AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eureka Chapter

The next meeting
Thursday April 24, 7:00 p.m.
Woman's Club
1531 J Street
Eureka, California

Pre-Meeting No Host Dinner 5:00
Roy's Club
Eureka, ***Call Nelda, 707-443-8049***
For a reservation so there will be enough seating

R. 'Taurus' is a triploid rhodo, photo from Bruce Palmer, see The Word of the Month

April 2014

Marathon Man, Rhodo Hybridizer, Bee Keeper

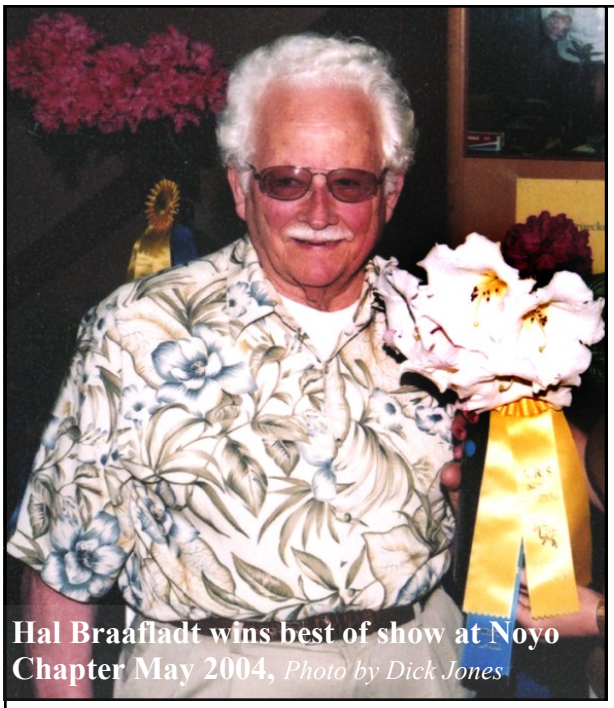
The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will meet Thursday April 24th at the Eureka Woman's Club 1531 J Street in Eureka. The guest speaker will be **Jack Olson** from **Eugene Chapter** in Eugene, Oregon.

In his own words "My program is, how Rhododendrons can be used in one's garden, as perennials. I will show many of the perennials that I grow with other companion plants. I will show some favorite trusses, the various foliage, and how Rhododendrons fit into the garden.

I bought my Mom a *Rhododendron* 'Britannia' in 1961. When I purchased my house in 1970 I bought three Rhododendrons from Edgar Greer, *R. macabeanum*, *R. arboreum*, and *R. sutchuenense*. I joined the American Rhododendron Society in the early seventies and later became a life member. I grew my first seedlings in a cottage cheese container on my television. I moved to Rocky Knoll in 1999 where I have a three acre garden. I grow hundreds of seedlings every year, I am looking for some great Rhododendrons. I have named 4 of my seedlings and have about ten more to name. I will not name a plant unless it can win a trophy at a flower show. All my named varieties are trophy winners.

I got my BS degree at Oregon State University, and my Masters at Oregon. I wrestled at OSU, and earned my letter. I was inducted into the Wrestling National Hall of Fame in 2003, as a wrestling coach (I coached for 30 years). I have run 25 Marathons, two of which were Boston. I have traveled to many places around the World. I run two miles everyday, and have a work out, in addition to my gardening. I have bees, and get my honey every fall, and always make a batch of mead. Life is great, I am happily married to Sandie, I have four children and eight grand-children." *Photo of Jack with a honeycomb, submitted by Jack*

Photos are those of the Newsletter editor, June Walsh, unless otherwise noted. Permission is granted to reprint any portion of this publication provided credit to the author and Chapter is given.



Hal Braafladt wins best of show at Noyo Chapter May 2004, *Photo by Dick Jones*

REMEMBRANCE OF HALVOR BRAAFLADT, M.D. (1926—2014)

By Paul Anderson, M.D. (a Founding Member of the Eureka Chapter)

I was fortunate to meet Dr. Hal Braafladt of Eureka in 1976 when I moved from Bellevue, Wash. to Eureka. I found him to be an excellent plants person with an expert knowledge of the genus Rhododendron. He had an interest in growing Rhododendron species from seed and patiently waited for the large-leafed Rhododendrons to flower. He also had a spacious garden, greenhouse, and a lath house! Hal enjoyed offering tours and providing plants for anyone who showed an interest.

Dr. Braafladt was an excellent mentor to become familiar with the tender Rhododendron species which he was very knowledgeable and enjoyed hybridizing. Some of the plants he hybridized and named are: 'Hope Braafladt', 'Humboldt Sunrise', 'Patricia Marie', and 'Super Jay'.

