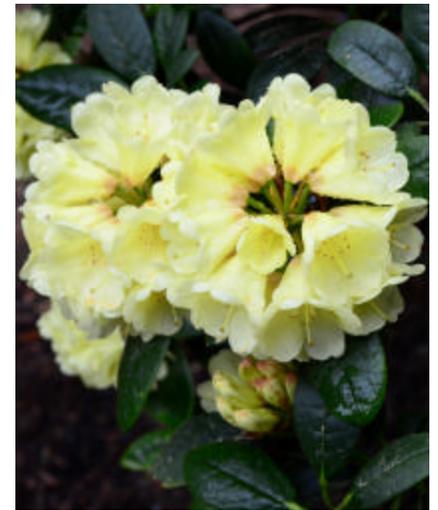
'Sparkling Stars'



'Orange Prelude'



'Invitation'



'Invitation's Gift'



'Wild Ginger'



'Windsong'



'Fire Rim'

# Frank Fujioka

# Jim Barlup

'Nancy Evans', a Ned Brokenbrough hybrid, has been a popular parent on the West Coast. Its orange flowers change to deep yellow as they age so it has



**Popular West Coast Parent: 'Nancy Evans'**

been a favorite for hybridizers seeking yellow or orange color. Its cross was (Hotei x Lem's Cameo), both of which have *R. dichroanthum* in their lineage. Those plants are not happy on the East Coast, nor are many descendants like Barlup's stunning 'Fire Rim'.

It is possible for hardy plants to arise when the parents are tender. 'Taurus' (Jean Marie de Montague x *R. strigillosum*) is one of our best reds but neither of its parents succeed here. Carol Segree said that Barlup's 'Windsong', a ruffled greenish yellow 'Nancy Evans' hybrid bloomed for her this year. Yes, we can't tell about hardiness until we actually grow a plant!

Frank Fujioka has made some breakthroughs in flower shape with several hybrids that have very narrow petals that are almost separate like the azalea 'Koromo Shikibu'. The strap-like petals give a starry effect to the blossoms. His cream colored hybrid 'Starbright Champagne' was introduced a number of years ago but he recently registered a sister seedling called 'Sparkling Stars' that may even be better.



**'Starbright Champagne'**

Of course, one of the things we eastern gardeners still need to work on is to get hybrids in those beautiful color ranges that also have climate adaptability. The

best way to achieve that is to raise lots of seedlings and let Mother Nature get rid of the weaklings through natural selection, or "survival of the fittest."

Jim Barlup has been trying to use some hardier plants in his crosses recently. He had a lovely pale creamy yellow with extremely frilled petal edges under evaluation. The cross was (Glenna x Janet Blair). 'Glenna' is (Hotei x One Thousand Butterflies) which is likely difficult in our area but 'Janet Blair' is tough so the new hybrid might survive for us.



**Under Evaluation: Barlup's ('Glenna' x 'Janet Blair')**

Barlup's 'North Wind' has huge white flowers with burgundy blotches, and is the cross (Scintillation x Snow Candle). It may grow for us, too. Jim doesn't have the difficult climate that will cut out the weaklings in the seedling stage, though, so we won't know until we try the plant. However, Jim does share his seed through the ARS Seed Exchange so try some of his crosses with hardy genes next year.



**'North Wind' ('Scintillation' x 'Snow Candle')**

It really is inspirational to see what these two amateurs have done in the realm of rhododendron hybridizing. They have produced outstanding hybrids for their market, but we can do the same for ours, too!

## Sad News

### Frances Louer

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of one of our long-time members, Frances Louer, on June 17, 2013. She was 88. Frances was a passionate azalea collector, and with her husband Phil, they amassed one of the largest private azalea collections in the country. Their lovely property near Gainesville has been on many garden tours, and the two generously



Frances and Phil Louer

shared cuttings with many other enthusiasts. She is survived by her devoted husband Phil, loving daughter Leslie Nanney and her husband Dave, and many other family members. She will be missed and we extend our sincerest sympathy to family and friends.

### Dr. William Ackerman

Horticulture lost another friend, Dr. Bill Ackerman, one of the true greats of the plant world. He passed away from pneumonia on July 6 at the age of 89. Dr. Ackerman is world famous for his work at the National Arboretum in developing a new race of hardy camellias. Camellias, still the mainstay of many southern gardens in zones 8 and 9 were difficult in the north and western suburbs of Washington DC. In fact, the entire camellia collection at the Arboretum was



Dr. Bill Ackerman

killed to the ground during severe winters in the 1970s and 1980s which spurred Dr. Ackerman's hybridizing efforts. Some of his camellias are hardy in zone 6!

Dr. Ackerman was an azalea advocate, too, and a personal friend of Ben Morrison, the first Director of the National Arboretum. During the "Save the Azaleas" campaign where the Glenn Dale Azalea collection at the Arboretum had been threatened with destruction, Dr. Ackerman wrote one of the strongest letters in support of its preservation. His letter can still be viewed on the website:

[www.savetheazaleas.org](http://www.savetheazaleas.org)

### Other Friends Who Have Passed

Although not members of our chapter, the plant world has lost some other good friends recently. We send our sincere sympathy to family members and friend in hopes that they may find peace and comfort during difficult times.

**Sybil Przypek** of Yorktown, VA, passed away on July 25 at the age of 76. Beloved wife of Walter Przypek, Sybil was a past President of the Middle Atlantic Chapter ARS.

**Pat Belcher**, the loving wife of Harold Belcher who helped lead the "Save the Azalea" campaign for the Ben Morrison Chapter ASA, passed away on July 18. She was 67.

**Dr. William Constable**, a radiation oncologist for the University of Virginia Medical School and long time member of the Middle Atlantic Chapter ARS passed away on July 7 at the age 83.

### Convention 2016: Williamsburg!

We are making great progress on our plans to host the 2016 Joint Convention of the ARS and ASA. We have settled on Williamsburg for the site and have two excellent hotels lined up. We will select one soon. The dates are April 20-24, 2016, peak spring season!

Our next priority will be getting plants started for the plant sale. This fall, we are trying to locate cuttings of rare rhododendrons to root and will be focusing on azaleas next year. We do need a large number of people to help with this activity since the plant sale is the key to running a profitable convention. The more plants we grow ourselves, the better.

Hosting a convention takes a lot of work but it can also be a lot of fun. We will have many committees and will need volunteers so please help us out!

Potomac Valley Chapter ARS - Newsletter  
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