

AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

Eureka Chapter

In-Person
Thursday April 28, 7:00
p.m.
Woman's Club
1531 J Street
Eureka, California

OR

By Zoom
To join the Zoom meeting
click this link:
<https://zoom.us/j/99120170578>



Eureka Chapter
American Rhododendron Society

Rhododendrons
in the Redwoods

April 2022

Fragrant & Fancy Rhododendrons

*The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society will meet in person and by Zoom on Thursday, **April 28, 2022**. The meeting and program will be held at the Eureka Woman's Club 1531 J Street in Eureka beginning at 7:00 P.M. Masks are optional, there will be no provided refreshments. You are welcome to bring your own. For those attending by Zoom link, see link above.*

Long-time Eureka Chapter member Don Wallace will give a program titled **Fragrant & Fancy – Bringing Fragrance into the Showiest Rhododendron Flowers**. In Don's program he will discuss what causes fragrance in flowers, and why it is desirable. A discussion of the different fragrant species and who discovered them leads into the idea of producing new hybrids with fragrance and colorful, showy flowers. Using literature to discover which cultivars will be the best parents for these new hybrids is shown with several examples. Finally, Don will list his favorite fragrant rhododendrons that are also available in nurseries today.

Don Wallace is the owner of Singing Tree Gardens, a small retail nursery, located in McKinleyville, California. Over the past 20 years Don has planted, propagated, hybridized, and grown from seed many rhododendrons. He is the past president of the Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society, and participated as one of the Show Chairmen at international ARS Conferences in Eureka in 1993, 1999 and 2017. Don has been involved in photography for 25 years, he travels each year to photograph many gardens up and down the Pacific coast. Currently, Don is active in hybridizing rhododendrons for fragrance, as well as new and exciting colors of flowers. Don was the recipient of the ARS Silver Medal in 2017 for his outstanding contribution to bringing knowledge about Rhododendrons to the Society and the public at large.



This will be our first in-person meeting since February 2020! If you can't be with us in person please join us by Zoom.

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.

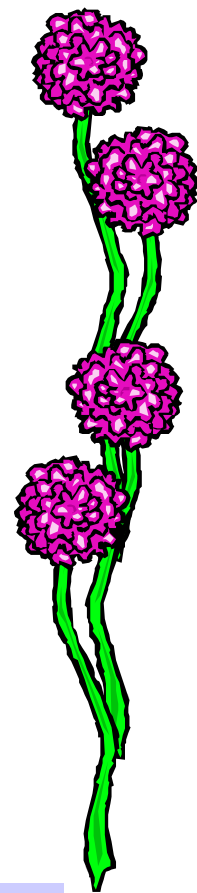
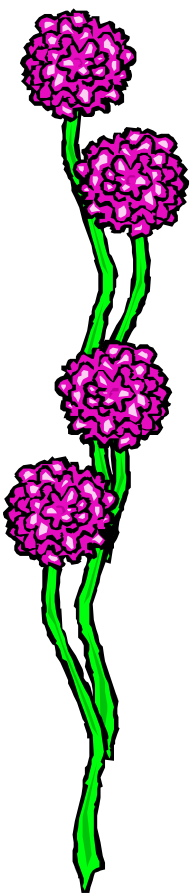
Buy Plants

The Eureka Chapter, American Rhododendron Society has plants available at very charming prices. Members and nonmembers are welcome to purchase. MEMBERS get the BEST prices! Member prices from \$8 to \$10

Non Member prices \$12-\$15, Become a member, get a free plant!

Many of the plants are in full bloom right now. They would make a great early Mother's Day or Father's Day or Family's Day or Friend's Day gift with many years of beauty to come.

Email RhodyHostel@suddenlink.net or call 707-498-2337 to make an appointment to come SHOP, SHOP!



**"Flowers
always
make people
better,
happier, and
more helpful;
they are
sunshine, food
and medicine
for the soul.."**

-- Luther Burbank 1849-1926

(he who brought us
Himalayan berries [Rubus armeniacus](#))



R. ponticum in a yard in Arcata

Plant of the Month ***Rhododendron ponticum*** *By Don Wallace*

A large growing species of rhododendron from central Europe that has a reputation of being invasive. However, here in coastal Humboldt County they grow large, but are not invasive. I think that when they make and drop seed it is too dry here for the seed to germinate. You have all seen the large specimens here along the freeway north of Trinidad that never get any care

and are lovely. The plant will grow to 12 ft tall in 10 years, and will flower in May - June. The flowers typically are a light purple, and sometimes have a gold eye. We consider this plant as a 'Big as a House' type.

