

WHIDBEY ISLAND CHAPTER



# ARS Whidbey Island Chapter NEWSLETTER

Website: [whidbeyrhodies.org](http://whidbeyrhodies.org)

Meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of each Month  
Fire District 5 Headquarters Station  
1164 Race Road, Coupeville, WA  
**Refreshments: 7:00 Meeting: 7:20**

Sept 2009

## Next Meeting: Wed, Sept 23

### Program: DVD of Ron Rabideau's Trip to Arunachal Pradesh

This DVD program is based on Ron Rabideau's experiences when he joined an outstanding international group of rhododendron explorers to Arunachal Pradesh in search of rhododendron species. The program consists of photos and video from members of the expedition and also personal observations of the people and the culture there. Narration by Ron Rabideau.

A trip to India and you won't have to leave Whidbey Island!

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

Sept 18-20....	Western Regional Conference Federal Way, WA
Sept 23.....	Chapter Meeting DVD: Arunachal Pradesh
Oct 28.....	Chapter Meeting Shirley Rock: All About Hardy Fuchsias
Nov 18 .....	Annual Mtg/Election of Officers Program: TBA
Dec 9 (Wed) .....	Holiday Dinner @ Christopher's in Coupeville
Jan 27 .....	Chapter Meeting Program TBA
Feb 24 .....	Chapter Meeting Program TBA
Mar 24 .....	Chapter Meeting Program TBA

## Thanks Jack and Norma!

Many thanks Jack and Norma Loundsberry and Mary and Geoff Wyman for another great picnic. The food was delicious and the grounds neat and tidy for lounging in the shade, strolling the paths or a competitive game of putt-putt golf.

Thanks also to auctioneer Bill Stipe for keeping things moving along at a quick pace and Marilyn Wright who kept the money in order... and let's not forget all of you who shared your favorite desserts and salads to round out the meal and share the day.

## ARS Regional Convention, Federal Way, WA

There is still time for you to attend the ARS Regional Convention, "Collecting Rhododendrons Around the World" being held September 18-20 at the Best Western Evergreen Inn & Suites, 32124 25th Ave South, Federal Way, WA 98023. For registration details and program information contact Bill Miller, Western Regional chair: 806 S Proctor, Tacoma, WA 98405; (253)-571-9489 smile4bill@hotmail.com.

## Time for Dues

By now you will all have received your renewal notices for your 2010 membership in our Whidbey Island Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. Please fill out your renewal envelope and get it in the mail (to Marilyn Wright, 453 Kineth Pt Pl, Coupeville, WA 98239) *today* or bring it to the next chapter meeting. Note that the dues structure has been simplified to a 'Regular' membership at \$40. The cutoff date for dues renewal is November 15. If your membership is not renewed by then you may miss the January issue of the ARS Journal. If you did not receive a renewal notice it means your dues have been paid through 2010 or beyond.



## Mature Rhodie Opportunity... knock, knock

Cascade Chapter member, Milt Strasburg, is moving out of the area. He has collected a number of rhododendrons over the years and would like to see them go to people who would appreciate them and not new home owners that would see them as 'too many plants' in the landscape – let's get rid of them!

Prices, trade or other deals are negotiable. Milt has already moved, but is back in town every couple of weeks as the old house is being painted/remodeled, etc. He can be reached on his cell phone – no matter where he is – at 425-518-3690.




**Cookie reminder:**  
Stephanie Rodden & Joan Bell

## From the Prez

Pat Sasson

Hi All,



Every Labor Day since I was a child a part of me always dies - only to be reborn as I realize September is truly here and another summer has gone by. Most of us would agree that it was indeed a glorious summer but would have liked more rain and less watering. So now Labor Day has gone, it has rained and we are now enjoying an Indian summer. Would you believe I have a few blooming trusses on my Christmas Cheer?

With September comes all things needing attention beyond our gardens and having fun. First of all, a great big *thank you* to Norma and Jack for once again hosting our August picnic. We had a good turnout, did well at the auction, and the salmon was fabulous thanks to Geoff's catching, and Jack and Mary's expertise in grilling. Thank you all again for your generosity!

