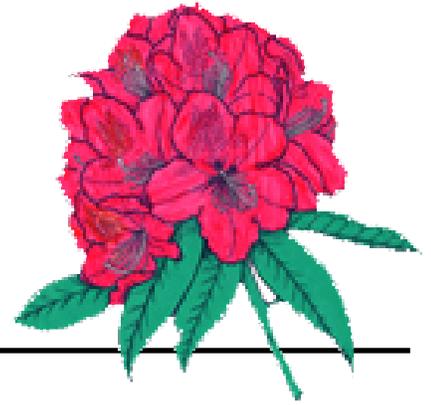


# Noyo News

## Noyo Chapter

American Rhododendron Society  
April, 2016

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**Wed, April 27, 7:00**

Presbyterian Church  
367 So. Sanderson Way, FB

### **Tips from a Master**

(As a result of an issue with a curb your editor is doing limited keyboarding. Ergo, much of this month's newsletter has been submitted by supportive members.)

Dennis McKiver, our president, submitted the following bio for those who may not be so familiar with Dennis. At the April meeting he'll be explaining how to prepare your entries for the Show. (In case you've not noticed Dennis does know how to produce and enter ribbon winners!)

### ***In Memory***



**Carl Nelson**

Dennis McKiver has been a member of the Noyo Chapter American Rhododendron Society since 2001 and is currently the Chapter president. He grew up with a family of gardeners on a small family farm. His father raised and sold peaches, plums, raspberries, boysenberries, and gladiola bulbs. His father showed his prize-winning gladiolas at local flower shows. His grandmother also raised prize-winning Hydrangeas, so he had some good teachers on how to grow prize winning flowers from a young age.

As a child he raised and sold vegetables to earn money and enjoyed the challenge of growing giant pumpkins, tomatoes and banana squash.

When he and his wife Valerie bought their house in Fort Bragg in 2001, it had a number of large rhododendrons growing on the property. They love the area wildlife, so they didn't want to fence them off their property. They loved the beauty of the

rhododendrons and with the added benefit that the deer didn't eat them, and because they came in a wide variety of sizes and forms, they chose to make rhododendrons their primary landscape plantings. In addition, the Forest Lane neighborhood they lived in was a noted rhododendron area, with many wild rhododendrons growing along the road, and being the home of the late Dr. Len Charvet, a noted local rhododendron hybridizer and presently the home of many other Rhododendron Society members. After joining the Noyo Chapter, in addition to reading every rhododendron book he could get his hands on, he learned from many local rhododendron growers and hybridizers like Ken Jones, Phil Johnson, Bob Boddy, Len Charvet, Jim Celeri, Eleanor and Bruce Philp, Bill and Loraine Fee, Polo de Lorenzo, Kathy Love and Peter Schick to name a few. Peter Schick got him interested in rhododendron species and Dennis is

currently a member of the Species Foundation and his rhododendron garden contains many species.

Presently Dennis has over 1,000 varieties of rhododendron hybrids and species growing on his property. Dennis and Valerie became members and volunteers at the local Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens because of the large variety and number of rhododendrons growing on the property, over 1000, many of which are over 50 years old. Dennis used the named varieties at the Botanical Gardens to identify the unnamed rhododendrons growing on his property. He has since helped the Botanical Gardens identify numerous unnamed rhododendrons growing on the property.

Dennis and Valerie regularly volunteer at Botanical Garden's fund raising and other charitable events.

Each spring Dennis leads tours of the gardens and conducts rhododendron workshops with an emphasis on how to plant and raise rhododendrons and which ones will do the best in different climatic zones.

Don't forget that if you **bring a new guest** you will be given a 1 gal. plant. Should your guest decide to join the ARS they also will receive a plant.

### ***Rhododendron Week***

*(Nannette Giomi submitted the following reminder of the Fort Bragg City Council proclamation for Rhododendron Week.)*

On Monday, April 25th at 6:00 PM the Mayor and Fort Bragg City Council will be presenting us with a proclamation re: Rhododendron Week, May 2 - 8. It would be very nice to have a good representation from our club on hand to recognize this honor and hopefully get a picture or two in the newspaper. Phil & Lucy will attend to give the Council a "promissory picture" of their recently registered 'Noyo Mist'.

