

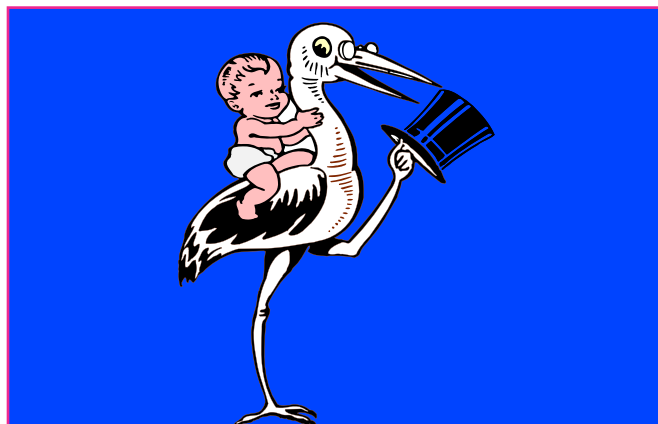
Eugene Chapter

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2009

CONTENTS

From the President	1
January Program	1
Editor's Byte	2
Yakkin'at the Old Tool Shed	3
Rhododendron 'Grayland'	4
Gerdemann Memorial	5
Thuya Garden	6
Did You Notice?	7
Chapter Calendar	8



FROM THE PRESIDENT

JANUARY 15 PROGRAM

I hope everyone had a great Christmas and that 2009 will bring a lot of blooms.

Our snow is gone but I hear that members at a little higher elevation still have some on the ground, this 2 days after Christmas.

I've been asked, "Should I brush the snow off my rhodies?" The very positive answer is "Maybe. It depends!" Galen experimented in Florence when we had snow and found that the wet snow could be shaken off if the forecast was in the 20's and low 30's. But if the forecast was 15° or down to minus 2 or below, the dry snow could be left on.

Heavy wet snow would break the branches; dry cold snow could cause bud damage and bark split. He tried leaving the snow on and shaking it off. Sometimes he got it right.

Oh, the joys of gardening! Helen

Gordon Wylie has traveled to Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland several times over the years, the last time while attending the International Rhododendron Convention in Edinburgh Scotland in May 2008.

So many places, so little time, so many gardens and so many photographs. The last time we saw Gordon, he was tearing his hair in anguish trying to select a title for his program, and choosing which gardens and which pictures to include in the 80 to 100 slides he likes to show at one time. So plan to be inspired by a beautiful slide show with Gordon's always witty and ever germane remarks.

Campbell Center, 115 High Street, Eugene
7:00 PM, January 15.

See page 8 for details of the evening.



THE "HIGHER ELEVATIONS"



R *esperatum*

President	Helen Baxter	461-6082
Vice President	Ted Hewitt	687-8119
Past President	Jack Olson	988-9133
Secretary	Paula Hewitt	687-8119
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Gordon Wylie	2006-2009
Terry Henderson	2007-2010
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Frances Burns	2008-2011

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Alternate Director	Rich Aaring	485-6013

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Hospitality Vacancy ~ Volunteer Needed!!

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Auction/Door Prizes	Rich Aaring	485-6013
Historian	Michael Robert	344-4391
Show Chairman	Leonard Frojen	485-0560

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ARS web site	http://ars.office.org	

HAPPY NEW YEAR!



VOLUNTEER!

YOUR CHAPTER NEEDS

A Hospitality Chairperson to welcome visitors at the door. If you like people, you will love this job and serve your chapter well.

**CALL PRESIDENT HELEN TODAY!
461-6082**

LIFE AT THE "HIGHER ELEVATIONS":

The McKenzie River rumbles past our front lawn and woodland in a brown muddy swirl. Flotsam from low-lying banks bobbles along in the water, rushing melting snow to the Willamette River in Eugene. There it joins a larger muddy flow to Portland and the Columbia River. If a floating log makes it that far without snagging onto something, the Columbia will carry it high and mighty to Astoria and the Pacific Ocean.

The foot of snow that fell well before Christmas has been loathe to leave, but a steady downpour of rain for the past few days has cleared the roof, and only 2 or 3 slushy inches remains. All the summer pruning of the rhodies and the big trees along the edge of the lawn has prevented a lot of snow damage. The one plant I felt compelled to rid of snow was the *Cornus involucrata* variagata with it's far-reaching linear limbs -- even one branch broken would be sorely missed.