Our treasurer, Marilyn, has received and deposited WIARS' share of the earnings from the Spring National Conference – a tidy sum of \$2,514! This is after all the expenses, donation to ARS, and seed monies have been paid off. Thank you to everyone who volunteered in any way to make this such a great success. Special thanks go to **Don Smart** who worked on the Conference before, during and after. His leadership was invaluable!

Meerkerk Gardens has submitted two proposals to the WIARS Board. The first one is to provide \$1,000 to the Outdoor Nature Education Program. The Board felt this to be an endeavor which could be supported out of monies in the Carl "Jake" Jacobson Fund, established upon his death by Bill Stipe under the wishes of Peg Jacobson. Bill and his committee, consisting of John Marshall and Mel Wright, are considering this and will have an answer for us at the next meeting.

The second proposal asking WIARS to adopt the Big Leaf Valley directly involves each and every one of you. As most of you know, Jake's dream was the Big Leaf Valley. The proposal states: *"The Gardens have endeavored to continue his work with a water drip system, and a small group, principally led by Don Kohlenberger of WIARS, has tried to maintain the project. It is a significant chore and is having trouble moving forward."*

The proposal is two-fold: 1) a long term work commitment and 2) a long term financial commitment. The work commitment entails maintaining, developing and completing Jakes' Big Leaf Valley in the form of 6-8 work parties a year. The financial commitment includes an initial expense of \$1000 for a much needed crush stone path through the Valley then perhaps \$500/year for plant acquisitions, signage and irrigation system maintenance. Don Kohlenberger has agreed to chair *Jake's Dream Team* and Don Lee has volunteered to be a regular worker.

Think about Meerkerk and our role to support it. We are in the unique position of having a rhododendron garden right in our backyard. Wouldn't we as members of the American Rhododendron Society like to step forward to preserve it for the future generations? We will talk about the Big Leaf Valley adoption proposal at our September meeting and ask for your thoughts and answer any questions you might have.

I am looking forward to seeing you September 23<sup>rd</sup>.

## The Big Leaf Valley Proposal

As Pat has mentioned in her message to you this month, we will be discussing a proposal to adopt the Big Leaf Valley as a Chapter endeavor. WIARS member and Board of Directors President of Meerkerk Gardens, Don Lee, has presented the WIARS Chapter with a view of what this might entail, both financially and physically. His proposal states:

*"I suggest that the Chapter undertake a consistent, long-term commitment to maintain, continue development and finish the development of Jake's Big Leaf Valley. Both regular work parties 6 to 8 times a year and financial support, perhaps \$500.00/year after initial start-up expenditure for materials needed for the valley. The project has defined boundaries. It is certainly not overwhelming for our Chapter's work parties with pot luck lunches in spring and summer of 10 people or so to accomplish a great deal in a half year. They can keep weeds under control, the brook cleared, water system functioning, plants groomed, new additions made.*

*I envision a sign at each end of the valley that this is a project of the WIARS in memory of Jake. This would show the Chapter's community involvement, mission of education and furthering of the rhododendron genus.*

*I envision a well-kept crushed stone, wide path through the area. The cost this year would be around \$1000.00. Perhaps a boardwalk would be most practical in the long run. It would require higher costs over several years. Additional benches, signage, new addition of plant species would be worthy projects."*

We will discuss this proposal and eventually vote as a membership as to whether or not we should undertake this task. Keep in mind that it is more than writing a check or having a load of gravel dropped on site. These are relative easy things to accomplish. The real challenge for each of us is the commitment of showing up for work parties and pitching in. Keep this in mind when you raise your hand yea or nay.

## Special Thanks to All

I would like to thank you for the fantastic "basket" of goodies I "won" at the convention. I cannot tell you how much we have enjoyed all the things from Whidbey Island. When we moved there in 1992, Jim Ramsey came by and presented us with a Yaku Fairy. That was it.... we started planting "rhodies" & getting involved in the club. Although we have moved a lot in the past years, our collection grows as we move our best plants with us. It was a special treat to get Frank's 'Seaview Sunset'.

