

Siuslaw Chapter
American Rhododendron Society
PO Box 1701
Florence, OR 97439-0111



Photo: Sandi Jensen

September 2021

Macrophyllum

No Chapter Meetings for now

The Siuslaw Chapter has no in-person events scheduled in September, due to the coronavirus pandemic. Our meetings will be on hold until the powers that be in Salem and Washington give us the green light again.

See the [President's Message](#) for details.

Everyone please stay safe.

Inside this issue

President's Message	2
Other Western Chapters	3
Siuslaw ARS June picnic	4
Doris Cockeram	5
Harold Greer	6
Art of Observation	7
Calendar & Contacts	9

On the internet

- Facebook:
[Coastal Rhododendrons](#)
- Web site:
www.siuslawars.org

September 2021 President's Message

By Day Farrald

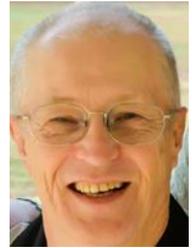
Greetings fellow Rhododendron enthusiasts.

It's hard to comprehend the difficult times in which we are living; uncertainty about what tomorrow may bring and the anxiety that comes with it. Our only recourse is to remain optimistic and anticipate a bright future.

And what better way to accomplish that positive outlook than enjoying the relaxing comfort of our gardens? Meandering through the random paths, searching for that flower bud on a special plant that has eluded us for the past three years, anticipating that outstanding trophy-winning truss or just appreciating the myriad differences in foliage.

But, please don't get too excited about those awards, if this year was any indication, I will win the most ribbons and accolades next year. Everyone I've encountered this Summer has professed to having the best trusses ever!

Before this resurgence of covid, we had a wonderful dinner at the Elks Club in celebration of our 50th +2 anniversary. Dr. Pinnock and Helen Baxter entertained us with a trip down Memory Lane, sharing great anecdotes about the early years of our Chapter. Of course, no reminiscence would be complete without a tidbit from Gene Cockeram. Our thanks go out to Bill Hennig for making the arrangements. On a more serious note, it has been decided by the Board, our in-person meetings will be put on hold until it is determined safe to gather again. Consequently, we will not have a pre-meeting dinner. (Don't pass GO, don't collect \$200.) We must all do our best to slay this microscopic dragon. Here's a little snippet. This Chapter in Florence, Oregon, with a population of only 9,000, has a membership of 86. That is fantastic and puts us in the top echelon of Chapters!



Because of the success of the virtual show, we will attempt to keep it interesting with a few presentations deserving a 'No Bell' prize. Thank you for your enthusiasm and participation. And remember, "Roots go down; Green part goes up."

*R. yuefengense from Ron & Cheryl Prchal
was our species Rhododendron of the Week of June 14-20*

You can still check out the virtual show at
https://1drv.ms/u/s!AqAxEq_Z8DoHqcqSQpBFc3VQAzXFwQ?e=Y9lu1W

Other Western Chapters

Other Chapter Websites

Eugene Chapter:

www.eugene-chapter-ars.org

Portland Chapter:

<http://rhodies.org>

SW Oregon Chapter:

Web site inactive

Willamette Chapter:

<http://arswillamette.com>

Tualatin Valley Chapter:

www.tualatinvalleyars.org

Eureka Chapter:

www.eurekarhody.org

Noyo Chapter:

www.noyochapterars.com

Eureka Chapter:

<https://eurekarhody.org>

Mt. Arrowsmith

Rhododendron Society:

<http://marsrhodos.ca>

All other web sites can be found at:

<http://rhododendron.org>

under chapters web sites

A Zoom Invitation from the Portland Chapter Dick Cavender on *Rhododendron occidentale: The Outlaw Species* Thursday, September 16 at 7:00pm

Dick is the Treasurer of the ARS Portland Chapter. He's a long-time member and a former railroad guy. He knows our lovely native *Rhododendron occidentale* inside and out.

