

President's Message

TREASURE HUNT

As a child, we can all remember enjoying a treasure hunt. I have been on an adult treasure hunt.

Many, many times I have driven down a street in Camas named NE Everett Street. It goes from town out to Lackamas Lake. As you drive out this street in the spring, you cannot help but be impressed by a section of this street that is adorned by a cavalcade of beautiful rhodies in bloom. Who brought all these rhodies here? Was there some famous rhodie person who gave out rhodies to all his neighbors?

After enjoying this street for six spring seasons, one day I got a call from Kathy Van Veen. There was some fellow in Camas named Thomas that has a yard full of rhodies, and he wanted to get rid some of them so he could plant bamboo. Yes, I said bamboo. The owner of these rhodies said that a few of the neighbors told him a famous rhodie person had lived in his house many years ago, and the rhodies he was about to dig up might be quite rare. This rhodie nut was named Ben and maybe his last name was something like Lancaster.

To his credit, Thomas called the Portland Chapter of the ARS and spoke with Kathy, and hence the call to me. I went out and looked and indeed the yard was full of rhodies, possibly as many as 50. They were not in very good shape, since the former owner became disabled and the yard was totally unattended for 15 years. I took Bob McArthur out and we surveyed the rhodies and selected several for cuttings.

Further checking revealed that this was not Ben Lancaster's house, but the home of his niece, Dorothy Kirsch. While talking with Dave Goheen I found that Ben Lancaster lived across the street several blocks to the north. On my next visit to Camas, I found the Lancaster house.

I mentioned this to Mike Stewart, and he had a major clue in this treasure hunt. First, Ben had supplied many of his hybrids to Mike's father at Dover Nursery, hybrids like MissionBells, Yaku Sunrise, Snow Lady, Lackamas Blue, Oliver Twist, Blulette, Rose Elf, Lackamas Spice, Vulcan Flame, Crete, Dover Rose, Yaku Frills and the list goes on. Secondly, Ben Lancaster's granddaughter had come across boxes with meticulous records of Lancaster's hybridizing work. These records meant little to the granddaughter, but she realized that they might be of interest to Mike Stewart,

A Short linked list of MAJOR FEATURES
Click on one to go there directly

Banquet meeting- [December Meeting](#)
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so she contacted him. Mike now has these records
On a recent afternoon, Mike and Marie Stewart and Jan Snyder and I went to visit the Lancaster home and the home of his niece. The owners of both these homes were most generous in permitting us to take cuttings, and Mike presented each owner with a copy of the book, "The Pacific Coast Rhododendron Story." Both owners were delighted to learn more about the history of their rhododendrons.

The cuttings were delivered to Kathy Van Veen that very evening, and they were in the dirt the next day. There are 14 different varieties and 140 cuttings growing at Van Veens. There are about 50 cuttings growing at Dover Nursery. All the cuttings have not been identified, but it looks like we have Lackamas Spice, Lackamas Blue, Inca Gold, Vulcan's Flame and Yaku Picotee, to name a few.

There are three bushes from Lancaster's niece's house that have been moved to our yard, and we are looking forward to raising the cuttings in our gardens. We have found the prizes in the treasure hunt.

Think of the impact that this man had. When the present owners purchased the Lancaster home in 1970, the whole back yard was full of rows of rhododendron plants. The new owners wanted the back yard for a playground for their children, so they called the neighbors and invited them in to take these rhododendrons. You now have beautiful rhododendrons all around this neighborhood. There are hundreds, no thousands, no tens of thousands of rhododendrons all around the world that came from a few tiny seeds in Ben Lancaster's greenhouse.

----Irv Snyder

December meeting.

HAVE A HOLLY JOLLY EVENING

FALL

By Peter Kendall

'Twas four days before Christmas and
 all through the hall
 The tables were glowing with candles
 and boughs.
 The music how merry, the punch all
 aglow,
 The air filled with odors of sweet
 casseroles.
 When what to my wondering eyes
 should appear
 But a long forming line, Irv Snyder at
 the rear.
 These Rhodie folks spoke not a word
 But went straight to their work
 While filling their platters
 With laughter and mirth...
 I heard them explain as they took their
 last bite...
 Merry Christmas to all and
 to all a good night a good night.

