

## May 2022 Message to Members

Chapter Members,

We are now in the middle of prime time in our azalea gardens. A number of our members around the state of Virginia have opened their gardens for visits by other chapter members. You are encouraged to take this opportunity to visit one of these gardens in your area. Some of our members will be attending the formal dedication of the Holly Springs Legacy Garden at Jenkins Arboretum in Devon, PA. The chapter has been supporting this effort for several years with plants and monetary donations. We look forward to seeing the results of this support.



### **Meadowlark Botanical Gardens Plant Sale April 30-May1/Ayr Hill Plant Sale May 7**

The chapter will be holding its first plant sale of the year at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens in Vienna, VA on 30 April and 1 May from 10am to 3pm. We will also be selling at Ayr Hill on May 7 from 8am – 1pm. Pass this information on to your friends.



**Meadowlark Botanical Gardens Plant Sale**

There are a large number of excellent plants available for sale. The list of plants can be found by clicking on this [link](#).

We always need volunteers to help out with these sales. If you are available any of these days, please contact **Barb Kirkwood** at [kirkwoodb@aol.com](mailto:kirkwoodb@aol.com) or (703) 268-6958.

### **Bonsai Day April 23**

Members of the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society Chapter have purchased azaleas from our chapter, over the past several years, to be used in developing bonsai.

This year, a number of Bonsai Society members assembled at the property of **Paul** and **Carolyn Beck** to purchase azaleas for use in their bonsai activities.



**Past President of the Northern Virginia Bonsai Society Chapter, Gary Reese, selects azaleas - photo C. Beck**

It was a very successful day with 22 customers and 92 plants sold for a total of \$1,791.00

### **Brookside Gardens Azalea and Rhododendron Tours**

**Keely Shaughnessy** and **Josh Demers**, staff members of Brookside Gardens, will be conducting walking tours of the garden on Wednesday 4 May from 1pm-2:30pm and Friday 6 May from 10am -11:30am. You will explore their colorful collection of azaleas and rhododendrons while learning how to incorporate them into your home garden.

The fee is \$10 or \$8 for Friends of Brookside Gardens. Attendees should meet outside of the Visitor's Center. Register online [here](#).

## **Potting Party April 26<sup>th</sup>**

**Dave Nanney** is the Legacy Lead for the Holly Springs hybrids. In 2020, the **Nanneys** provided Holly Springs cuttings to chapter member **Mike White** of White's Nursery, for the purpose of propagation.

The result of this effort was 152 robust azaleas that were so large they needed to go into 2-gallon pots.

**Barb** and **John Kirkwood**, and **Dave** and **Leslie Nanney**, joined **Paul** and **Carolyn Beck** at their home on 27 April to up pot these azaleas. These will be available for future chapter plant sales.

Thanks to these members for their time and effort in repotting these plants. Additional photos are at the end of this message.



**Volunteers unload azaleas for repotting – photo P. Beck**

## **McCrillis House and Gardens**

**Kathy Jentz**, chapter member and editor of *The Azalean*, has brought to our attention, the McCrillis House and Gardens in Bethesda, MD. She states that the azaleas and flowering trees are incredible. More information on McCrillis house and Gardens is available at the following links:

<https://www.montgomeryparks.org/parks-and-trails/mccrillis-house-gardens/>

<https://dcgardens.com/mccrillis-gardens/>

## **White Garden Status**

In 2010, chapter member **Margaret White** left her 13 acre property with her house and garden to Fairfax County to be used for the enjoyment of the general public. Chapter members, along with members of other horticultural societies, have participated in work groups over the years to help maintain the property until it was opened for the general public. The Northern Virginia Chapter has also donated thousands of dollars over the years to facilitate the maintenance of the property.

It has recently come to our attention that the county has designated the **White** home as part of the Resident Curator Program. Under this program, the house will be leased to a private individual who will maintain the house. The house and an area around it will not be available to the general public. We feel this will not be in keeping with **Margaret White's** intention when she donated the property to the county and will be detrimental to the public use of the property.

**Fairfax County has extended the period of comment to 13 May.** If you would like submit questions and comments to Fairfax County on their Resident Curator Plan, you can email them at [parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov).