A loud bang on the house woke me at 3 AM December 21. It sounded like snow sliding off the roof. (I wish!) Back to sleep. At daybreak we found the 56-year old English walnut tree split asunder from top to bottom, our power pole jerked out, taking the main wiring to the house with it. The power company warned it would be several days before they could fix it. So with hot wires down, no running water, no heat and -- you get the picture -- sons and daughters plotted via a conference call what to do with "Mothah". (That would be me.) With a few things stuffed in a bag, dressed in high boots and heavy coat, I was sent trudging over foot-deep snow and through the woods to daughter Nancy's house .2 mile over yonder. (To be utterly forthright, I was escorted.)

Nancy had electric power, two bathrooms and kitchen with hot and cold running water, 5 dogs, 3 cats, tomato soup and toasted cheese sandwiches ready. She shoveled snow at the barn, hauled water to her horses and dug out the driveway to the highway, while I sat on the couch with 3 lap dogs so *very* glad to see me. We watched the weather, Oprah and a movie. When Nancy returned to the house it was dinner time. A snow plow had cleared the highway, so, with stud tires on her 1985 CRX SI Honda with sunroof and well over 200,000 miles. Over the snow we dashed (laughing all the way!). -- fifteen miles to Aunt Ding's Cafe. It was virtually empty, but prime rib, garlic potatoes, salad, sauteed veggies and coconut cream pie never tasted better!

Arriving home safely, we retired early. Nancy with 2 cats, and I in the guest room with a guard dog, a Maltese, a Yorkshire terrier and a 20+ year old Macaw, Adeline, who rang her bell, hollered "Hello, Dear" in 5 languages, hung by her beak from her stand, upside down by her talons, and waved High Fives to me with her foot -- all tricks I once had taught her. One could say "my chickens had come home to roost". Out with the lights, no reading tonight!

By some miracle, while we slept, the power company relented, set a new pole and had the power on at Dunroamin by midnight! After a good breakfast with Nancy, "Mothah" waded home through the snow to join Mary, Douglas and Bogey dog in the little house in the country with no English walnut tree.

**You have to do your own growing
no matter how tall your grandfather was.**

Abraham Lincoln

While pruning hazelnut limbs I was forced to concede that some of the trees on the lower flat are just too tall for the pruning saw, even though it extends 17 feet and, with my reach, another 6 feet or so from the ground. Looking up into the canopy of the orchard got me to wondering which hazelnut tree is the world's tallest. Some hazelnuts have single trunks and are truly trees, but some varieties have multiple trunks, which makes them a bush no matter the height. Turns out that a Turkish hazelnut grows to a respectable 115 feet.

Looking over at MIL's garden I naturally started thinking about the tallest rhodies, so I went to the National Register of big trees for 2008 and looky here:

SPECIES	STATUS/YEAR	Circum- ference	Height	Spread
Catawba	<i>Rhododendron catawbiense</i> 2005	15 ft.	25 ft.	15 ft.
<i>Pacific</i>	<i>Rhododendron macrophyllum</i> 2006	37	24	21
Rosebay	<i>Rhododendron maximum</i> [dagger] 2005	28	28	36
Rosebay	<i>Rhododendron maximum</i> [dagger] 2005	31	28	28
Rosebay	<i>Rhododendron maximum</i> [dagger] 1981	28	34	28

The Pacific is the largest rhododendron registered, and it is located in Lane County, Oregon! After much searching on the Internet I found an article dated June 12, 2008 in the Coos Bay paper *The World*, which states that that tree is in the garden of Jeff and Wendy Grant, on the banks of Collard Lake in Florence. I went to the Oregon Heritage Tree Program website and found it was not listed. I figured that, if the website listed a shagbark hickory, a lilac, and pear trees (all smaller in size, but not in history), the Grant's tree should be listed there too. So I e-mailed Siuslaw chapter president Mike Bones, and he is looking into it.

Snow damage in the hazelnuts creates next year's firewood, so we will have an abundance this spring. The snow accumulation on the Persian walnut literally split the sixty year old tree in half right down the middle of its trunk. One side just managed to miss the chicken coop, while the other side took out the electrical pole. So, while the temperature was in the teens, we sat in front of a roaring fire waiting for Christmas AND the restoration of power. Thanks to EWEB, the pole was replaced and power was restored within 24 hours!