--Jan Snyder

Join us on December 21, 2006 for our annual
 Christmas Buffet at All Saints Episcopal Church.
 Bring a dish to share and join us at 6:30 p.m. for a
 memorable evening.

In support of our Christmas tradition members are
 invited to bring 12 slides to share for the evening's
 entertainment.

The doors will open at 6:00 p.m. to enable the Table
 Hosts to decorate.

volunteer table hosts are: :

1. Kathy & Dave Collier
2. Brenda Ziegler & Steve Hopkins x8
3. Dorothy & Don Patrick
4. Karen & Dick Cavender
5. Kathy & Roger Lintault
6. Linda Rungay
7. Anya Averill & Stuart Celarier
8. Peter Kendall
9. Barb & Bob MacArthur
10. Loni & John Welsh

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Into the noiselessness
 the swoop of a hummingbird
 in a muffled whirr

Between house and tree
 the empty web takes on
 a raggedness

Dropping temperature
 before nightfall and the
 cricket's trill

Fall - the path around
 the magnolia ends
 where it began

The maple's disguise
 at Halloween is almost
 flawless

On the other side
 of a lifting fog, a new world
 of sun struck maples

Fluttering leaf
 -- the wind at play in a world
 before time

Infiltrating fog
 the falling leaf's mindfulness
 is mindlessness

The broken leaf
 --its color now the color
 of the path
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SOMETIMES GOOD THINGS HAPPEN.....

Julie Miller (E. White Smith's Daughter and co president of the Tacoma Rhododendron Society) had this to say about her greenhouse:

We realized that our greenhouse was not going to last another winter and spent all of September taking down the glass, cutting out all the rotten roof joists, and replacing the glass with polycarbonate sheets.

You won't believe this but we were taking down the glass when our neighbor wandered over and asked, "What's up?" We told him we were building a new greenhouse and he piped up with, "My brother has some of that plastic stuff."

I thought to myself SUUUURE he does. So we went over to the guy's house and he told us that he had been meaning to build himself a greenhouse but it probably wouldn't happen and we could have it.

We scrounged 8 sheets of 4'x12' polycarbonate for free. We thought of Kathy Van Veen. We still had to buy four sheets and decided not to try and scrouge the wood so we couldn't do it for nothing but we did pretty well. Our initial budget was \$2000 and we only paid \$800.

We then converted the pots on the benches to conservatory style plantings in raised beds. Oh, we put in a small pond also. We will see if the vireyas and orchids like the new arrangement or not.

>> happy scrounging, fellow rhodie nuts!
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This Month's Featured rhododendron species:

R. NIEUWENHUISII

No, it's not named after your new managing editor. *R. Nieuwenhuisii* is a small leafed and small flowered vireya not normally found in cultivation. It is in the collection at the Royal Botanical Garden in Britain and in the wilds of the Far East. Look in the Rhododendron Handbook and you will find only the name listed in the vireya section, no further details. Sigh. Such a promising name- it deserves to be more popular if only for that reason.

A REQUEST from the National President of the American Rhododendron Society

Leonard Miller ARS President would like to ask the kind people of the Portland Rhododendron Society: Do any of you have any R. hyperthrum hybrid cuttings you would like to donate to the 2008 ARS convention to be held in Oklahoma.

If you do, please give them to Van Veen Nursery to root and send on for the convention.

If you have any questions call Kathy or Vicki at Van Veen Nursery 503-777-1734.

---Thanks, Van Veen Nursery on behalf of Leonard Miller

Ask the expert:

The question was asked: Can root weevils ever be eliminated from the garden? The resounding answer was no. It is best to focus on control of adults in the early and late summer. However, don't despair. If they don't go try selling "Laceleaf" Rhododendron! (and also see last month's comments on Telstar®).

