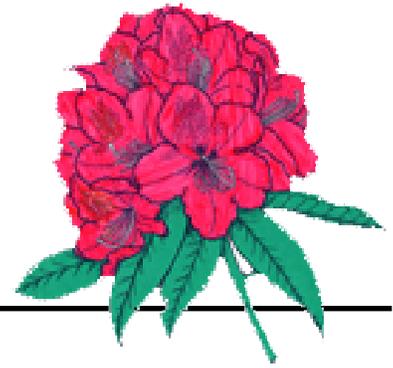


# Noyo News

## Noyo Chapter

American Rhododendron Society

April 2018



**Wed, April 25, 7:00**

*Presbyterian Church  
367 So. Sanderson Way, FB*

### **Dennis McKiver Prepping for the Show**

The Noyo Show and Plant Sale will be here in a couple of weeks. It's time to take some serious action for your entries. **Dennis** will be giving away his secrets for entering good samples from your gardens. Identifying possible entries, when to cut, grooming, storing, etc. In case you've not noticed Dennis is very successful in these endeavors.

Even if you've 'been there, done that' a little review of your Show strategy is bound to pay benefits, aka ribbons! Make sure you mark your calendars for this meeting, not only for yourself but **also for your friends**. This will be a good meeting to encourage folks who are wondering if they should pursue the world of rhododendrons.

### **Noyo Chapter Affairs**

The Noyo Board of Directors will present a slate of nominees for next year's officers and directors. Included will be **Devon Billings**, **Pam Rivette**, **Rosalie Stanley**, and **Judy Parker** nominated for Directors, and **Linda Lawley** nominated for VP.

**Ted Steinhardt** and **Ben Nicholson** will continue in their offices, as president and treasurer.

Other members may be nominated for any position at the April meeting by themselves or by any chapter member.

We always need new (or old) blood to fill the various positions

for running the chapter. While the Board's slate will include very willing and qualified candidates there are other members who also are qualified. It's time for **everyone** to consider what you are willing to do to keep the chapter viable.

### **Presidents message April 2018**

**It's show time! The Board is working hard to get all of the show details accomplished.**

**Many thanks goes out to those who have been involved. A huge thank you to Roxanne at the Botanical Gardens. Her efforts on advertising the show in articles placed in magazine, papers, flyers etc., are invaluable to the show.**

**The show tent goes up on Monday April 30th. ! As the club receives a substantial cost saving by supplying support labor to help put up the tent, we need any and all help to put up the tent. It takes a couple of hours, and except for lifting the main poles the work is not hard. Please help, and if you cannot help come and watch, as this is a very interesting event.**

**Dennis is up in Oregon picking up plants for the plant sale now. As in the past those plants will be available for members only before the Rhodie show. If you are interested, come early for the best selection of plants.**

**This year the nomination committee has been hard at work finding officers and board members for the coming year. At the April club meeting we will be voting on a new slate of Officers and Board members.**

**Our workday for May will be the Rhodie show itself. I will try to get the workday back on tract as we have been rained out.**

**Please mark your calendars to attend April 25th at 7:00 p.m.**

**The City of Fort Bragg will proclaim the week of the Rhododendron at the City Council meeting on April 23rd. The club will have a few minutes to talk about Rhododendrons and Rhodie show. If you can, come and support the club.**

**Ted Steinhardt**

## ***Regarding the Show***

With the Show about two weeks away there are numerous things to do. Getting involved makes it easier for those members already committed.

### **•Tent Set-up**

The tent will be erected on Mon., 4/30. Contact Ted Steinhardt for details about helping.

### **•Bottles to Businesses**

On Wed., 5/2, trusses will be delivered to various businesses here on the coast. Linda Lawley (409-4417) is in charge. We still need volunteers to help with delivering the trusses. We will also need trusses that should be brought to Linda's house (17400 Redwood Springs Dr.)

### **•Ribbons**

If you have ones you no longer want please bring them to the Apr. 25 meeting.

### **•Rules and Entry Forms**

The 2018 **Rules** will be sent in an email separate from the newsletter, and there will be copies at the Apr. 25 meeting as well as the **entry forms** in case you need some. Both will also be available at the Show during

the Show set-up on Thurs. afternoon and Friday morning.