Here's the ZOOM link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86153706368>

Meeting ID: 861 5370 6368

*Did you leave these forks at our
June picnic? Sandi & Larry Jensen
would like to return them.*



Siuslaw Chapter ARS Mission Statement

The mission of the Siuslaw Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society is to promote the genus *Rhododendron* by:

- ◇ Creating enthusiasm for the genus *Rhododendron* through meetings, shows, publications, and social activities that provide the opportunities for members to share experiences and build friendships.
- ◇ Providing educational opportunities to successfully grow and enjoy these wonderful plants.
- ◇ Encouraging propagation and hybridizing of species and hybrid rhododendrons.
- ◇ Furthering the planting and use of rhododendrons in home, business, and public landscapes.
- ◇ Advocating the conservation and preservation of superior plants of our native rhododendrons and the habitat along the Oregon coast.
- ◇ Advancing and supporting the mission of the American Rhododendron Society.

Siuslaw Chapter ARS June 2021 Picnic

The chapter got together at Sam Spayd's hangar at the Florence Airport for our annual picnic.



Photos: Myles Swift

Doris Mae Cockeram (1928—2021)



Doris was born on December 26, 1928 in Anacortes, WA. Her parents, Lillian and Elmer Hansen, eloped on Christmas Eve the previous year. Doris was expected to be a Valentine's Day baby but was born early. When she came into this world, she weighed only 2½ pounds. The hospitals did not have incubators in those days so her mother Lillian put her in a shoe box inside a larger box, lined that with bricks that were warmed in the oven and covered everything with a towel to keep Doris warm. Doris had to be fed with an eye dropper, but due to the perseverance of her mother, she survived. She was always a small child and had health issues. Early on she contracted pneumonia. She had to be kept back one year in school because she missed so many days. About high school age she contracted scarlet fever. She was quite slight, "toothpick" thin until after her fourth child was born. One of her goals in life was to reach 5 feet tall, but she only reached 4' 11¾".

Her family lived in the Puget Sound area and moved around a lot until her father Elmer moved the family to Reedsport, OR in the mid-1940s. In 1948, Doris graduated from Reedsport High School where she was a member of Quill and Scroll. She had earned a scholarship to Oregon State College (now Oregon State University) and her dorm room had already been picked out. However, those plans were changed when she fell in love with the milkman, Eugene Cockeram, and they were married on August 8 of the same year. The couple had a daughter, Carolyn, in late June the following year. She joked that people were counting their fingers. Fifteen months later another daughter, Janet, was born. The family moved into a new house on Highlands Drive upon her discharge from the hospital. Doris loved living in her new house surrounded by neighbors and high school friends, and a yard to garden in. A son, Gregory, was born in 1954 and a third daughter, Emily, was born a year and a half later.

In 1956 the family moved to two acres of land off North Beach Road on a half mile dead end road now known as Boy Scout Road. They "temporarily" lived in the "small house," what was later to become the garage of a split-level home. The pending National Park effort delayed the construction of the new house until 1962, when in order to keep the national government from turning the area into a national park, Dunes City was formed. Doris and Gene lived on the property until they moved into town in Florence in 2014.

Doris became the first Recorder for Dunes City in 1963. She worked nights as a Matron for the Florence Police Department from 1967 to 1972 and worked at the Westlake Post Office part-time for 9½ years.

Doris joined the Florence Garden Club in 1962, where she was an active member for many years, holding the office of president twice. She eventually became a Lifetime Member with the nearest member following 17 years later. She joined the Siuslaw Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society in Florence with her husband, Gene, and served as Secretary-Treasurer. She received a Bronze Medal for her service to the chapter.

Doris was an avid reader of mysteries and had an extensive collection of Agatha Christie novels. She watched *Perry Mason* faithfully for years, and later *NCIS* was her favorite television program.

Doris sewed many dresses for her daughters when they were growing up. She was also known for her needlework, knitting, and crocheting. She led a 4-H knitting group in 1958-59. She made afghans for each of her children as well as quilts for many of her grandchildren. She was noted for her well-loved sticky buns made for family gatherings and potlucks with the clubs she belonged to, including the 4 Cs campout group. Camping in what was once the pasture was fun for the campout group and the family.