Irv Snyder asked: Which rhododendron are early blooming? The crowd went wild with names and we were off. It proves we have quite a knowledgeable group.

Here is a list of what I could get:
 Airy Fairy see picture below



- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| Altraclarensis | Coral Glow |
| Christmas Cheer | Lee's Scarlet |
| Heather Ridge Beauty | Ptarmigan |
| Pink Snowflakes | R. lutescens |
| R. dauricum | R. moupinense |
| R. macronlatum | Tessa Bianca |
| Seta | |

Yellow Hammer --- winter frost and spring bloom photos L. Nieuwenhuis



--Vicki
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THE CREELWAY PROPAGATION SYSTEM

by Mike Creel

The first installment of a series

Mike Creel lives in Lexington South Carolina. He is active in rhododendron chat group circles on the internet and he specializes in azalea propagation. He will give presentations at chapter meetings, but as a high demand Eastern USA speaker, he is beyond the budgetary constraints of the Portland Chapter. The next best thing is to present some of his ideas to you in print.

The first is a handout that Mr. Creel distributed at his Oct. 21, 2006 CreelWay propagation workshop at the Mary Henry Arboretum in the Gladwyne township of Philadelphia. Here are his introductory comments.

"The document is an attempt to greatly simplify my propagation principles and methods from a 22-page document of propagation notes that I prepared for a large workshop in July 2006 at the Cullowhee native plant conference at Western Carolina University, my third consecutive workshop there. A direct link to the pdf file of that longer document is given in this article."

"The second document (to be printed next month) is my response to several good questions that Clarence Towe of Walhalla, SC, provided when I asked him to critique my July 2006 propagation notes."

"Since writing all three documents cited above I have made several UPDATES (to be printed as part 3) which include advancements, experiments and improvements involving CreelWay propagation. These updates include: experiments with open-vented dome pots in part shade and full sun; building a propagation tower for hanging basket domepots; using long-fiber sphagnum moss as media in domepots; making propagation media from off the shelf products; and others."

NATURE IS MY GREENHOUSE

A propagation workshop

Who in the audience has tried to propagate

trees, shrubs, vines or perennials from cuttings? Who has a greenhouse or cold frame? Who has used glass jars for propagation?

Well, I would like to introduce to some new propagation methods and devices that I have invented by trials and errors. You may not recognize any of them since they are not available at the store. But they are easy to make and use.

My complete propagation notes can be found on the website of the 2006 Cullowhee Native Plant Conference <http://edoutreach.wcu.edu/np/2006/index.html>

CREELWAY PROPAGATION PRIMER

Without a greenhouse, strictly outdoors, using seeds and cuttings I propagate many choice native and cultivated plants in USDA zone 8A where I live. I propagate on a small to medium scale very economically, just relying on discarded and inexpensive materials. I select and adapt my pots and my media for drainage that starts fast and stays fast. I use two basic pots of my own design, one for seeds and one for cuttings. Both pots are altered by adding or enlarging drainage holes and both are only half filled with media. The cutting pot, called a domepot, has a clear or translucent closed dome, made from a bottle, sitting in the center of on the media and securely wired to the pot and must be kept in shade while the cuttings root. The seed pot, also just half filled with media, has cover made of 1/4 or 1/3 inch mesh hardware cloth attached to it and can be kept in sun or partial shade. Good labeling of all propagation pots is important, giving contents by variety of species and date planted. DO NOT use fertilizer, pesticides or fungicides in either type of pot.

The shaded domepot for cuttings has a plastic dome sitting inside the rim to capture humidity and hold some heat inside. Water from rains, sprinkler or hand watering enters the dome pot through a margin of open media between dome and pot rim and migrates through the media under the dome. Do not remove a dome to water cuttings. Domepots

need once weekly watering of about 1/2 inch from either rain or sprinkling. Rooting in warm weather takes from 2 to 5 months, longer during cool weather. Once cuttings are rooted the vent cap (bottle cap) of the dome can be removed, but not the dome itself. A vented domepot (cap removed) can be gradually moved out from under the shade into full sun and will not overheat. The vented dome can be kept attached to the pot to speed cutting growth, particularly during winter, or the dome can be removed 6 weeks after initial venting.