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? E-mail me at garden.projects@hotmail.com

TIPS FROM THE OLD TOOL SHED:

During the year, especially in winter, inspect your barbecue grill for proper operation and try to have an extra tank for emergencies. Everyone should have a special box or container for emergency supplies, and a good source for information is www.eweb.org Under ENERGY, click on Outages and Safety.

We at the Willamette Valley Hardy Plant Group believe that our two organizations serve complementary interests, and we would like to introduce more people to the information and experiences that we offer. To that end, we would like to offer to the members of the Eugene Chapter of the ARS a 25% discount on a new one year membership in the Hardy Plant Group. That's one year for new members at \$15 instead of \$20. Membership offers reduced rates for our monthly presentations, access to the new section of our website for members only which will launch February 2009, and member-only open gardens, trips and workshops.

Our memberships run from January through December of the calendar year and can be purchased at the door at any of our meetings or by sending a check for \$15 payable to the WVHPG, PO Box 5942, Eugene, OR 97405.

Please mention that you are a member of the Rhododendron Society if and when you apply for membership.

I've also included the press release for our January 13th meeting. We think that Claire Sawyers' talk will be applicable to all types of gardens – native, food-producing, or decorative.

If you have questions, **please contact me at 344-0896 or pam@bobwhitman.com.**

Sincerely,

Pam Perryman, President

pam@bobwhitman.com

541-344-0896

It was an elegant evening! Linda Wylie and Sandy Olson did a marvelous job of decorating with greens provided by Jack and holly provided by Paula Hewitt. The tables, including the long serving table were colorfully set. The buffet could not have been better and included appetizers such as stuffed mushrooms from Dick and Karen Cavender and Sushi made by Paula; ham, nicely baked by Rudy Fecteau, wonderful scalloped potatoes from Leonard Frojen, many salads and vegetables (which we sometimes find to be in short supply), and some decadent desserts including a rich chocolate cake, a carrot cake, and a cranberry cheesecake and too many more to sample all of them. As 6:00 PM drew near, it appeared that we might have a small attendance but several people arrived just as the 'begin to eat flag' dropped, filling four tables. A few more people arrived throughout the evening; totalling some 28 in attendance. Many thanks to all who made it a night to remember.

It is apparent that no lifetime is long enough in which to explore the resources of a few square yards of ground. Alice M. Coats

EUGENE PLANT GROUP OFFERS GARDEN DESIGN LECTURE

The Willamette Valley Hardy Plant Group will present Claire Sawyers giving an illustrated talk on Tuesday, January 13, 2009, at 7 p.m. at the University of Oregon, Agate Hall, at 18th Avenue and Agate Street, Eugene, OR.

Claire Sawyers, author and director of the Scott Arboretum at Swarthmore College, PA, has studied garden design and worked in gardens in the US, Japan, Belgium, and France. In her talk, *The Authentic Garden*, she will explain and illustrate five principles that help to make a garden that is true to a specific time, place, and culture. She will explain how to capture and reflect an authentic spirit so that the garden will nurture those who cherish and dwell in it.

The evening includes a mini clinic by Roger Gossler, of Gossler Farms Nursery in Springfield, about winter bloom, especially fragrant witch hazels. He will have nursery stock for sale. Doors open at 6:30 for refreshments and book sales, including copies of Sawyers' recent book *The Authentic Garden*.

Admission to this talk is free for members and \$6 for non-members. There is ample parking next to Agate Hall. For more information about the group or this event, contact Pam Perryman at (541) 344-0896.

Editor's note: The following article was written by Don Wallace for the October Eureka Chapter Newsletter edited by June Walsh. The flower was so interesting I asked permission to print the article for our Chapter. Thanks Don and June!

Plant of the Month:

RHODODENDRON 'GRAYLAND'

By Don Wallace



Photo by Don Wallace

"Grayland" is a new white rhododendron hybrid from Frank Fujioka that is, as yet, unregistered. The parentage is (Yaku Sunrise x Hansel) x Lem's Cameo and is a sister seedling of Rh. 'Starbright Champagne'. Frank thinks that the flowers are better on 'Grayland', but the foliage on 'Starbright Champagne' is superior.

We think they are both great! This new hybrid grows to 6 ft. in 10 years, and flowers very heavily every April-May. The flowers have unusual, deeply cut white petals that don't even look like rhododendron flowers, with red-orange in the throat.

The foliage is a nice medium green and stays on the plant for 2 years, which is the average. If you are going to have a "white" rhododendron in your garden, it should really be "Grayland".