Dr. Hal Braafladt was a good Rhododendron friend of Dr. Richard Anderson, also of Eureka, who also hybridized and named a number of Rhododendrons. When Dr. Anderson passed away, his Rhody enthusiast friends started the Richard Anderson Rhododendron Club.

Dr. Hal Braafladt started a Rhodie Show as part of Eureka's Rhododendron Festival in 1974. The Rhododendron festival was started in 1967 and featured a week-long schedule of events. Dr Braafladt organized and provided many plants for the Rhodie Show which was held in an outdoor covered display area at Redwood Acres. He would invite members of the Richard Anderson Rhododendron Club to help transport plants in bloom for the display and assist with providing information at the show.

Dr. Braafladt became a life member of the American Rhododendron Society in December 1976. The Richard Anderson Rhododendron Club decided to form the Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society in 1984. Hal became the first Vice President.

Dr. Braafladt enjoyed displaying blooms at Rhododendron Flower shows held by other chapters. He and I took several trips to enter blooms in the Portland Chapter and Eugene Chapter shows. Fortunately the climate in Eureka always had an earlier bloom and our trusses usually placed well adding to the educational content of the other chapters' shows.

One of the highlights of having Dr Braafladt host the Rhododendron meetings at his home was the opportunity to tour his beautiful garden. One year he invited a touring group from New Zealand to have a dinner hosted by the Eureka group at their home. The NZ group lead by Graham Smith of Pukeiti was a delightful group to meet and they enjoyed a banquet which included some local steelhead trout for the dinner.

We are greatly indebted to Dr. Hal Braafladt for his interest and knowledge in promoting the genus Rhododendron so expertly in the Eureka area, and we will greatly miss his kind, friendly companionship in the quest of growing such beautiful plants.

Founder of Eureka Chapter among his hybrids in his back yard 1982
Photo by Paul Anderson

Editor's note: Hal is survived by his wife, Denise and their large family. Hal and Denise sang in the choir at Christ Episcopal Church and often went to choir rehearsal then came to the Rhodo meeting on the same night. Hal loved to make wine and we were among those who got to taste along with his fellow vintner and Rhodo members Mike and Audrey Bode. ***Memorial services will be held May 3rd at 2:00 at Christ Episcopal Church at 15th and H Streets, Eureka.***

The 42nd Annual Rhododendron Show and Plant Sale

By Mary Marking

It's that time of year: the temperature has warmed up, Rhodies are blooming and the annual Rhododendron Show and Plant Sale is in just a few days!!!

Location: Miles Hall, St. Bernard's Elementary School at 115 Henderson Street, Eureka, California.

Open to the public: **Saturday April 26th from 10 to 3 and Sunday April 27th from 10 to 3**.

You and your friends, relatives, neighbors and the public are encouraged to participate in the show. Membership is not required to participate.

Entries will be accepted for display from 5 PM until 8:30 PM on Friday, April 25th and from 7:30 AM until 9 AM on Saturday, April 26th. No entries will be accepted after 9 AM.

Set up will begin at 3:00 PM on Friday the 25th for those of you who are planning to help.
This year we again will have the hall all to ourselves. In order to have a great show **we need everyone to participate by bring in at least 3 trusses.** Can you imagine how wonderful the tables will look? We will need help with filling the bottles, setting up the room with tables, risers, covers and signage. You can also bring your trusses, plants, educational displays, flower arrangements and photos at that time but they will not be accepted for display until the room is ready. **Be sure your trusses have plenty of water** and the stems are cut long enough to allow the most water to get into the truss. If you haven't signed up to help and have some free time you are more than welcome to come and help. The more help we have the faster it gets done.

Anyone can enter Trusses and Plants, Photography, Educational and Flower Arrangements. If you have a special plant that can be dug or is in a pot, bring it in. Also, don't forget there is an **Education Class**. We have had some really interesting displays in the past. The **Photography Exhibit** has been a well-filled section. **Be sure the photos are matted and not framed**. We have added this year a **Youth Class** for anyone 16 years of age and under. This class will accept Rhodies and Azaleas both trusses and sprays, and arrangements. Please see the rules.

Margaret Cole will be happy to receive any and all entries for the **Flower Arrangements**. This year we changed the groups so please check the rules. We should have the table at the front of the hall simply full of arrangements. To ensure that there is enough space please email (mscole2002@suddenlink.net) or call (707-822-8353) Margaret to reserve your space by the end of the April 24th Chapter meeting.
Remember, even if you don't believe your flowers are "good enough" for judging, bring them anyway. They will look great as examples of the type of rhododendron we have in our area. We need as many we can get. This is a great time for everyone to participate, bring your family, friends and neighbors.

