

ALPINE LINE

Allegheny Chapter North American Rock Garden Society



November – December 2016

CHAIR'S Message

I can't believe it is almost Thanksgiving! It has been a wonderful fall, but I still need to get some bulbs in the ground. Hope you all got your gardens to bed and everything planted.

We will be having one more regular meeting on November 20, when Mark Tebbitt will be talking about plants that grow in the Andes. We had several exceptional speakers this year, and next year's lineup is looking great, too. I hope you will attend meetings to hear the speakers and learn more about rock gardening.

The banquet went really well, and I think almost everyone enjoyed the gift exchange game. Thanks to Trish, Bobbi and Ellie for doing the table favors and getting the room set up. Each attendee received a sedum, and the several door prizes were plants from Arrowhead Alpines. Thanks to Dennis James the exchange game went well, and several participants had their gifts stolen from them numerous times. I hope everyone ended up with something they liked and can use. I also want to thank everyone that helped out with the banquet. It really ran smoothly.

The seed packaging will be on Thursday, December 8th from 9 to noon at the Northland Library. Thank you goes to Trish and her helpers Ellie and Bobbi. Please come and help out. The more people that pack, the quicker we will get done. There will be refreshments.

Thanks to all the officers, committee chairs and members for making this another great year for the Allegheny Chapter. Many thanks to Dianne Passoth for her careful, concise reporting of our meetings; Lyn Lang's service, including membership, plant sale, proofreading, distribution, and contributions to the newsletter; Patty McGuire for taking care of the finances; Trish Abrams for supporting/helping me by taking on the vice chair position, and helping with the banquet and seed packing; Debra Meyer for a wonderful job on the plant sale; Stephen and Bonnie Plato for hosting meeting refreshments; Deborah Crowley for editing the newsletter; and Amanda Haney for maintaining the website. A big thanks to all the members who regularly help to maintain our public rock garden at the Aviary. Thanks to the many others who helped with activities throughout the year. It was greatly appreciated. Also, a big thanks to Len and Al for all they do. The officers have all agreed to continue in their current positions for 2017.

Hope you all have a great holiday season! See you at the January meeting.

Karen

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November Meeting – Sunday, November 20th at 2 PM

Northland Public Library, 300 Cumberland Road, Pittsburgh 15237

Members A – H are asked to bring snacks. Raffle donations are always welcome.

November 20th Speaker: **MARK C. TEBBITT, Ph.D.**

Since I was a small child growing up in England I have been an avid gardener with an interest in all kinds of plants. These days I am especially interested in alpine, arid-land, and woodland plants. In 2007 I moved to Uniontown to take a position as a botany professor at California University of Pennsylvania. As part of this job, I teach, conduct taxonomic research on the genus Begonia, and curate the Biology Department's greenhouse. Prior to moving to Pennsylvania I was head of the Horticultural Taxonomy Program at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden in New York City. Before that I worked on the European Garden Flora project at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh. As a taxonomist I have conducted botanical fieldwork throughout the world, with much of my fieldwork involving the collection of begonias, hardy orchids and saxifrages. In the past ten years I have had the opportunity to visit Andean South America on several occasions and have developed a keen interest in the plants of this wonderful mountain range.

Topic: Plant hunting in the Andes: An overview of my plant collecting experience in the Ecuadorian, Peruvian, and Bolivian Andes. Each year I visit the Andes to collect and research begonias. I will talk about my work on these tropical plants as well as some of the other tropical, temperate and subalpine Andean plants that I have encountered. The emphasis will be on garden worthy plants, especially those already in cultivation.

AVIARY GARDEN

If there is a touchstone for our Chapter, it is the Aviary Rock Garden maintained by a dedicated group of our members. Here is a 12 month a year beautiful rock garden featuring plants of diverse forms and colors - from early season bulbs, primulas, iris, and sedum to fall blooming gentiana, from all the perennials that keep the garden a real showplace during the winter.

Looking at the garden there is always a heartfelt feeling of accomplishment. All year passers-by stop to make such nice compliments about the garden – no, we have not harvested any new members, but we are hopeful.

Some garden highlights included Sedum rupestre 'Angelina', Primula juliae 'Jay-Jay', Tulip 'Lady Jane', Delosperma 'Gold Nugget', a Daphne sp. that lit up the garden and then died for no apparent reason. A few other plants included Liatris microcephala, Gentiana paradoxa, Gentiana verna, Campanula Bavarian White and Bavarian Blue, and Talinum (annual species).