Harold Eldon Greer (1945—2021)



Harold Eldon Greer, 76, passed away unexpectedly on August 10, 2021, while tending to his landscape and his beloved rhododendrons. Harold was born to Edgar and Esther Peterson Greer on May 21, 1945, in Greeley, Colorado. His family moved to Eugene, Oregon, when Harold was seven years old and shortly thereafter Harold was introduced to the world of plant materials, and specifically, rhododendrons, by his father. What began as a shared hobby between father and son soon became a business, Greer Gardens Nursery, originally located in the River Road area. In 1961, the family purchased a parcel of land on Goodpasture Island Road and moved the nursery to the site which would be home to the business for the next 50 years.

Harold graduated from North Eugene High School and attended the University of Oregon, but his passion from a very young age was plant materials and rhododendrons. As a teenager, he was the youngest person to be accepted into membership of the Eugene Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society and by the age of 22, he was the youngest person to ever be appointed as a Director for the American Rhododendron Society. His involvement with the international organization continued as he served in a progression of officer roles, culminating as President of the American Rhododendron Society, again as the youngest person ever to do so. Additionally, he served on many ARS committees throughout his lifetime.

Along with his love of rhododendrons, Harold possessed a talent for photography, another passion which continued throughout his lifetime. He had a very good eye for composition and color. Over the years, he photographed thousands of plant blooms, trusses, and leaves, which became the illustrations for the many articles and presentations he prepared. In addition, Harold wrote and illustrated several books about rhododendrons, the best known of which is “Greer’s Guidebook To Available Rhododendrons”. Harold loved to share his wealth of knowledge about the plant world but he was always striving to learn more. In addition to the American Rhododendron Society, he belonged to the Royal Horticultural Society, the Magnolia Society, the Camellia Society and he was a board member for the Rhododendron Species Foundation in Federal Way, Washington. Harold also loved to travel and he incorporated his thirst for knowledge into the many horticultural tours he and his wife, Nancy, led to Japan, New Zealand, Australia, Germany, France, England, Scotland, Ireland and the Scandinavian region over the many years of their life together.

In 2015, as Harold looked forward to retirement, he sold the Greer Gardens Nursery property to The Springs Living, a retirement and senior living company based in McMinnville, Oregon. Harold worked with the new owner, Fee Stubblefield, and his team at The Springs Living to envision and realize a multi-level retirement community on the property, surrounded by beautiful gardens containing the rare and unique rhododendrons Harold had collected and nurtured during his lifetime. An additional aspect of the new construction was a new home for Harold and Nancy’s comfort and enjoyment in their retirement years. The Springs at Greer Gardens will always remain as a reminder of Harold’s passion for rhododendrons and beautiful gardens.

Harold is survived by his wife of 55 years, Nancy (Scott) Greer; his sister, Elizabeth Montel, of Grants Pass; his sister-in-law, Linda Southwick, of Eugene; his nephew, Scott Reese and wife, Susan, of Eugene; niece Wendy Hitztes and husband, Will, of Denver, Colorado; niece Cassie Gaudette and husband, Brian, of West Point, New York; and numerous other nieces and nephews. A Memorial Service is being planned for a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Research Foundation of the American Rhododendron Society or to the Rhododendron Species Foundation of Washington.

The Art of Observation

by Kath Collier

One fine summer day, a group of board members waited on the porch at a new Chapter President's home greeting each other excitedly. Ted Van Veen, however, was looking at a small plant tucked near the entry.

He reached down and gently took a baby rhodo leaf between thumb and finger, and chuckled quietly. As the host welcomed us in, Ted turned to him and pointed at the plant "you're gonna want to move that."

That baby plant in its 2x2 foot planting space was 'Anah Kruschke' that grows quickly to 10 feet wide x 15 feet high. And, like other rhodos, much larger as it gets older.