**Don Hyatt** wrote a detailed article on this subject for the April newsletter of the Potomac Valley Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. He has allowed us to reprint this article for our members. It is located at the end of this email. Updated information on the status of the garden is available at <http://www.arspvc.org/articles/mwhite.html>.

## **Open Member Gardens**

A number of our chapter members have opened their gardens for visits by other chapter members. Below are the gardens open for member visits:

### **Klimavicz Garden** – Vienna, VA

**Joe** advises that early azaleas are opening up now. April 30-May 1 will be peak bloom and should be the best time to visit. Visitors should call in advance to ensure **Joe** is home. His cell is 703-795-8999. Address - 8994 Kildownet Court, Vienna, VA 22182

### **Nanney Garden** – West Springfield, VA

The **Nanney** garden is already open and blooming. They will host their annual open house on 1 May from 12-5. They encourage people to reach out and come visit anytime as the garden is already in bloom. To visit at another time, please contact them at [dnanney@cox.net](mailto:dnanney@cox.net) or (703) 644-5651. Their address is 8646 Tuttle Road, Springfield, VA 22152.

### **Sperling Garden** – Alexandria, VA

The garden is always open to visitors, but please phone ahead to make sure **Barry** will be around. There should be some good displays from now until the middle of May, but from about April 25 to May 5 should be when most will be blooming at the same time. 7732 Schelhorn Rd., Alexandria, VA 22306, 703-765-7062 [bsperling@cox.net](mailto:bsperling@cox.net)

Last year's garden:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/6VBuL1TBoYML6474A>

### **Harrison Garden** – Midlothian, VA

The **Harrison** garden will be available for people to drop by and see... They have a couple of hardscape surprises... This is the year of the hardscape surprise for the ages... No hints other than BIZARRE... Anyone who wants to visit contact them at [bobnpvine@gmail.com](mailto:bobnpvine@gmail.com) or (703) 431-3368. The address is 7441 AMF Dr., Mechanicsville, Va. 23111

### **Boninti Garden** – Charlottesville, VA

The **Boninti** Garden will be open Saturday April 23rd until May 22nd. Their phone number is 434-296-6464, however it is not necessary to call in advance. Maps to the property are on the bench by the side door. Detailed directions and parking guidance was provided by separate email on 24 April.

## **Garden Photos**

Our membership is spread across the country, Canada and Europe. Obviously, many of our members can't physically tour other members' gardens because of distance. Many of you work very hard to create beautiful gardens and you should show them off.

Additionally, many of us visit beautiful public and private gardens. We'd like you to share these photos with us especially, though not limited to, those gardens with azaleas in bloom.

If you would like to share photos of your gardens with the other members of our chapter, please send them to [rickfbauer@gmail.com](mailto:rickfbauer@gmail.com). If appropriate, provide information on the photos provided.

Below are garden photos submitted by members.

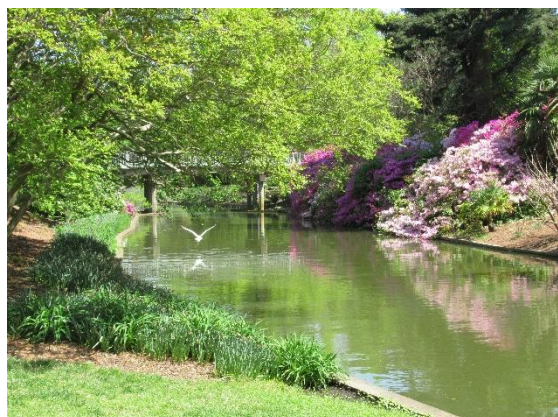
White Garden, Fairfax County, VA – photos Judy Shapleigh



Maymont Garden (Japanese Garden), Richmond, VA – photos Rick Bauer



Norfolk Botanical Garden, Norfolk, VA – photos Rick Bauer



Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Richmond, VA – photos Rick Bauer



Azalea Floral Displays, Virginia Garden Week, Fredericksburg, VA – photos J. Neckel



### **Chapter Volunteers Needed.**

All chapter activities are planned and conducted by volunteers. As with many organizations, much of the work is done by a small number of members. At the last meeting, **Barb Kirkwood** asked for more members to volunteer for specific positions. Specifically:

**Plant Sale Coordinator** - The chapter is looking for a volunteer to be Plant Sale Coordinator. This individual's responsibilities are to coordinate, as necessary, with the venue where we will be conducting the sale and to be the central point of contact for soliciting volunteers and for disseminating necessary information to them. If you are interested in the position or would like more information, contact **Barb Kirkwood** at [kirkwoodb@aol.com](mailto:kirkwoodb@aol.com) or (703) 268-6958.