### **•Food for volunteers on Sat/sun**

Contact Rosalie Stanley (67-0720) if you can bring some kind of snacks for the members working at the Show on Sat. and Sunday.

### **•Dinner with the Judges**

After judging is completed we will be taking the judges to dinner at the Crow's Nest. All members are encouraged to join the judges. (This is a no-host affair for our members.)

### **•Entry Times**

Your entries may be delivered on Thurs., 5/3, between 5 and 7, or Friday morning between 9am and noon. **Noon is the deadline** for entering your trusses, sprays, bonsai, floral arrangements, and pictures.

## ***Chores in Your Gardens***

### **•Deadheading**

Rather than waiting until the bloom season is finished you can start deadheading your earlier bloomers. (See p. 3.)

### **•Cleaning up**

Before this year's flowers and leaves start falling it's still time to clean up last year's debris

under your plants. This reduces the sites for harmful, pathogenic organisms.

### **•Watering system**

As it'll soon be time to turn on your watering system check it out and repair the clogged or missing sprinklers.

### **•Soil pH**

Check out your soil pH to help your rhodies succeed. (see p.4.)

### **•Planting**

Deciding what and where you'll be planting can be challenging.

Dennis McKiver picked up plants from Oregon for the Show Sale and they will be **available before the Show** beginning this weekend (4/21-4/22). Contact Dennis (813-8383) to arrange a time to get some before others beat you to it.

The blooming time for most of our rhododendrons lasts about a month. The **foliage time lasts all year**. Remembering that, is a good reason to select some plants for their foliage. A popular choice is 'Sir Charles Lemon' with it's bright cinnamon brown indumentum and pure white flowers.



'Sir Charles Lemon'

## 'Sir Charles Lemon'

Rhododendron Sir Charles Lemon is sometimes labelled in gardens as *R. arboreum* ssp. *cinnamomeum* 'Sir Charles Lemon'. This is in fact a natural hybrid of *R. arboreum* ssp. *cinnamomeum* x *R. campanulatum*.

Seed pods were harvested by Sir Joseph Hooker during his trip to Sikkim in 1849-1851.

The plant grew in Sir Charles Lemon gardens. During a trip to Cornish gardens, Henry McLaren, Lord Aberconway, spotted the rhododendron and took cuttings for propagation in 1937. As the plant had no name, he called it Sir Charles Lemon.

Grown from cuttings all the plants worldly distributed come originally from this specimen.

The plant forms a big shrub or a small tree up to 7 m. The pointed leaves are wider than pure *R. arboreum*, intermediate between the parents. They are dark kaki green above and have a rusty indumentum when mature. The stem is mahogany and the bark rough.

The plant is sometimes slow to bloom. Like many species it blooms well every two years. The flowering period, roughly in April, can last 3 weeks.

The truss is white and graceful and makes a good contrast with the leaves or the stem.

The plant seems resistant to diseases.

### •Companion Plants

Don't forget to leave space for selected companion plants to add variety to your garden. Some plants are challenging here on the North Coast. While lilacs, roses, and peonies all will grow here they do not prosper as well as some others. For example, maples do well and make nice complements for our rhododendrons.



## It's Time To Deadhead Your Rhododendrons

Singing Tree Nursery Sept 2015,  
Don Wallace

*Every year after the bloom, everyone's rhododendrons are covered with seed heads where the flowers once were. I am always asked if they should be removed, and my answer is "yes if you want more flowers". In theory, if the plant puts its energy into seed production, then fewer flower buds are created for next year's bloom.*

*This theory was validated by the Portland Parks Department when they did an interesting experiment. One large rhododendron was selected in the park that always bloomed reliably. After blooming, only the bottom half of the plant was deadheaded, leaving the top half untouched. The following spring the bottom, previously deadheaded, half flowered heavily, while the top half had few flowers. To confirm these results they repeated this experiment, only this time they deadheaded the top half of the plant, leaving the bottom half untouched. The next spring, as suspected, the top half of the plant flowered heavily, while the bottom half had few flowers.*

*So, while this experiment was great proof that deadheading is a worthwhile practice for those wanting more flowers, there is the question: "What about my 50 year old rhody that flowers with abandon every year with no deadheading?" My only answer to that question would be that some varieties, once reaching maturity, will bloom very reliably every year even without the deadheading. So, my advice would be to go ahead and deadhead those plants that are "do-able". Once they are too tall, let it go...there are many other gardening chores that will fill up the time anyway.*

## *Monuments from the Past*

As you look around at this time of year you may wonder how some people can have such large rhododendrons. They're hard to miss since they're so noticeable when in full bloom.