A sunny seed pot with the wire mesh cover, called a varmint cap, that prevents bird and other animal damage to seedlings, can be kept covered until seedlings grow to reach the wire mesh. Or the seedlings can be transplanted and separated shortly after the first true leaves (not seed leaves) have formed and planted in a large pot with wider spacing or separate pots. The media I use when repotting woody plants is 2 parts GardenPlus soil conditioner mixed with one part of pine bark mini-nuggets or an equivalent mixture. When transplanting seedlings and cuttings to a pot I fill it just halfway with media. Good drainage is critical for many species, except things like waterlilies.

THE BASICS OF CREELWAY PROPAGATION

Finding and Adapting Domes: Propagation domes can be easily made by cutting off the bottom or cutting in half a variety of plastic bottles that are clear or translucent and do not degrade with exposure to cold or heat. I like 2 liter and 3 liter soft drink bottles and certain types of clear gallon spring water bottles. Various food and drink storage containers can also be adapted. Translucent milk bottles work but may break down with outdoor exposure. Do not touch or disturb domes in place over cuttings, particularly in cold weather.

Selecting and Adapting Pots/Containers: Except for the mesh pots designed for garden pond plants, all pots need to have new, additional drainage holes drilled into them using a 3/4 holesaw and high-speed corded drill. You can reuse old pots, particularly the

molded thick walled pots, for propagation, including plastic hanging baskets. Pots can also be made from a variety of inexpensive containers. Don't drill cold pots but warm them to room temperature first to prevent splitting. A small hair dryer speeds this up. Making a pilot hole with a small awl before drilling is good for many plastics. For seed pots I cover them with a square of hardware cloth 1/4 or 1/2 inch mesh that is cut slightly larger than the pot opening. Domepots need to be shaded while cuttings are rooting. I use a medium density Coolaroo shade cloth supported by a four foot high frame. Seed pots can be in full sun. Hanging baskets make one of the best domepots.

Finding and Mixing Media: The primary media I use for cutting and seed pots may not be presently available here, but there are alternatives that drain quickly enough (long fiber sphagnum moss, etc). My media mix is 5 parts of GardenPlus soil conditioner (Lowe's #9675) mixed with one part of Fafard 3 or Baccto Pro. I just fill my "drilled" pots half full of media which speeds drainage. Once media is moistened by sprinkling the pot, after sticking cuttings or planting seeds, water must drain from the media surface in one eye blink. Cuttings and seedlings will not survive in media that stays saturated. Long-term good drainage is the priority for all propagation. I use no artificial rooting hormones on cuttings but do sprinkle local humus fines on the media surface in cutting and seed pots before planting.

Finding, Keeping and Preparing Cuttings - With woody plants I stick only woody cuttings, not green soft growth. Cuttings should be conditioned local outdoor weather, not from a greenhouse or indoors, by growing outdoors or by prechilling in a ziplock bag with no added moisture. Jointed or branched cuttings root better than straight stems. Dormant cuttings in this area can be taken and stuck in winter IF protected from severe cold by a coldframe or cold greenhouse. They can also be stuck just before the end of the dormant season, before any leafing out. I use only woody cuttings because they are available year-round, are easier to handle, store and mail than green cuttings and have more growing points and

natural rooting hormones present.

SUMMARIZING THE STEPS FOR THE CREELWAY PROPAGATION SYSTEM

Select an area where domepots will be shaded and protected from cold and where seed pots will get enough sunlight.

Assemble a collection of pots and drill them for drainage.

Collect clear bottles to make domes to fit pots and cut the bottoms off.

Find a supply of materials to mix your own media, and keep it dry

Buy or find wire to hold down domes and seed pot covers. I use new electric fence wire.

Get materials for outdoor labels. Metal offset printing plates are best. Some pencil writable plastics.