If we persist, I do not doubt that by age 96

Or so we will all have gardens we are

pleased with, more or less.

Henry Mitchell

It is with sadness that I report the death of Jim Gerdemann of Yachats, Oregon last night (Dec. 19). He lived in Urbana, Illinois most of his life, retiring to the Oregon coast about 25 years ago where he created a magnificent garden. Many of you have visited his wonderful garden where he grew many rhododendrons and other plants that generally would not grow in that climate area. When he was in Urbana he grew plants that would normally be grown in warmer climates. On the Oregon coast he grew plants that would normally be grown in more tropical climates.

Jim passed away of age related causes and enjoyed his garden up until nearly the end. His garden will go on without him as it has been purchased and will be open at times as a private botanical garden.

A memorial service will be scheduled sometime after the New Year.

HAROLD GREER

Those who knew Jim Gerdemann and have visited his unusual garden have been fortunate indeed.

'ANNA'S RIPLET'

Hybridized by Halfdan Lem, was blooming in the Gerdemanns' front yard when a group from Eugene Chapter visited last spring.



This photo of 'Anna's Riplet' was taken by Frances Burns in her garden.

*To dig and delve in nice clean earth
Can do a mortal little hurt.
John Kendrick Bangs*

THE FOLLOWING HAVE VOLUNTEERED TO BRING COOKIES IN THE MONTHS AHEAD

January - Helen Baxter 461-6082

February - Leonard Frojen 485-0560

**March - JoAnn Napier 746-0828
Ray Klein 688-7786**

Any Volunteers to help Helen in January and Leonard in February?

BEATRIX

The Gardening Life of Beatrix Jones Farrand

1872 -1959

Published by Penguin Books

If one is interested in the English Garden heritage of which we Americans have been major beneficiaries, one cannot do better than to read the works of English author Jane Brown. Other enjoyable and informative books written by her are: *The Art and Architecture of English Gardens*; *Gardens of a Golden Afternoon*; *Lutyens and the Edwardians*; *Vita's Other World*; *the Pursuit of Paradise: A Social History of Gardens and Gardening*; *The Garden at Buckingham Palace*; *The Modern Garden*; *Tales of the Rose Tree*; and *Lanning Roper and his Gardens*.

Beatrix Farrand, who designed Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D. C. was "almost the female equivalent of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted" who designed Central Park in New York City. As mentioned in an earlier newsletter, she was instrumental in preserving many of Gertrude Jeckyll's drawings and writings. That was the beginning of Jane Brown's interest, but as an Englishwoman, it was extremely difficult because American Beatrix Farrand had systematically destroyed almost everything that would illuminate her personal history. Why? According to Jane Brown, it was because of the deep shame she felt from her parent's divorce. Her mother was an only child, as was Beatrix. Beatrix was the niece of the famed Edith Wharton, and her closest friends were in the upper echelons of English and American Society but only a few "safe" letters remain. It was the encouragement of Robert Grant Irving, the American author of *Indian Summer*, a story of two Englishmen, Lutyens and Herbert Baker and their work in New Delhi, that gave Jane Brown the courage to continue with the book. One of several reasons for writing it "is to divert (American) rose-tinted eyes from English gardens to a marvelous heritage of their very own." The book is beautifully illustrated and a real treasure to read.

FB

THUYA GARDEN NORTHEAST HARBOR, MAINE BY TED HEWITT

In the early part of the 20th century, Mt. Desert Island, along the coast of Maine, was a popular destination for people on the East Coast to vacation for an active life in the outdoors - hiking, fishing, and boating, all while enjoying the beautiful scenery. The wealthy and social elite had "cottages" in Bar Harbor but there were many who came to stay in country hotels or with families who had an extra room or two. Joseph Henry Curtis, a prominent Boston landscape architect, was one who came to stay with the family of Captain A.C. Savage on the edge of Northeast Harbor before Savage developed his property as the Asticou Inn. Mr. Curtis loved to hike through the surrounding mountains studded with exposed pink granite and with vast views over the off-shore islands. Eventually he purchased property that went from the harbor up into the hills and developed what became known as the Asticou Terraces, a series of winding pathways complete with rustic lookouts in which one could picnic while enjoying the views over the water. Where the hill leveled onto a shelf part way up the mountain he built a summer cottage which he named Thuya Lodge after the native white cedars of the area and planted an orchard behind. Even before Acadia National Park existed, he had the idea that this beautiful land should be preserved so he created a trust that would leave his property to the town of Mount Desert with money to have it maintained and open to the public.