The City Council meeting will be at the Fort Bragg Town Hall, 363 N. Main St. (corner of Main and Laurel Streets), Fort Bragg.

### ***Volunteers Needed For Truss Distribution !***

*(Terry Giomi submitted the following request for volunteers.)*

A big part of our publicity for the upcoming show is the distribution of Rhododendron Trusses to the motels, B&B's, and other businesses in the Mendocino/Fort Bragg area. In the past we have had at least 5 or 6 teams to accomplish the deliveries. As of this writing we have only have a total of 5 people (instead of the 10 to 12

needed). The deliveries will take place on Wednesday, May 4th. We will meet at the home of Terry and Nannette Giomi at 9AM. Please, if any of our members could make themselves available to drive and/or help deliver trusses on that day it would be greatly appreciated. Thank you to those who have already volunteered.

We are also seeking donations of trusses for this advertising endeavor. Trusses can be delivered to the Giomi's on the evening of May 3rd, after 6PM, or the morning of May 4th between 8 and 9:30AM. Arrangements can be made to have trusses picked up on Tuesday evening by calling Terry Giomi at 964-4435.

### ***Some More Show Alerts***

*(aka Calls to Action by You)*

#### ***•Refreshments for the Show***

Contact Rosalie Stanley (367-0720, [jpmohn@mcn.org](mailto:jpmohn@mcn.org)) by Tues., May 3, if you are willing to bring some refreshments for the Show.

#### ***•Raffle/Silent Auction***

There will be a sign-up at the Apr. meeting for working some of the raffle shifts.

*June Walsh, Eureka Chapter editor, has graciously permitted the use of the following planting information provided and sponsored by Singing Tree Gardens & Nursery.*

*Don Wallace of Singing Tree Gardens & Nursery frequently provides useful tips and advice.*

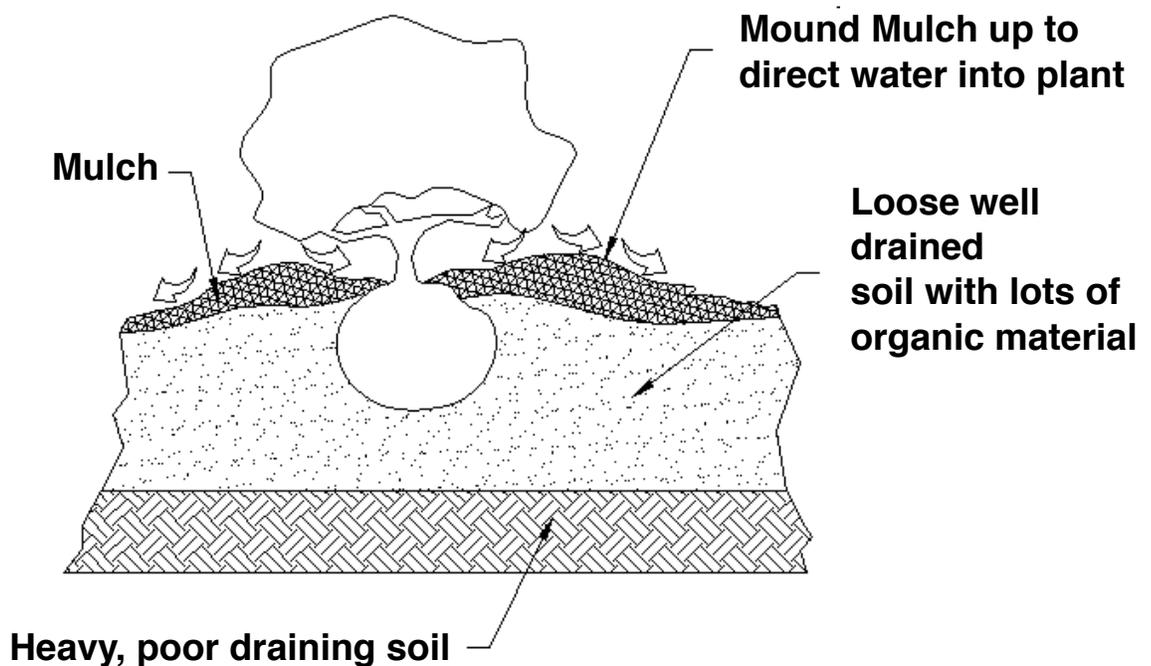
## 6 Steps to Success with Rhododendrons