**Refreshments Coordinator** – **Patsy Meadows** has been doing this job for many years now. The chapter Executive Committee decided at their December meeting to

streamline the responsibilities of this position. No longer would the incumbent have to coordinate the snacks brought in by various members. The coordinator now procures the meeting snacks paid for by the chapter and coordinates set up of the snacks.

We still need someone to plan and purchase the snacks and to set up the refreshments at the chapter meetings. It would be great if we had a couple of people volunteer to allow flexibility if one of them were not available for the meeting. If you would like more information or are interested in volunteering, contact **Barb Kirkwood** at [kirkwoodb@aol.com](mailto:kirkwoodb@aol.com) or (703) 268-6958.

**Calendar of Upcoming Events –**

Below is the schedule for 2022. The calendar is also available on the chapter website at <https://nv-asa.org/events>.

Check the online chapter calendar for the latest updates.

Date	Event	Organization	Location
30 April and 1 May	Meadowlark Plant Sale	NV-ASA	Meadowlark Botanical Gardens 9750 Meadowlark Gardens Ct. (off Beulah Rd) Vienna, VA 22182
May 5-8	ARS Convention in Washington State	ARS	Vancouver, WA
May 7	Ayr Hill Plant Sale	NV-ASA	Freeman Store and Museum 131 Church St. NE Vienna, VA 22180
15 May 10am	Dedication of Holly Springs Legacy Garden	Jenkins Arboretum	Jenkins Arboretum, Devon, PA
May	Member Open Gardens	NV-ASA	Various
May 8 (rain date)	Meadowlark Plant Sale	NV-ASA	Meadowlark Gardens
Jul 17 1:30- 4:30 pm	Cutting Exchange	NV-ASA	Kirkwood Presbyterian
Sept 24 1:00- 4:30 pm	Fall Sale	NV-ASA	Kirkwood Presbyterian
Oct 30 1:30- 4:30 pm	Meeting with speaker	NV-ASA	Kirkwood Presbyterian
Oct 30 (after chapter meeting)	Executive Committee Mtg	NV-ASA	Kirkwood Presbyterian
Dec 4 1:00- 4:30 pm	Holiday Party	NV-ASA	Barb and John Kirkwood’s Home

**Other Activities/Notes –**

**Miscellaneous –**

**Photos for *The Azalea Clipper*/Facebook** – We are looking for pictures of your garden to share with other members on our chapter **Facebook** page and in the ***Clipper***. Now is the time to show off a little. Send me your pictures at [rickfbauer@gmail.com](mailto:rickfbauer@gmail.com). We are also always looking for articles for ***The Azalea Clipper***. They don’t have to be long and can be on any azalea related subject (e.g., gardens (public or private), hybridizers, companion plants etc.). Pictures are also always appreciated. Please consider writing an article. Contact me at [rickfbauer@gmail.com](mailto:rickfbauer@gmail.com) or 757-771-4446 if you have any questions. ***Clipper*** articles can also be the basis for later submissions to ***The Azalean*** (see below).

**The Azalean** – The editor of **The Azalean** depends on member submissions of articles of interest to the general **ASA** membership. If you have an article to share, send it to them at [theazalean@gmail.com](mailto:theazalean@gmail.com). Articles should be submitted as Microsoft Word documents. Illustrations are highly encouraged and should be at least 4 x 6 inches at 300 dpi.

## Potting Party 26 April



Volunteers offload plants – photo P. Beck



Carolyn Beck inspects Holly Springs azaleas – photo B. Kirkwood



Leslie Nanney repots Holly Springs azaleas – photo B. Kirkwood



John Kirkwood repots Holly Springs azaleas – photo B. Kirkwood



# Potomac Valley Chapter

American Rhododendron Society

www.arspvc.org

Spring Newsletter: April 2022

Reprinted with permission of Don Hyatt

## Problems in Paradise! *What is Happening at the White Garden?*

By Donald W. Hyatt (donaldhyatt@verizon.net)

On January 6, 2010, when Margaret White passed away a few weeks before her 104<sup>th</sup> birthday, the title to her beautiful 13-acre property transferred to the Fairfax County Park Authority. They agreed to develop it into a public garden for all of us to enjoy.