Upon his death in 1928, the town officials appointed Charles Savage, the grandson of A.C. Savage and current proprietor of the Asticou Inn as the sole trustee of the property and, for the next twenty years, Mr. Savage maintained the Asticou Terraces with the goal of encouraging people to enjoy the beauty of the area, even opening Thuya Lodge with its outstanding botanical library to the public. Then, in 1955, when his friend and garden design mentor, Beatrix Farrand, decided to dismantle her wonderful garden at Reef Point, the family estate in Bar Harbor, Mr. Savage purchased many of her mature and unusual plants with the plan of developing and designing a garden himself. After completing the Asticou Azalea Garden in 1958, he started work on Thuya Garden in the old orchard behind Thuya Lodge.

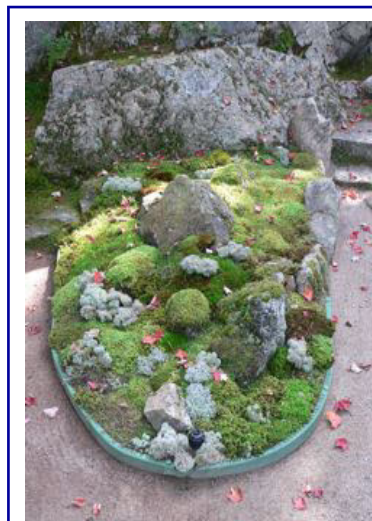
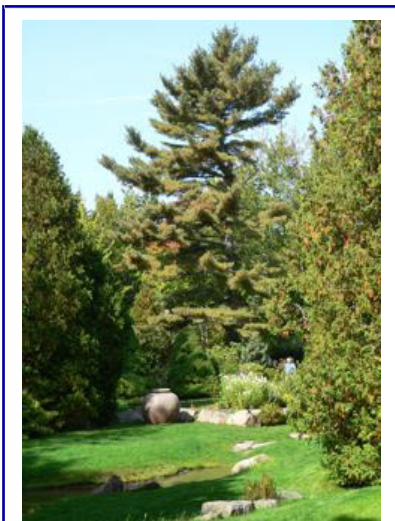
Today, one can approach Thuya Garden either by walking up the winding gravel paths of the Asticou Terraces or by driving up a narrow lane through the spruce forested hillside to a small parking area from where the garden is entered through a pair of wonderful wooden gates. Made of local white cedar and designed by Charles Savage each gate consists of twenty-four carved plaques depicting the flora and fauna of the area. As one enters the garden, one first sees the dwarf conifer garden on the right, forming a tapestry of color, texture, and form and anchored by two large *Picea pungens* albert spruce trees from Reef Point that mark the entry into the large, narrowly oval main garden. On the left, is the back lawn of Thuya Cottage edged with many rhododendrons, also from Reef Point, that must be beautiful in the spring. However, as Paula and I entered the garden in late September, our eyes immediately were drawn to the brilliant color of two long rows of perennial beds sweeping to the left and ending at a rustic pavilion in the distance. Even this late in the season, the mix of various shades of pinks and blues interspersed with white was beautiful. As we looked more closely at the beds, we found that various salvias, dahlias, lavatera, Joe Pye weed, hollyhocks, and verbenas all contributed to the color and texture of this English-style garden but there was also a mix of foliage colors of greens and grays. Within the borders we could see that many earlier blooming perennials had already been cut back indicating that the flow of color lasts from spring to fall. Between the long perennial borders is a strip of grass reaching back to the Upper Pavilion nestled at the edge of the forest and serving as a destination for the garden visitor who seeks a pleasant spot from which to view the major axis of the garden.



From the pavilion, we exited the garden through a small gate in the fence surrounding the garden to be back in the natural spruce-fir forest, finding a path that briefly shows the beauty of nature's garden before re-entering the garden through a lovely, latticed gate. Inside the garden again, the path meanders along the edge of the forest with the native mosses, shrubs, and trees on the left and the garden plantings of ferns and other Maine natives on the right. It is here that the naturalistic garden style of Beatrix Farrand becomes apparent as a transition from the native forest to the designed garden and, as we returned to the center of the garden, I became aware of the way the colorful flower borders of the garden are really centered within an oval bowl-shaped space within the forest. At the edges of the garden, as well as at the end of the borders, are many large, old rhododendrons that serve to transition the garden to the forest.