**1. PLACEMENT:** The right plant in the right place! This is the essential first step in a happy relationship with your new rhododendron. Rhododendrons range in size from less than 12 inches to almost 10 feet in height (measured after 10 years of growth). They can be pruned or moved later, but it's definitely easier to select the appropriate plant in the first place. So plant the low-growing ones where suitable...under windows for example...and the large ones where they will have room to grow. If you are not sure which rhododendron best fits your location, just ask. I'm sure we can find one that is just right for you.

**EXPOSURE:** Rhododendrons on the coast generally do well with direct sun, still it's best to avoid areas with hot reflective sun, like a southwest exposure against a house. As a general rule, most of the smaller leaf types prefer full sun. The larger leaf types will thrive in "bright shade" areas with little or no direct sun. But remember, all rhododendrons need a good "light level" if they are to bloom well. Areas with only ferns and moss, i.e. redwood forest, are too dark!

**WIND:** Protect your rhododendrons from strong winds, especially salt winds off the ocean. If you live on the bluff, tuck your rhododendrons around on the leeward side of the house, behind a fence or in the shelter of a windbreak planting. Low growing varieties are generally the best choice - they are down out of the wind.

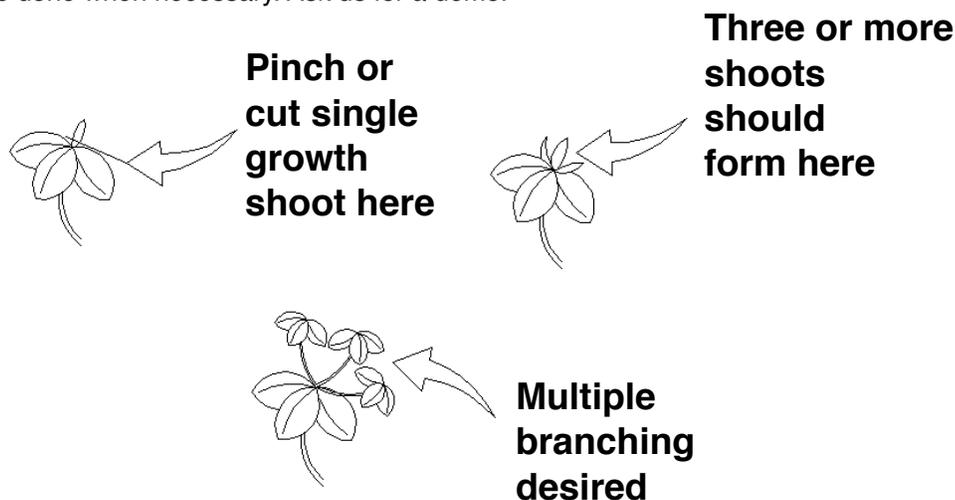
**2. PLANTING:** Rhododendrons like a moisture retentive soil that is well drained. Amend soil with acidic wood compost or redwood soil conditioner to achieve a soil structure which is rich and fluffy. Beware of planting close to concrete foundations or other areas near concrete, as these sites tend to have higher pH soils that are toxic to rhododendrons. If your soil is heavy clay which collects and holds water, you must insure that the rhododendron's roots stay well above this heavy, wet soil. Often, the simplest solution is to mound the soil up to give the rhododendron 18"-24" of clearance above the clay basin. Other possibilities are raised beds or rock garden constructions. Dig a hole 12" larger than the rootball and place the plant into the hole, making sure that the top of the rootball is a couple of inches above the surrounding ground. **NEVER BURY THE PLANT DEEPER.** A rhododendron fertilizer may be applied at the time of planting, being careful to follow directions on the package.