The county spent money to develop a Master Plan. The public approved bond referendums for improvements but year after year, we saw very little change. In fact, we watched the garden decline as the meadow transformed into an unsightly tangle of invasive weeds, thorny brambles, and trash trees. Portions of the rhododendron collection were in bad shape, too, as honeysuckle and porcelain berry vines engulfed many plantings. One cannot expect the lovely garden that she and her husband J.C. had developed since 1939 to sit idle for a decade and not decline.



Jean Beaudry with Margaret White on her 103<sup>rd</sup> birthday



Autumn vista of the garden room, the core of the garden



The garden room and centuries old oak

The story was similar with Green Spring Gardens since that land sat idle for 10 years before they started to develop that into a horticultural park. It is a wonderful asset today.

The core of the White Garden around the home was still OK after 10 years but the most impressive asset on the property is the magnificent glass garden room the Whites built that wraps around the house. That is what is in jeopardy. We just learned that the county is planning to sign a 25 to 30 lease on the home through their Resident Curator program. A couple would live there rent-free for that time for the promise of maintaining the house.

This program was just established in 2014 and was designed to provide maintenance for historical homes. That should not even apply to the White residence since it is not historic in any way. The problem with the lease is that it will make the home, the glass room, as well as an area around the residence will be off limits to the public. That is the core of the garden. Margaret and JC selected the site for the home so it would be under the shade of a 300-year old white oak and would look out on the most spectacular parts of the garden.



Up until her death, Margaret hosted our chapter in that room for various meetings and picnics. She spent all her time in that room, too. The healing power of that inspirational place surely contributed to her longevity. I had been there during every season of the year and it was always magical. I remember golden autumn days with colorful leaves fluttering in the breeze and winter days watching the snow begin to fall. Then came early spring as sweeps of daffodils at the edge of the field began to flower before the buttercups bloomed. Then came the dogwoods, redbuds, and the azalea border.

As the season progressed, the perimeter of lawn behind the home was a continuation of rhododendron blooms that seemed like a slow-moving firework display.



The azalea border as viewed from the garden room



Rhododendron 'Taurus'



Rhododendron 'Hanna Hersey'

It began with the brilliant red 'Taurus', peach pink 'Hanna Hersey', and pink and cream of 'Martha Phipps'. Several plants of the deep pink 'David Gable' were to the left. They were quickly followed by the rose red 'Atroflo', white 'County of York' and lavender pink 'Caroline'.



Rhododendron 'David Gable' in the garden



Rhododendron 'David Gable'



'David Gable' as viewed from the garden room



The Meadow - Buttercups



**Rhododendron 'Scintillation'**



**Rhododendron 'Caroline'**

lavender pink 'Caroline'. There were bold pink Dexters like 'Scintillation' and 'Betty Hume', as well as an older Dutch white, 'Mrs. A. T. de la Mare'. A stunning specimen of the yellow and pink Dexter's 'Skyglow' stood as a sentinel beside a path leading to the garden where 'John C. White' named for her husband grows.

The grand finale was undoubtedly her magnificent 'Cadis' which was



**Rhododendron 'Skyglow'**

surely the most impressive specimen in the Washington, D.C., region. It had the prime location at the edge of lawn behind the home. It was so perfectly framed by the floor to ceiling glass walls in the garden room. Like 'Caroline' one of its parents, it is fragrant, too.



**Rhododendron 'Cadis' as viewed from the garden room**

Under the lease agreement, the home including the magnificent glass garden room where Margaret White enjoyed her garden would be off limits to the public while during a period of 25 to 30 years. Since the family will be provided a restricted area around the home to ensure, that would restrict access to the core of the garden. Yes, there are other rhododendrons on the property but this area is center stage. It is wrong to



**Rhododendron 'Cadis'**

## Reasons to Oppose

1. The White Residence does not fit the type of property Resident Curator Program is supposed to protect. The county brochure describing the program states:

### Resident Curatorship Program

The objective of a Fairfax County Resident Curator program is the preservation of historic buildings within the county...The end goal is to rehabilitate and maintain underutilized historic properties and provide periodic public access to appreciate the historical significance of the properties.