At the other end of the major axis of the garden, the design becomes a less-structured woodland garden where the crushed gravel path meanders past a natural spring and a prized dawn redwood from Reef Point to a delightful moss garden beautifully composed of green mosses, gray lichens, and lichen-spotted granite rocks that echoes the mosses, lichens, and rocks in the forest outside the fence. It is here that the memorial tribute to Charles Savage has been placed, at the edge of the garden before the rocky, granite slope rises again to the next ledge up the mountain. Finally the path returns to the entrance passing through a glade of old rhododendrons edged with ferns. However, even this part of the garden shows a number of more formal design features with views down grassy allees to a bench or a large, elegant, concrete Soderholtz urn capable of withstanding the harsh Maine winters.

Today both the Thuya Garden and the Asticou Azalea Garden are beautiful, vibrant, and alive gardens as a result of a series of caring and creative trustees and gardeners. For many years, John D. Rockefeller, Jr. provided financial backing for the endeavors of Charles Savage and now his son, David Rockefeller, has provided support for the Mount Desert Land and Garden Preserve that oversees the gardens. Each garden, though different from the other, serves as a monument to Charles Savage as a visionary for the landscape of Mount Desert Island and as a self-educated garden designer.



Did you notice the number of trusses on your rhodies this last year? At least at our place, we had more flowers than ever before and the least people visiting. Weather perhaps?

Did you notice the extreme weather we had this year? In the first part of may we had 105° in Roseburg. Very seldom does it get that hot even in August.

Did you notice the otherwise cool and damp weather during the time for hybridizing? I got only about 1/4th of normal, which isn't a lot. And even then not all the crosses I made took

Did you notice the bud set was lousy? It looks like there will be about half the trusses we had this year. Could it be the weather?

Did you notice that the rhodie and azalea leaves turned brilliant color before they fell? I had several calls on why that was. People though they needed more fertilizer. Weather perhaps?

Did you notice the magnificent colors on the native trees on the surrounding hills -- the most beautiful colors that I have ever seen in all my 78 years in Oregon. Oops, now you know; could it be the weather?

Did you notice the number of deer munching on your lawn, azaleas, rhodies and other shrubs? Most does had twins. Weather related?

Did you notice that we haven't been to the meetings at Eugene Chapter? Weather related? Not entirely -- perhaps a little because of our ages, I won't tell my wife's age, and if I did it wouldn't be related to the weather if I *never* made another meeting!

Did you notice, and I hope you did, because watching our rhodies grow and flourish in all kinds of weather is something we enjoy and I hope you do too!

**To create a little flower
Is the labor of the Ages.**

WILLIAM BLAKE

EUGENE CHAPTER
AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY
PO Box 7704
EUGENE, OR 97401

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2009
JANUARY

2009

CHAPTER CALENDAR

2009

JAN 15* EUGENE CHAPTER MEETING ON THIRD THURSDAY

5:30 PM No Host dinner for Speaker (all invited) at Bai Khao Thai Cuisine (736-8484)

Let Helen know you are coming so she can reserve a large enough table. 461-6082

541 W. Centennial Blvd. (in back on east side of Value Village Shopping Mall) **Springfield**

7:00 PM Refreshments at regular meeting, **Campbell Center**, 511 High Street, Eugene

7:30 PM Program: 2008 GARDENS OF GREAT BRITAIN

Slide Show by Gordon Wylie Guests welcome!

FEB 12 EUGENE CHAPTER MEETING; BACK TO 2ND THURSDAY

Panel Discussion: GROWING RHODIES IN POTS, Terry Henderson; MAKING CUTTING BOXES, Ted Hewitt;
and GRAFTING RHODODENDRONS, Galen Baxter

MAR 12 EUGENE CHAPTER MEETING

ANNUAL MEETING - NOMINATION & ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Program: GROWING WINNERS & SHOWING RHODODENDRONS, Mike Bones, Siuslaw Chapter

APR 11 EARLY SHOW & AWARDS BANQUET

The Electric Station, Fifth and Willamette

Speaker Don Wallace, Singing Tree Nursery Eureka

MAY 9-10 SPRING RHODODENDRON SHOW -- VALLEY RIVER CENTER

PLANT SALE - FAIRGROUNDS, MAY 9 ONLY 9 AM - 2 PM

*** NOTE OUR MEETING IN JANUARY IS ON THE THIRD THURSDAY!!**