**3. MULCH:** Mulch provides many important functions; it helps keep the roots cool and moist, keeps other plant competition in check, and helps to build a rich soil as it decomposes. The best mulches to use are: fir bark (mini or micro grade), pine needles, rotted sawdust or any other type of wood chips. Avoid newly chipped wood if it heats up in a pile. Usually it is best to allow fresh chips to age for a season before using near plants. Aged horse or cow bedding is quite good if it has been composted for a season, but it does tend to bring in weeds. Apply about 4 inches of material, beginning just outside the drip line and reaching in toward the trunk. **DO NOT PILE MULCH AGAINST THE TRUNKS.** Reapply mulch yearly to maintain this level. Never use weedmat around rhododendrons, because their roots require access to the air. Weedmat + Mulch = Suffocation! If you must use weedmat, keep it back at least to the drip line of the plant.

**4. FERTILIZER:** A regular feeding program will insure that your plants have the proper nutrients to keep them strong and healthy. To encourage the formation of flower buds, apply a granulated rhododendron specific fertilizer once in the early spring (February-March), then again in early summer (May-June). As soon as it has finished blooming, the rhododendron begins setting the buds for next year's flowers, so this post bloom feeding is especially important. We think "Valentine's Day and Father's Day" -- an easy way to remember the two applications. In fall (November-December) use a mild, organic fertilizer to help keep the soil fertile, and insure that your plants have a steady supply of nutrients throughout the year. When applying fertilizer, gently scratch it into the mulch beginning six inches from the trunk, working your way out to the drip line. If you are going to apply more mulch, fertilize first then mulch on top.

**5. PRUNING/PINCHING:** It is important to pinch out any single growth shoots on young rhododendron. This encourages multiple branching and prevents your plant from becoming 'leggy'. A good rhododendron should have multiple branches close to the ground level, forming a well rounded plant. By keeping your plant 'pinched', you can encourage more branching, creating a fuller plant with more flowers! Heavier pruning can be done when necessary. Ask us for a demo.



**6. IRRIGATION:** For newly planted rhododendrons, irrigation in the dry months is essential to get your plants well established. Soil should be moist, but not soggy. Water requirements will vary from week to week, from one part of your garden to another. The best test is to get your fingers into the top 2-3" of soil and CHECK. A drip irrigation system must also be checked and adjusted regularly. Droopy leaves can indicate a thirsty plant, but they can also indicate a too-wet plant. Once your rhododendrons are established, they can get by with only occasional summer water.

**Eureka Chapter Membership Information @ 707-443-0604**

**or contact us at Rhodyhostel@suddenlink.net**

**ARS website: <http://www.rhododendron.org>**

Planting information provided and sponsored by Singing Tree Gardens & Nursery

### •Bottles for your entries

You can get bottles for your entries on Tues., May 3, @ 4:00 at the storage shed on Chestnut St (btw Harrison & Whipple), or earlier by contacting Dennis (813-8383), or at the tent at the Gardens after Tues., May 3.

### •Entry Forms

Pick up your entry forms at the Apr., meeting.

### •Show Rules

This year's Show Rules will be sent to the emailers in a separate email.

### *Some dates to note for our Show*

April 25 - City Council

*Rhododendron Week*  
proclamation

May 2 - Tent goes up

May 3 - Move tables & bottles\*

May 4 - Bottles to the Inns\*

May 4 & 5 - Tent set up of tables, coverings, and fixtures\*

May 5 - start accepting entries @ 3:00

May 6 - Bring entries, 9am - 1pm

May 6 - Judging, 3-5pm

May 7 & 8 - Show open to public, 9am to 5pm

May 16 - Take down Show, move bottles and tables back to storage garage\*

May 17 - Tent take down\*

May 25 - Show Awards & mini Show

\*These activities are in need of people to help. Please consider getting involved.

Contact John Winding, Rosalie Stanley, Ben Nicholson, or Dick Jones to find out how you can help. Contact info for these people is on the last page.