All the wonderful things in the basket have either been eaten or used already and they were such treats, especially when we have had company! I love the coasters & the note cards which I wanted to get at the shop but didn't have to after all. The mugs are being used every day. I also have a beautiful rhododendron bloom in one of my vases that will never grow old.

I know we paid for these baskets but you put so much thought into this one that we were thrilled. I could go on and on but just want to let you know how much I appreciated everything.

Thank you for your cleverness in putting this together..... you must have had us in mind, AND we will have you in mind every time we enjoy a cup of coffee or a walk in our garden to see what started on Whidbey by Jim Ramsey.

Sincerely, *Dee (L. Bob) Smith*, Cascade Chapter

# I'm Thinkin' Bulbs!

Gail DaPont

Here it is September and I should be thinking about getting the last few rhododendrons that need planting into the ground and putting the garden to bed for the winter. Instead I'm thinking **BULBS!** Catalogs for shrubs and perennials have been trying to tempt me into a purchase or two all summer but it's the bulb catalogs that linger in my hands amid sighs of desire.



There is nothing more uplifting after months of dreary winter than the sprouting promise of a snowdrop (*Galanthus*) or winter aconite (*Eranthus hyemalis*) in February. A few weeks later I know I'll see daffodils, primulas and early blooming rhodies.

Subconsciously this is when I start making my wish list, my theory being that you can't have enough bulbs. I'll make a quick note in my journal of the bulbs I need and the where I want to plant them so when the bulb catalogs start to appear in the mail I'm ready with pen in hand: Narcissi 'Quail' and 'Derringer' mixed together to cover the ground between rhododendrons 'Opal Luster' and 'Lemon Dream'; yellow species crocus would make a nice welcome planted in the lawn along the driveway (will the deer leave them alone?); blue alliums 'Azureum' might be striking among bunnera 'Jack Frost'; I think I'll try some species tulips along the woodland path... the wanting goes on.

Soon I realize that my planting ambition has grossly exceeded my budget so I whittle away at my list until it is in the same neighborhood as my pocketbook. It is always a challenge to sort out the bulbs I 'want' from the 'absolutely can't live without' but not to fear, there's always next year!

If you haven't considered bulbs in the garden give them some thought. They don't require any maintenance to speak of and you can plant just a few to get your feet wet or plant them in huge drifts. And if you're going to take the plunge into the bulb addiction, don't forget some fall blooming bulbs. *Colchicum speciosum* is starting to bloom now and *Cyclamen hederifolium* makes a lovely carpet of pinwheel-like flowers under tired rhodies to give them a bit of fall sparkle.

## Bulbs: What's the Difference?

GardenGate Magazine Oct '09

**Q.** I'd like some bulbs that'll grow in my lawn in early spring. What's the difference between bulbs that naturalize and those that perennialize?

**A.** A planted bulb that grows and blooms for at least three years in a row is considered a good perennializer. The same bulb regrows and may increase in size, but doesn't really spread. A bulb that will not only return but also multiplies and spreads in considered a good naturalizer. These work well growing in a lawn. When growing naturalizers in the lawn, try to let the bulb foliage turn yellow before you mow the grass in spring.

# Bulb Fun

Can you find the bulbs and blooming companions? Answers below.

- |           |                |           |          |
|-----------|----------------|-----------|----------|
| AZALEA    | DAFFODIL       | MAGNOLIA  | WISTERIA |
| DOGWOOD   | BLEEDING HEART | PEONY     | CAMELLIA |
| FORSYTHIA | PRIMROSE       | COLUMBINE | HYACINTH |
| SCILLA    | CRABAPPLE      | IRIS      | SNOWDROP |
| LILAC     | TULIP          | ALLIUM    | CROCUS   |



## \$ Table Reminder

Don't forget to bring those plants you've thinned out or just want to share for the dollar table. It gives you the opportunity to cast off those 'too much of a good thing' plants and others take home a new treasure for their garden.

Please submit articles of interest for **Oct** Newsletter by **10/14/09**

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Puzzle solution.