Member Garden Tours

May 1st Noon to 3:00 p.m., May 22nd Noon to 3:00 p.m. and June 5th 1:00

On May 1st, Noon to 3:00 p.m., the Eureka Chapter Hosts Tours of Moss Family Temperate Woodland Garden at Humboldt Botanical Garden. Bring your own picnic. Curators Tim and June Walsh will be available for tours of this young garden where Eureka Chapter members planted the first trees, *Magnolia denudata*, in March 2008. There will be a vehicle available to get our members who need help, up the hill. **7707 Tompkins Hill Road,** south of Eureka Highway 101 exit 698. Dogs on leash OK

On May 22nd, Noon to 3:00 p.m., Don Wallace has invited Eureka Chapter members to tour and view his garden, Singing Tree Gardens. Don started his nursery business in 1992 as a hobby. It has grown into his passion and livelihood. Wander the beautiful paths to see the interesting mix of rhodos, flowering trees, conifers and specialty plants to give you inspiration for your own garden. **5225 Dow's Prairie Rd. McKinleyville** north of Arcata/Eureka Airport Highway 101 Exit 725. Please no dogs.

June 5th, 1:00 p.m. meet in the parking area at Stagecoach Hill Azalea Reserve, see our native Rhododendron occidentale at its peak. North of Big Lagoon at Kane Road,

The Eureka Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society has established a scholarship for Journalism majors at Cal Poly Humboldt to continue the legacy of Jerry Reynolds.

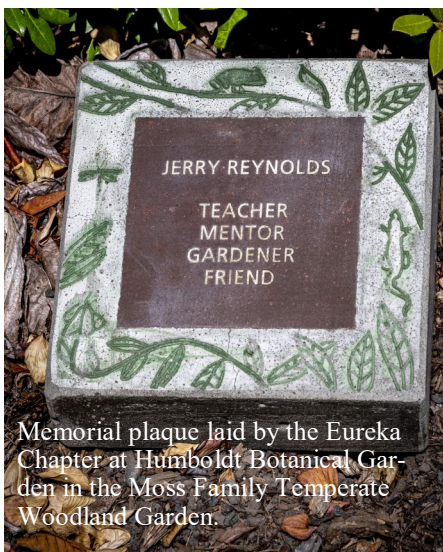
About the American Rhododendron Society (ARS) The Eureka Chapter of the ARS is one of the largest and most successful Chapters in the 51-Chapter International Organization. The Eureka Chapter was established in 1984 and currently has over 100 members. The Eureka Chapter's Board of Directors has established a Scholarship to honor Jerry Reynolds.

About Jerry Reynolds Jerry Reynolds was an active member of the Eureka Chapter of the ARS. At the time of his death, November 17, 2015, he was the Eureka Chapter President. For many years he was the Rhododendron Show chair and the editor of the Eureka Chapter's newsletter. The members of the Eureka Chapter have fond memories of his kind, welcoming nature. He loved a good story—whether he was listening or telling one. Always curious, he encouraged people to share their ideas. He had natural leadership skills; he could size up a situation and identify what needed to be done, in a calm, effortless style.

Jerry retired to Arcata after being the editor of a major Southern California newspaper, *The Torrance* (Calif.) *Daily Breeze*. His idea of retirement was to teach part-time at Humboldt State University in the Journalism & Mass Communication Department including Investigative Reporting, Editing, Desktop Publishing, and adviser to *The Lumberjack* Newspaper Workshop and *Osprey Magazine* Workshop. He also worked part-time in Eureka for *The Times Standard* newsroom, primarily writing editorials. Jerry was technically a journalism department "lecturer" (using the HSU terms), not a professor. But he was a gifted teacher, willing to take on the challenging roles of adviser for the *Osprey Magazine* and then adviser of *The Lumberjack*. Students loved taking his Desktop Publishing class, where he introduced them to Adobe software InDesign and Illustrator and how to create e-newsletters and design the *Lumberjack* news pages. Students and faculty alike relied on Jerry's problem-solving skills on all things related to the Macintosh computer and its software. He was an avid gardener. He developed a special passion for the many varieties of rhododendrons and azaleas, both in his own garden as well as at the Humboldt Botanical Garden's Moss Family Temperate Woodland Garden. There, he was a loving member of the *Wild Weeders* and *Grateful Deadheaders* volunteer gardening teams. Read more about Jerry here <https://eurekarhody.org/newsletters/2016/2016%20Eureka%20Chapter%20Newsletter%20-%20January.pdf>