Often you see one with large, lax, white trusses. Likely it's one of the Loderi group, and most likely it's 'Loderi King George'. In the earlier rhododendron days here on the coast it was a popular plant.

Along with John Druecker, Paul Bowman, Bud Richards, Don Spini, and Bill Fee there was Phil Cornell. Phil was an active hybridizer. Some of you may have a plant named 'Illa May', named by Phil after his friend Ben Allenby's wife, Illa May. Ben and Phil lived near each other on Ellison Way, which connects Simpson Lane with Georges Lane.

On Ellison Way it's hard to miss where Phil lived as there's a large *loderi* there now in full bloom. It's fragrance is unmistakable, and wonderful.

We can thank our earlier mentors for leaving these plants that just go and go, like the little pink energizer bunny. It's interesting to find out who lived where you see these *Monuments from the Past*.



## *Soil pH*

Rhododendrons require acidic soil to thrive. If it's too low (highly acidic) or too high (too alkaline) they will not perform as you expect.

It's worthwhile to know your soil's pH. You can approach this with a quick, down 'n dirty method or you can pursue a much more scholarly investigation.

For the more thorough approach check out a 1992 *Tips for Beginners* at the following website.

Journal ARS Article  
Vol. 48: No. 2: Year 1992

**[Tips for Beginners: How To Adjust Acidity Levels in Your Soil](#)**

For a quick method, Dave Banks in his ARS e-newsletter *Rhodo Notes* offers this approach. Note that this is quick and there is no guarantee as to it's precision.

*Put some of your garden soil in a small container; pour some vinegar on it. If it fizzes you have acidic soil.*

*Take another small amount soil & put it in a small container. Add some baking soda mixed with water; if it fizzes your soil is alkaline.*

*If your soil doesn't fizz in either experiment, your soil is neutral. For rhodies & azaleas you need your soil to be slightly acidic.*

*I found this experiment on the internet - so you know it must be true!!!*

## **Noyo Chapter Officers & Chairpersons**

President*:	<b>Ted Steinhart</b>	964-6896, <a href="mailto:waterman.teacher@comcast.net">waterman.teacher@comcast.net</a>
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Secretary*:	<b>Rosalie Stanley</b>	367-0720, <a href="mailto:jpmohn@mcn.org">jpmohn@mcn.org</a>
Treasurer*:	<b>Ben Nicholson</b>	961-6193, <a href="mailto:bennich@aol.com">bennich@aol.com</a>
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	<b>Fran Steinhart</b>	964-6896, <a href="mailto:waterman.teacher@comcast.net">waterman.teacher@comcast.net</a>
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Hospitality:	<b>Rosalie Stanley</b>	367-0720, <a href="mailto:jpmohn@mcn.org">jpmohn@mcn.org</a>
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Wellness:		
Editor :	<b>Dick Jones</b>	964-4353, <a href="mailto:dic@mcn.org">dic@mcn.org</a>
*Board of Directors		

## **Mark Your Calendars**

### **2017-2018 Meeting Schedule**

General Meetings will be on the 3rd or 4th  
Wed @ the Presbyterian Church in F B.

•Wed., April 25

### **Dennis McKiver Prepping for the Show**

•Sat and Sun., May 5-6, 2018.

### **Noyo Chapter Show and Plant Sale** Mendocino Coast Botanical Gardens

•Wed., May 23, 7:00 pm

### **Spring Potluck, Awards, and Mini Show**

Presbyterian Church

•April 27 to 29, **Eureka** Chapter  
Flower Show and Plant Sale

•May 20-26, ARS Annual Convention,  
Bremen, Germany

## **Noyo Chapter**

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