### *Planning for the Show* (i.e. the 2017 Show)

It's too late to fertilize for this year's Show. Many growers recommend fertilizing just after the plants are through blooming. A rule of thumb (and a green one at that) used here on the north coast is Valentines Day and Fathers Day. So it's a good time to get things ready if you're going to do a post bloom fertilizer application.

Another step for next year's show is deadheading. This removes the energy sapping effect of developing seeds. Besides taking energy many types of developing seeds inhibit new growth. Another benefit of deadheading is the removal of the petals and therefore less chance of petal blight, a difficult to control fungal infection that destroys the flowers. Ideally, the petals should be discarded from our gardens.

Mulching is a good way to conserve soil moisture and as it decomposes is a good way to improve your soil. If fertilizing, it's good to add the mulch after fertilizing.

### *2016-2017 Chapter Officers*

A slate of candidates for the Board positions was presented at the March meeting. This position does not require knowledge of rhododendrons or knowing other members. It's a fun way to get involved without taking on a load of responsibility. Any member may be nominated, including yourself.

Voting for the Board seats will occur at the April General Meeting.

Members at the meeting will also vote on the following proposed By-Law changes.

ARTICLE V - BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
**The Board of Directors shall henceforth be known as the Board.**  
**Board members shall be limited to two consecutive terms in any one office.** The Board shall consist of four elected officers, four elected Directors and the immediate past President. Each Director shall serve for two years and the terms of office shall rotate so that ~~two~~ half of the directors shall be elected each year.

## ***Noyo Chapter Officers & Chairpersons***

**President\*:** *Dennis McKiver* 813-8383, [dmckiver@comcast.net](mailto:dmckiver@comcast.net)  
**Vice President\*:** *Marianne Peterson* 964-3804, [houseofgold@mcn.org](mailto:houseofgold@mcn.org)  
**Secretary\*:** *Rosalie Stanley* 367-0720, [jpmohn@mcn.org](mailto:jpmohn@mcn.org)  
**Treasurer\*:** *Ben Nicholson* 961-6193, [bennich@aol.com](mailto:bennich@aol.com)  
**Directors\*:** Ken Jones 964-0495, [nodjaken@yahoo.com](mailto:nodjaken@yahoo.com)  
Valerie McKiver,  
Judy Parker, 962-0490, [jparkerca2@comcast.net](mailto:jparkerca2@comcast.net)  
John Winding 937-2140, [whistle@mcn.org](mailto:whistle@mcn.org)  
**Past President\*:** *Jim Celeri* 813-1868, [grounds@gardenbythesea.org](mailto:grounds@gardenbythesea.org)  
**Show Chair:** *John Winding* 937-2140, [whistle@mcn.org](mailto:whistle@mcn.org)  
**Membership:** *Terry Giomi* 964-4435, [tjgiomi@aol.com](mailto:tjgiomi@aol.com)  
**Hospitality:** *Rosalie Stanley* 367-0720, [jpmohn@mcn.org](mailto:jpmohn@mcn.org)  
**Plant Raffle:** *Ted & Fran Steinhart* 964-6896, [waterman.teacher@comcast.net](mailto:waterman.teacher@comcast.net)  
**Wellness**  
**Editor:** *Dick Jones* 964-4353, [dic@mcn.org](mailto:dic@mcn.org)

**\*Board of Directors**

## ***Mark Your Calendars 2015-2016 Meeting Schedule***

- Wed., April 27, **Dennis McKiver**  
Prepping for Show
- Sat. and Sun., May 7 and 8

## ***Noyo Show and Plant Sale***

- May 25 **Noyo** Show awards;  
Mini Show, members only
- June TBA, Member Garden Tour
- Apr. 23, **DeAnza** Ch. Plant Sale
- Apr. 20-24, 2016, **ARS Annual  
Convention, Williamsburg, VA**
- Apr. 29-May 1, **Eureka Ch**  
Show and Plant Sale

## ***Noyo Chapter***

***American Rhododendron Society  
P.O. Box 1068  
Fort Bragg, CA 95437-1068***