The Jerry Reynolds Memorial Journalism Scholarship

The Eureka Chapter will offer an annual scholarship of \$1,500 to the successful applicant majoring in Journalism at Cal Poly Humboldt. This scholarship is administered through Cal Poly Humboldt's Journalism Department & Mass Communication Department. The recipient will be invited to produce a story on a relevant topic about rhododendrons that can be used for the society's website, newsletter and/or other media sites.



Memorial plaque laid by the Eureka Chapter at Humboldt Botanical Garden in the Moss Family Temperate Woodland Garden.

Editor's note: Those of us who knew Jerry and were mentored by Jerry believe that he would be very happy, indeed, by this scholarship in his honor.



Jerry volunteering at Humboldt Botanical Garden in the Moss Family Temperate Woodland Garden.

Eureka Chapter Member Profile



Joan Elking with her Yak

Joan (“Jo ann”) Elking, Wife, Mother, Grandmother, Gardener

Joan is a long-time Eureka Chapter member, but she allows that her husband Barney who passed away in 2014, was the one originally interested in rhododendrons. She was raised in the house her family built in 1898 in Fortuna on Main Street. Her garden has plants that her family planted when the house was new and many that she and Barney added.

Her favorite rhododendrons are ‘Horizon Monarch’ and *Rhododendron yakushimanum* (now called *Rhododendron degronianum* subsp. *yakushimanum*). Joan’s favorite garden outside of her own is the world famous Butchart Gardens on Vancouver Island, British Columbia.

Joan writes, “I should tell you the story of our *Rhododendron yakushimanum*. Barney was able to buy a small one around the time they became available to the public around 1967. He put it in a small wooden pot. Then in 1969 he accepted a 2-year job in Southern Chile, he left the plant in its pot with his mother in Fortuna for those 2 years, plus one year while we were in Eureka. Then he accepted a 10-year, plus one, job in Saskatchewan and Alberta, Canada, and a year in Seattle. Before we left he put the ‘yak’ in a larger wooden pot. Then we came home. But, we still moved. We were several years back in Fortuna. Then Barney took a job in Arcata so we built a house on some property we had which, backed on the Arcata Community Forest. We managed to get the yak and her pot in the back of the truck and away to Fortuna. We had the yak with us through these moves, being planted in larger wooden pots when needed. We were in Arcata for 12 years and we didn’t plant her in the ground because the soils were mostly clay and thin. She sat next to the redwood forest and I used to sit beside her when she was blooming and just enjoy her beauty.

After those 12 years she and her pot had become one and I had inherited the family home where I grew up back in Fortuna. Barney had retired by then and we said this is it. We are not moving again. We chose a place in the front yard next to a *Rhododendron* ‘Pink Pearl’ which my grandfather and grandmother had planted about 1942. We dug a big hole for the Yak and her pot. So far, so good. She is about 55 years old now and still beautiful as ever. Last week I gave her 2 cups of fertilizer and a good drink.”

Editor’s note: Tim and June Walsh visited Joan on a sunny April day to take her picture (above) with her cherished Yak. Her home is surrounded by a lovely garden filled with many rhododendrons, azaleas, viburnum, spring bulbs and an orchard.

Please share YOUR story by sending to RhodyHostel@suddenlink.net or call June!