Tear Down will begin at **3:00 Sunday April 28th. You can start removing your entries at 2:30.** All entries not removed **will be discarded after 3:00. When we are finished participants will be served pizza for their diligent hard work.**

Word of the Month, *By Bruce Palmer*

This month's word is **POLYPLOID**. It comes from the Greek *polys,* many, and the Greek combining form *ploos*, fold. Thus, **polyploid** means many fold. We discussed it three years ago, but it bears repeating just before the show because many of the prize-winners are polyploidy. The polyploids may or may not be characteristic of the form as called for in the judging rules, but they are usually quite striking.

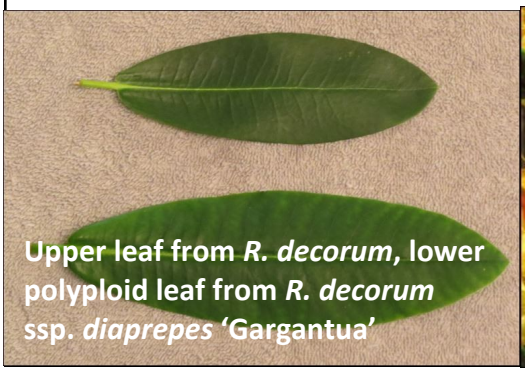
Let's review what polyploidy means. The variety of forms in nature is mediated by sexual reproduction. That's what sex is for (variety) not for fun, despite the rewards for higher animals. The characteristics we see in living organisms are controlled by **genes** (a contraction of pangene, from the Greek *pan*, universal, and *genes*, universal or something that produces). The term pangene originated in the nineteenth century when scientists believed that characteristics of cells were shed into the blood and absorbed by sex cells (sperms and eggs), thus "bad blood". We now know that a gene is a strip of DNA that controls a specific characteristic in an organism. In general, a characteristic is controlled by two genes, one inherited from each of two parents. Each of these genes is on a separate long strip of DNA called a **chromosome** (Greek, *chroma*, color, and *soma*, body). An old photo of buttercup root cell chromosomes I took many years ago shows this characteristic as the first illustration.

There are many exceptions among plants, animals and other organisms, but for our purposes we can say that cells in plants and animals have chromosomes in pairs. This normal situation for cells is called **diploid** (Greek *dis*, twice, and *ploos*, fold). Somatic (Greek *soma*, body) cells, those that do not carry on sexual reproduction, reproduce cells like themselves by duplicating the DNA in chromosomes, lining the chromosomes up in a row and separating the two duplicates to produce two new cells with the same number of chromosomes as the parent cell. This process is called **mitosis** (Greek *mitos*, thread).

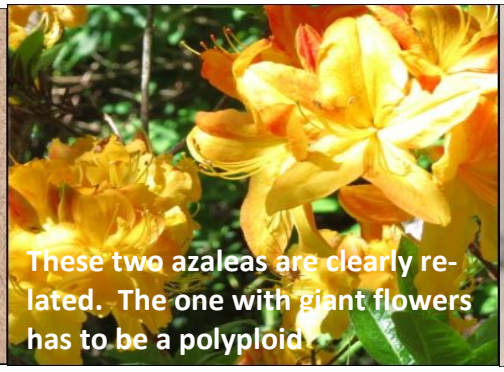
For cells that carry on sexual reproduction, the process (called **meiosis** from the Greek *meioun*, to make smaller) is similar but has extra steps that produce cells with single chromosomes instead of paired ones. When two of these **haploid** cells from two different organisms of the same species combine the result is a **diploid** cell that can reproduce myriad times and specialize to become a multi-celled organism.

That's what is supposed to happen, but the steps often get fouled up We call cells and organisms with multiple sets of chromosomes **polyploid**. When polyploidy occurs during development in higher animals such as humans, it is usually fatal. A large percentage of human miscarriages are probably caused by this problem. In plants it is another story. All sorts of polyploid combinations can occur and do so regularly in nature. It appears that polyploid plants in a given species are hardier in nature than diploid plants; the polyploids survive better at the edges of the ranges of native plant species than do diploids. Polyploid plants in general have larger leaves, flowers and fruits than diploids. The second illustration shows a leaf at the top from *Rhododendron decorum* as normal size. The lower, larger leaf is from *Rhododendron decorum* ssp *diaprepes* 'Gargantua', a polyploid.