**The White Home is not historic**

The White's residence was built in 1939 and is not historically significant in any way. It does not fit within the objectives of their program. There is a 100-year old barn on the premises but that is not the house. The purpose of Margaret White's gift was to protect and develop a spectacular garden.

2. The Master Plan on page 33 describes opportunities that would be available to refurbish the home and use it to support the garden. It specifies the first floor which is the wonderful garden room.

### Residence Adaptive Reuse

The residence on the White site presents many opportunities. Consideration may be given to the conversion of the first floor of the residence to public space. The second floor may be set aside for use as an on-site caretaker's residence. Exterior access to expanded restroom facilities within the residence may be provided.



**The Home could have multiple uses**

Anyone who has visited the place knows how spectacular that glass room is and how it provides the best place to view the garden. Margaret lived in that area and hosted countless plant society meetings there. A lease on the residence would tie up that asset for three decades. The Resident Curator Program restricts public access around the residence which is the very core of the garden.

3. There was only one application for the Resident Curator Position. The background of the applicant does not satisfy staffing requirements as outlined in the Master Plan on page 36.

### Site Personnel

Oversight and/or staffing by professional horticulturalists and specially trained grounds staff will be required. Managing and maintaining high quality horticultural resources requires staff with specialized education, training, and experience. During peak gardening season, additional volunteer hours per week would enable the staff to maintain quality plant displays. Ideally, the primary horticulturalist would have at least a two-year degree in horticulture plus a few years of experience. Seasonal staff with specialized training would be beneficial.



**Rhododendron 'John C. White' plant and flower**

The sole application for the Resident Curator Position and was Mrs. Meg Stout. She is an engineer by trade and with special interests in history and Aquaponics, raising fish and plants in a soil free aquatic environment. That is not sufficient horticulture background for site personnel as described in the Master Plan. She introduced her family and none of them seem to have any horticultural training either.



**Rhododendron 'Anna Rose Whitney'**

1. The program was not properly advertised. Mrs. Stout admitted that she only learned about White Property Resident Curator opportunity two weeks before the deadline to apply. As far as I can tell, none of the people who have been supporting the White Garden since its inception heard anything about the plan. This includes members of the White Family, anyone in the Friends of the White Garden organization, members of the Rhododendron Society or the Azalea Society, or volunteers who have been helping maintain the gardens for at least the past decade. We did not know the property was being put into the program so we were unaware of the deadline date. Only one member learned of the initial online hearing of Mrs. Stout's proposal that was held on March 29. She received a flyer and that was the first she had heard about the situation. A few of us heard about the committee's evaluation of her proposal on April 6 just 30 minutes before it was about to start. The only opportunity for us to comment was set for April 13 but after significant complaints, it has now has been extended until Friday, May 13.

#### **Useful Links:**

Submit Questions and Comments to Fairfax County on their Resident Curator Plan:  
[parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov)

White Garden Master Plan posted on 7/26/2006:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/sites/parks/files/assets/documents/plandev/master-plans/whitemp.pdf>

About the Resident Curator Program:

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/resident-curator-program/about>

A links to YouTube recordings of the Zoom Meetings on 3/29/2022 and 4/6/2022:

<https://www.publicinput.com/RCPWhiteGardens>

Fairfax County Board of Supervisors: Request they stop the curator lease and fund the White Garden

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/boardofsupervisors/members-and-districts>

Article in Annandale Today local paper on 3/31/2022 which encourages comment:

<https://annandaletoday.com/more-details-emerge-on-resident-curator/>

About Meg Stout, the Applicant for the Resident Curator Position

Website: <http://www.megstout.com/>

Blog: <https://www.millennialstar.org/author/megstout/>

Book on Aquaponics: <https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/359406/aquaponic-gardening-discover-the-dual-benefits-of-raising-fish-and-plants-together-idiots-guides-by-meg-stout/>

Washington Gardener article about the renovation of the meadow in the October 2021 issue.

<https://issuu.com/washingtongardener/docs/oct2021-washingtongardener-final>