WORD OF THE MONTH: BRACT

By Bruce Palmer

Our rhodie truss buds are swelling, with a few of them opening to bloomin' bloom. They should be on time and in great abundance this year if we can judge from the buds. Most of the buds are still tight and are covered and protected by **BRACTS**, the word of the month. **Bract** in this context is a modern botanical Latin term but it derives from the Latin *bractae*, a term used by the Romans to describe a very thin sheet of metal such as gold leaf. **Bracts** are modified leaves used for purposes other than photosynthesis. **Bracts** usually, but not always, tend to be smaller and thicker than photosynthetic leaves. Typically their function is to protect tender buds, either leaf or flower buds. In our Rhododendrons, leaf and flower buds form shortly after the plants bloom. The buds need protection from drying while they are very small and from winter weather as they grow bigger. Most Rhododendrons display multiple flowers at the ends of branches in groupings we call trusses. Until the flowers open, each one is protected by a thick **bract**. In fact each developing flower is protected from both sides with the bracts overlapping to keep the cold out and the moisture in. Once the flower is fully open, the bracts are no longer needed. Some drop off and some persist inside the trusses. Those are the things we "clean" out to make the trusses look better when we enter them in our flower show.

There are some other purposes for bracts. One of the more obvious ones was on display at Christmas time. The big red things on Poinsettias are not flower petals. The flowers are very small yellow, red and green objects with no petals in the center of a whorl of red **bracts**. The large red **bracts** are there to attract pollinating birds and to furnish landing platforms for the birds.

Both **bracts** and flowers are modified leaves. Johann Wolfgang Goethe, best known for his writing of



Rhododendron nuttallii

The reddish bracts are protecting the truss before it displays the largest flowers in the genus *Rhododendron*.



Euphorbia pulcherrima
(Poinsettia)

The bright red bracts around the tiny flowers attract bird pollinators.

Faust, but also an avid botanist, got it right when he wrote "Everything is leaf, and through this simplicity the greatest diversity becomes possible." We're beginning to see that diversity as our rhodies come into flower. It should be a great bloom year.

Photos provided by Bruce Palmer

The best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and of love. -William Wordsworth, poet (7 Apr 1770-1850)



Rhododendron 'Jennifer Rothrock'



Rhododendron 'Humboldt Sunrise'



R. 'Jolene'

Don Wallace's images



Rhododendron lindleyi

Again rejoicing Nature sees
Her robe assume its vernal hues;
Her leafy locks wave in the breeze,
All freshly steep'd in morning dews.
-Robert Burns (1759-96)



Rhododendron 'Coastal Sugar'

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

Eureka Chapter Newsletter is published monthly except during July, August and November.

Submissions from members are encouraged and should be sent to June Walsh, Newsletter Editor, by email RhodyHostel@suddenlink.net
Membership information and applications are available from Ellen Gill. Htg1anderg@suddenlink.net

Eureka Chapter is a member of the **Humboldt Botanical Gardens**, Eureka, CA and **The Rhododendron Species Botanical**, Federal Way, WA.

Eureka Chapter is a chapter of the American Rhododendron Society a 501 (c) (3) charitable organization.

www.EurekaRhody.org



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Future Programs

The Eureka Chapter is ready to welcome its members and guests back to the Eureka Woman's Club for in-person meetings. We hope to continue to Zoom meetings and post the programs on the web at www.EurekaRhody.org.

The Eureka Chapter Telephone-tree callers will be on the phone to keep you up-to-date with anything new. Tell them thank you for their calls!

In Person and Zoom Programs

April 28, 2022

Don Wallace, Fancy and Fragrant Rhododendrons

April 30, 2022

Rhododendron Parade, <https://eukekarhodyparade.com/>

May 1, 2022, Noon to 3

Eureka Chapter Hosts Tours of Moss Family Temperate Woodland Garden at Humboldt Botanical Garden.
Bring your own picnic. Docent led tours, vehicle available to get visitors up the hill

May 22, 2022, Noon to 3

Singing Tree Garden, tour, bring your own lunch

May 26, 2022

Mini Show, canceled

June 5, 2022 , 1:00 p.m.

Stagecoach Hill Azalea Reserve, north of Big Lagoon at Kane Road, Carpooling encouraged

<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/california/stagecoach-hill-and-azalea-nature-trail>

All programs subject to change

Plant Sale continues: Call or Email Tim or June Walsh, then come SHOP till you drop! Many of the Rhodos are coming into bloom now. Shop early for the best selection. The prices are so great you will be able to get plants for all your neighbors, too.

Email Rhodyhostel@suddenlink.net or call 707-498-2337

Eureka Chapter Officers and Board Members

For board member contact information or if you are interested in attending a board meeting which are held the first Wednesday of the month at 7PM all members are welcome, call or email June Walsh 707-498-2337 or RhodyHostel@suddenlink.net