Minutes of September Meeting

The September 11, 2016 meeting of the Allegheny Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society was called to order at the Northland Public Library at 2:10 p.m. by Chair Karen Schmidt. 32 members, 6 guests and 3 new members (Don Garwood, Ron and Dot Sims) were welcomed.

Karen introduced the guest speaker, Joseph Tychonievich. Joseph is a nationally renowned author, speaker and gardening expert. His first book, “Plant Breeding for the Home Gardener” was among the most celebrated and best-selling titles published by Timber Press in 2013. Organic Gardening named Joseph one of the “six young horticulturists who are helping to shape how America gardens”.

“The World of Rock Gardening” was the subject of Joseph’s program. During his talk he explained the basic principles of creating rock gardens. He shared beautiful, inspiring pictures of rock gardens he had visited while doing research for his new book, “Rock Gardening – Reimagining a Classic Style Garden Techniques - Plants”. Joseph ended his presentation by stating that rock gardens are starting to go main stream for the following reasons:

- the hardy succulent craze
- fairy gardening (rock gardens with props)
- many people have small spaces, therefore, containers are being used
- rock garden plants are easier to manage
- a shift in design
- it fits into today’s lifestyle
- the emergence of meadow grass gardening

A final thought – embrace and appreciate what grows in the climate you have.

There was a refreshment break and the raffle. This also gave everyone the opportunity to purchase unique plants our speaker had brought from Arrowhead Alpines.

The Business Meeting began with the reading of the August 21, 2016 minutes by Dianne Passoth. Linda Kalcevic moved and Bobbi Diller seconded that the minutes be approved as read. The motion passed unanimously.

Patty McGuire gave the Treasurer’s Report. There were 5 checks written and 6 deposits made since June 26th. Patty answered a question regarding the proceeds from the Annual Picnic. Ron Sims moved and Bobbi Diller seconded that the Treasurer’s Report be accepted as received. The motion unanimously passed.

Minutes of September Meeting (continued)

Len Lehman will be speaking at Soergel's October 15th at 7:00. There is a \$5.00 fee that will be redeemable at Soergel's. Advance registration is suggested.

Next, Al Deurbrouck discussed styrofoam containers.

An announcement was made concerning the Annual Banquet. It will be held on Sunday, October 16th at 5:00 at St. John's Lutheran Church. The cost for the catered buffet will be \$20.00 per person. A Yankee Swap Stealing Gift Exchange game will take the place of a speaker. If you wish to participate, please bring a wrapped garden related gift costing between 10 and 15 dollars. There will be door prizes and table favors, but no raffle. A notice will be sent including a request to RSVP.

It was noted that the Club is in need of a Vice Chair.

The meeting was then adjourned.

Dianne Passoth, Secretary

Minutes of Annual Awards Banquet - October

The 2016 Annual Awards Banquet of the Allegheny Chapter of the North American Rock Garden Society was held on Sunday, October 16, 2016 at St. John's Lutheran Church on Cumberland Road.

Social time began at 5:00 p.m. A delicious catered buffet dinner followed. Door prizes and table favors were provided.

Everyone then participated in a Yankee Swap Stealing Gift Exchange game involving wrapped garden related items. Packages feverishly passed from person to person. It really was a lot of fun.

Len Lehman distributed the Chair's Choice plant for 2017 to those in attendance. It was a Corydalis "Purple Bird". Lyn Lang will send the growing instructions Len provides to the members.

The evening ended with the presentation of the following awards:

2016 AWARD WINNERS

TRAVELING AWARDS

CLARE WILLIAMSON BEST IN SHOW AWARD

Debra Meyer - Phlox subulata 'Snowflake'

CONNIE McKEEVER BEST DWARF TREE, SHRUB OR CONIFER AWARD

Bob Dietz - Azalea 'Stewartstonian'

AUDREY RAUCH BEST TROUGH AWARD

Lyn Lang - Athyrium filix-femina 'Minutissimum', Adiantum venustum, and Asplenium trichomanes

CHAIR'S CHOICE AWARD

Bobbie Diller - Iris 'Hot Coals'