Not everyone can identify a plant just by touching the leaf. Most of us struggle if we don't have a tag or two, garden map, or splendid memory of what we bought when.

The beginning of wisdom is calling things by their proper name.

—Confucius

Why know the name?

Maybe you don't need to know the plant name. If you just like plants, don't ever plan on participating in a plant competition, or propagating, or already know what the plant will do and what it needs...maybe you don't need to know the name. Most of us need a little help and the name opens doors to getting it.

Knowing the name helps one know what is normal for this particular plant. This applies both in size, root growth, light requirements, bloom, bloom time, and more. It is kind of nice to know these things for placing the plant in a location that complements the garden and meets the plant's requirements. I know, however, that there are a lot of us that just find a blank spot and grab a shovel, and hope for the best.

Having a name can also give you an edge in competitions. There is a reason why many plant shows give points (or take away points) for named plants. How can one judge perfection if you don't know what something is? Enough said. If you want to purchase a winning entry, knowing the name is critical.

Keep in mind that there are plant societies that won't even let you bring an entry to show and/or compete if it is not named properly. And then there are the unregistered, unnamed plants that folks propagate but never get a name for.

Five ways names get messed up

Losing a name tag is only the start of the various ways plant names can get messed up. Some other problems include:

- **Duplicates** – There are at least four different azaleas with the name 'Surprise' and the problems don't end there. Doing a bit of research before settling on the name could be rather beneficial for the rest of us trying to compare a Glenn Dale with a Knap Hill or other hybridizer's work.
- **Translations** – Many of our plants, and in particular, azaleas occur or were hybridized in a different country. As such the names are often translated from one language to another and errors can occur. A friend of mine liked the look of some Chinese lettering and had those symbols, seen on a sign, emblazoned on a tee shirt before translation. She was just a bit shocked to find out that they translated into "Fast" and "Hot" – good for food, not so good for wardrobe.
- **Pronunciations and spelling** – even when one tries to maintain the original names, they can be incorrectly pronounced and suffer from even worse spelling issues. Speaking and spelling words from a different language can create some very different meanings than the original owner intended. Just for fun search for translators and start with a foreign name such as Satsuki and change out a few vowels. This will give you an idea of how bad spelling could impact the meaning.
- **Foreign names may describe the plant or flower.** 'Issho no Haru' is translated into 'Spring of one life' even though the translator said 'Spring together.' Closely spelled 'Issho no Hana' or 'Flower of a lifetime' or for the one line translator 'Hana' suggested 'together over there.' I'm sure there could be some very interesting mis-translations that would make us wonder.
- **Origins** may be 'shrouded in mystery' or no one really knows from the get go where it came from or the name.

Naming plants is one way to educate the public and help them learn about the genus. Competitions and displays of flowers is an important step to helping educate the public and protecting our existence as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization in Oregon. Yes, we provide a variety of educational opportunities (shows, regular meetings, newsletters, etc.) that help strengthen this role and minimize our taxes.

The Art of Observation (continued)

When you don't know...

There are some new computer applications which allow you to take a picture of a flower and the system will search for the plant's name. It may not be totally accurate but that may just be a matter of time. I don't think it works with leaves, even though leaves can be a critical element when identifying a plant. Sometimes that is all you have. Here are a few tips for trying to identify a plant:

- **Note as many attributes about the unknown plant as you can** – sizes, color, texture, bloom time, leaf shape and color, etc. Pay attention to things that are unique, such as leaves with creamy white splotches on a Satsuki with varied bloom types showing purple. This description narrows down the options to fewer than 20. It is usually not that easy.
Other attributes to compare include:
Leaves – color, length, width, tip, stem, anything weird? Winter leaves, under leaves, hair.
Stem – color, length, strength
Plant – shape, size, % blooming, date blooming, growth shape (mounded, for instance)
Bloom -- number and shape of petals, stamens, colors (all of them), flower size, rebloom
Roots – shape, color, etc.
- **Ask about the history of the plant.** Where did it come from? People have been crossing azaleas, for instance, for well over 400 years and there are thousands of them. When a plant came on the market or was popular can help identify it as well.
- **Compare attributes and descriptions.** Generally, all of the attributes will need to match well for you to give the unknown plant a name. Even then it can be difficult to name because of the growth patterns exhibited on the East coast compared to the West coast. Nighttime conditions on the East coast can make azaleas grow VERY differently.
- **Check databases with pictures and descriptions.** This could include the [American Rhododendron Society](#) and the [American Azalea Society](#) sites and other online databases maintained by members.