We take advantage of polyploidy in agriculture. The original tomato is smaller than the grape tomatoes we get in the grocery store; the larger the size the more chromosomes. Wheat, corn and watermelons are all polyploid. For the last fifty years or so, polyploidy has been induced artificially using the gout drug colchicine and other substances. The same holds true in ornamental plants. The Title Page photo is the hybrid R. 'Taurus', often a winner at the show. 'Taurus' is a **triploid**, the result of the union of a **haploid** and a **diploid** sex cell. 'Taurus' has been described as "the red by which all other reds are judged", but plants like this with odd numbers of chromosomes tend to get fouled up when they produce sex cells and are notoriously hard to use for hybridization. On balance, though, **polyploidy** produces great ornamental rhododendrons that we can enjoy for their great foliage and large, showy flowers. Let's hear it for "Horizon Monarch", "Grand Slam", "Taurus", "Lem's Monarch", "Point Defiance", "Supernova", all of the *R. maddennii* and many other great **polyploids.**



Upper leaf from *R. decorum*, lower polyploid leaf from *R. decorum* ssp. *diaprepes* 'Gargantua'



These two azaleas are clearly related. The one with giant flowers has to be a polyploid.

Chromosomes in the root of a buttercup just before mitosis.

Blue Bells, *Scilla hispaniea*

Oh, how fresh the wind is blowing!
See! The sky is bright and clear,
Oh, how green the grass is growing!
April! April! are you here?
–Dora R. Goodale (1866–1953)

Plant of the Month
Rhododendron 'Horizon Jubilee'

By, Don Wallace

This is another fine rhododendron from Dr. Ned Brockenbrough who brought us *R.* 'Nancy Evans', *R.* 'Horizon Lakeside', and *R.* 'Horizon Monarch'.

The plant is considered a polyploid, which means it has thicker stems and leaves, and a bigger flower. Some other polyploid rhododendrons that have these qualities include *R.* 'Pink Walloper', *R.* 'Point Defiance', and *R.* 'Horizon Monarch'. Polyploid means there are more chromosomes in the plant, which also makes the plant more resistant to pests and diseases. I would also say they are more drought tolerant.

R. 'Horizon Jubilee' is new to us and the plant world, but I think that it will become very popular because of its attributes. The flowers are big and showy and sit atop of a perfect whorl of leaves. The buds open medium pink and then become pale yellow with a bright pink edge, in clusters of 15. This new hybrid blooms at the same time as *R.* 'Horizon Monarch' so would be a great companion plant and a lovely show of flowers. *R.* 'Horizon Jubilee' is a tetraploid. (see The Word on page 4).

Baby Blue Eyes, ***Nemophila menziesii***

Himalayan Blue Poppy, *Meconopsis baileyi*

Who says you can't grow Peonies in Eureka?

Eureka Chapter is published monthly except during July and August.

Submissions from members are encouraged and should be mailed to June Walsh, Bulletin Editor, 2050 Irving Drive, Eureka, CA 95503-7022.

Membership information and applications are also available from June Walsh.

Eureka Chapter is a member of the Humboldt Botanical Gardens Foundation, Eureka, Calif., and The Rhododendron Species Foundation, Federal Way, Wash.

Eureka Chapter is a chapter of the American Rhododendron Society.

Eureka Chapter/American Rhododendron Society
2050 Irving Drive
Eureka, CA 95503-7022

Future Programs

April 24, 2014	**Jack Olsen, Companion Plants for Rhodos**
April 25 to 27, 2014	Rhodo Show and Sale
May 16 to 18, 2014	ARS Spring Convention, Cleveland, Ohio
May 22, 2014	Mini Show and Potluck
June ?, 2014	Member Garden Tour and Potluck Picnic
July and August	Weed and Water!
September 18, 2014	***This is a date Change! Bruce Palmer, native plants of Hawaii, Potluck Luau, Hawaiian shirt contest***
Sept. 26-28, 2014	**Western Regional Conference, Everett, WA**
October 23, 2014	To Be Announced

MEMBERS-ONLY PRE-SALE SALE

FRIDAY, APRIL 25TH, 5:30 TO 8:00 AT ST. BERNARD'S SCHOOL

MEMBERS-ONLY! MAY PURCHASE PLANTS AS THEY COME OFF THE TRAILER.

SPECIAL MEMBERS-ONLY PRICING.

NOT A MEMBER? JOIN AT THE PLANT SALE.

Nominations for Eureka Chapter Officers and Board Members
September 2014 to June 2015

President, Jerry Reynolds
Vice President, Pat Chaney
Secretary, Gail Ledbetter
Treasurer, Tim Walsh
Director at Large, Nelda Palmer
Newsletter Editor, June Walsh
Publicity, Ellie Gayner
Past President, Bruce Palmer
Programs, Don Wallace
Membership, Max Abrahamsen
Show Committee, Tom and Mary Marking

For board member contact information or if you are interested in attending a board meeting, call or email June Walsh 707-443-0604