PERMANENT AWARDS

MADLINE MODIC MERITORIOUS SERVICE AWARD

Sandra Ciccone and Lorraine Duffola

Dianne Passoth, Secretary

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MAY SHOW WINNERS

CUMULATIVE POINT WINNERS

- 1st Al Deurbrouck
- 2nd Lyn Lang
- 3rd Trish Abrams

BEST IN CLASS

CLASS #1 ONE PAN ROCK GARDEN PLANT IN FLOWER — Debra Meyer,
Phlox subulata ‘Snowflake’

CLASS #2 ONE PAN NATIVE WILDFLOWER, SUITABLE FOR SUN OR
SHADE ROCK GARDEN — Lyn Lang, Trillium grandiflorum

CLASS #3 ONE PAN PRIMULACEAE IN FLOWER, INCLUDING PRIMULA,
DODECATHEON, AND ANDROSACE — Lyn Lang, Primula sp.

CLASS #4 ONE PAN BULBOUS OR RHIZOMATOUS PLANT, SUITABLE
FOR ROCK GARDEN, IN FLOWER — Trish Abrams, Arisaema
sikokianum

CLASS #5 ONE PAN SUCCULENT (CRASSULACEA, MESEMBRY,
ANTHEMACEAE) — Al Deurbrouck, Lithops (Living Stones)

CLASS #6 ONE PAN ROCK GARDEN PLANT GROWN PRIMARILY FOR
FOLIAGE, INCLUDING HOSTAS, FERNS, AND SAXIFRAGE —
Al Deurbrouck, Hosta ‘Mister Asami’

CLASS #7 ONE PAN DWARF SHRUB, TREE, OR CONIFER — Bob Dietz, Azalea
‘Stewartstonian’

CLASS #8 ONE BOWL OF CUT FLOWERS OF ROCK GARDEN PLANTS,
TO BE JUDGED FOR VARIETY AND QUALITY OF MATERIAL —
Trish Abrams, Iris sp., Ajuga sp., Lily of the Valley, and Sweet Woodruff

CLASS #9 TROUGH OF GROWING PLANTS OF THREE OR MORE
DISTINCT SPECIES ARRANGED FOR EFFECT — Lyn Lang, Athyrium
felix-femina ‘Minutissimum’, Adiantum venustum, and Asplenium
trichomanes

CLASS #10 FAIRY GARDEN -- ONE PAN CONTAINING MINIATURE
PLANTS ACCESSORIES ARRANGED TO CREATE A MYTHICAL
GARDEN THEME — Nancy Pacella, Cedar Norfolk pine, Sedum sp.,
Sweet Woodruff, Moss sp., Viola sp., Alyssum sp., Mushroom sp., and
Ajuga sp.

CLASS #11 Chair’s Choice — Bobbi Diller, Iris ‘Hot Coals’



JOIN

NARGS TODAY. NARGS is for gardening enthusiasts interested in alpine, saxatile, and low-growing perennials and woody plants. Annual dues in the US and Canada are \$40, payable in US funds. VISA/Mastercard accepted.

Benefits of membership include: *Rock Garden Quarterly* with articles on alpines and North American wildflowers, illustrated in color photographs and pen and ink drawings; annual Seed Exchange with thousands of plant species; study weekends and annual meetings in either US or Canada; and book service.

Join online at www.nargs.org or write: Bobby J. Ward, Executive Secretary NARGS, P.O. Box 18604, Raleigh, NC 27619-8604, USA.

The NARGS *Quarterly* is now online and members have free access at www.nargs.org/rock-garden-quarterly.

NARGS Seed Exchange packaging workshop, December 8

9 a.m. – 12 Noon

**Northland Public Library
300 Cumberland Road
Pittsburgh 15237**

This activity will start promptly at 9 a.m., because we have only 3 hours to complete our work. Another group has reserved the meeting room after us, and we need to have all materials packed and the room clean by 12 noon.

Participants will process quantities of seed donated by NARGS members from around the world. Seeds for each variety will be divided into smaller quantities, placed in glassine envelopes and labeled for the annual sale known as the NARGS Seed Exchange. Through this annual sale, many choice or hard to find seeds are made available to NARGS members at very reasonable prices thanks to the support from members of the Allegheny Chapter and other chapters in preparing the seed packets.

Please bring scissors. Light refreshments will be available.