Satsuki azalea showing unique stripes and sanding

I suppose in some cases we are just going to have to wait for some plants to go through a DNA identification process, such as 23AndMe or AncestryDNA® used for humans to truly identify and name a specimen. In the meantime, there's a plant in the garden named and registered as "I don't know." It looks good. Its name however tells the real story. Confession: I laughed at the name and bought it anyway. Take note, I have had to transplant it several times to try and figure out what it needs...

References and places to go:

Ito Ihei. *A Brocade Pillow*

Robert Z. Callaham. *Satsuki Azaleas for bonsai and azalea enthusiasts*

Fred C. Galle. *Azaleas Revised and Enlarged Edition* or newer

Jim Trumbly. *Propagating Multi-Patterned Satsuki* (https://www.azaleas.org/wp-content/uploads/azalean/38/2/articles/Propagating_Multi-Patterned_Satsuki.pdf)

Harold E. Greer. *Greer's Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons. Species & Hybrids*. Excellent place to look.

PlantNet is one of many free apps (application programs) for your smartphone for identifying plants. Other apps include: **iNaturalist** (free on Android and iOS); **Leafsnap** (free on iOS); **Plantifier** (free on Android and iOS); **iPflanzen** (free on Android and iOS); and **SmartPlant** (free on Android and iOS).

Check in with the associated plant society website for references and potential help. This applies to nearly every kind of plant. Even Wikipedia may be helpful in pointing the way.

Finally, check other collector databases such as: <http://rhodyman.net/rhodynev.php>

About the author: Kath Collier has been an ARS member for over 30 years, and served as PDX Chapter newsletter editor, President, vice President, and board member for many of those years. She also served at the Society level as the ARS Secretary, Budget committee member, and frequent Journal contributor. Currently she is helping create training courses for OSU Tourism & Business Devel. College Extension - Oregon Sea Grant, GORP program.

Calendar of Events 2021

September 16 Portland Chapter Zoom at 7:00pm
Dick Cavender on *Rhododendron occidentale*:
The Outlaw Species
Details [here](#).

Calendar of Events 2022

May 4—8 ARS Annual Convention
Note date change Portland, Oregon
Info [here](#).



ROTW June 14-20 deciduous azalea:
R. occidentale x *bakeri* from Floyd Hutchins

Chapter Contacts

President : Day Farrald - 2023
541-590-3161
day817@outlook.com

Vice-President: Bill Hennig - 2023
541-997-2489
billhennig40@gmail.com

Secretary: Kathy Bones - 2022
541-997-3082
kathybones@charter.net

Treasurer: Pam Guettler - 2022
541-991-9482
pamguettler@gmail.com

Past President: Larry Jensen
541-852-7031
sfuchsia@gmail.com

Board Members:
Mike Bones - 2022
541-997-3082
rhodies@charter.net

Debbie Peterson - 2023
541-997-1212
beachbabybaubles@gmail.com

Sandi Hennig - 2024
541-997-2489
flendish42@gmail.com

Sunshine: Sandi Hennig
541-997-2489
flendish42@gmail.com

Newsletter: Patricia Swift
pcswift@outlook.com

Publicity: Day Farrald
541-590-3161
day817@outlook.com

Dinner coordinators:
Sandi Hennig
541-997-2489
flendish42@gmail.com

Lee Goodenough
559-288-5658
secretlgood@gmail.com

Membership: Jo Ann Wilson
541-902-9780
nanabanana339@gmail.com

Webmaster:
webmaster@siuslawars.org