Get necessary tools including an electric drill and 3/4 inch holesaw, pocketknife with awl, heavy scissors, wire cutters, leather gloves.

Consider sources of cuttings and seeds you wish to propagate

Before you stick cuttings or plant seeds, consider your season and your climate, and what temperatures are predicted for the next six months.

FOR QUESTIONS CONTACT:

Mike Creel <mikeacreel@yahoo.com>
155 Cannon Trail Rd., Lexington, SC 29073
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Midnight mystique photo L. Nieuwenhuis

THE OCTOBER FRANK FUJIOKA PROGRAM

By Kathy Van Veen

We were honored to have Frank Fujioka come down from Whidbey Island for last month's program. He gave a real first class presentation, no doubt about it.



photo L. Nieuwenhuis

He had been asked by Marc Columbel, the founder of the Rhododendron Society in France, to talk last May at their big show in Brittany, which happens every three years.



Kathy Van Veen receiving non-recycled plastic cutting bags from Frank Fujioka photo L. Nieuwenhuis

I had asked him several times to come to Portland, but he always declined. Then last winter I went up to Everett and gave a program. At the Farwest Show in August Greg Kesterson mentioned that Frank was willing to do his Brittany program for us. Just Ask. So I phoned him up. He joshed around a bit, but ultimately said yes. Later he admitted that he almost had to, because I had done one for them and even traveled many hours on the BUS to get there. See, good eventually comes from lots of things!

Anyway, Frank's program was terrific. He

used Powerpoint, complete with music, and his pictures were crystal clear and color perfect.

He showed the hybrids he has developed and registered over the years. His goals include trouble-free plants that grow in full sun, have beautiful flowers, and good foliage. It's pretty easy to get one of these in a plant, but not all at once. From the pictures he showed, you can see that he has succeeded many times.

Frank has ambitions beyond that. Way, way beyond. He showed what could be in the year 2046. There were his beautiful plants happily growing in the desert with camels walking by, and in Antarctica where the penguins were enjoying them.

Every so often he inserted a surprise photo to keep everyone's attention. One was of his host Marc Columbel with a judge's wig and a big old mustache/

After his time in France, Frank went on to Germany. He visited Hachmann's where they are doing quite well, thank you, under the direction of Hans' son Holger. The greenhouses are large and full, and they are dabbling in Japanese maples.

Then he went to Denmark, which almost seems to be the place to grow beautiful species, plants looked so very good. We were all ready to move there. They plant in beds made of peat blocks. You can read more about it in the ARS Journal, summer 2006.

Finally must be mentioned his garden on Whidbey (Island), right above the water. If you haven't been there, you must see it. It is of course perfect. What would you expect from a man who lives on Rhodie Lane?

---Kathy Van Veen

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photo by by Frank Fujioka



photo by by Frank Fujioka

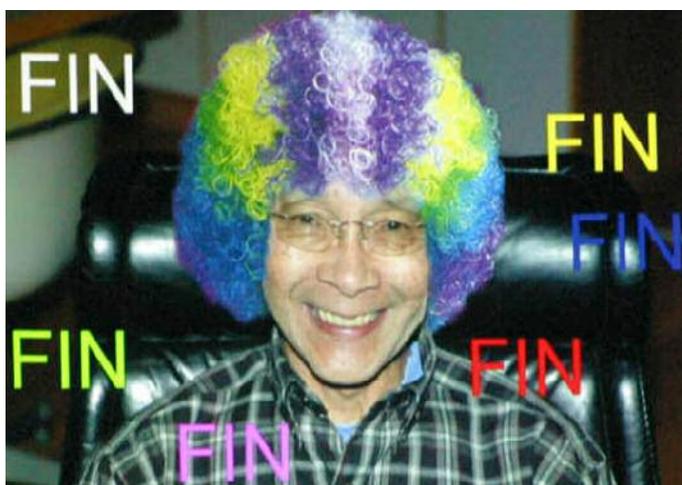


photo by by Frank Fujioka

CAN YOU RECOGNIZE WHAT THIS IS?



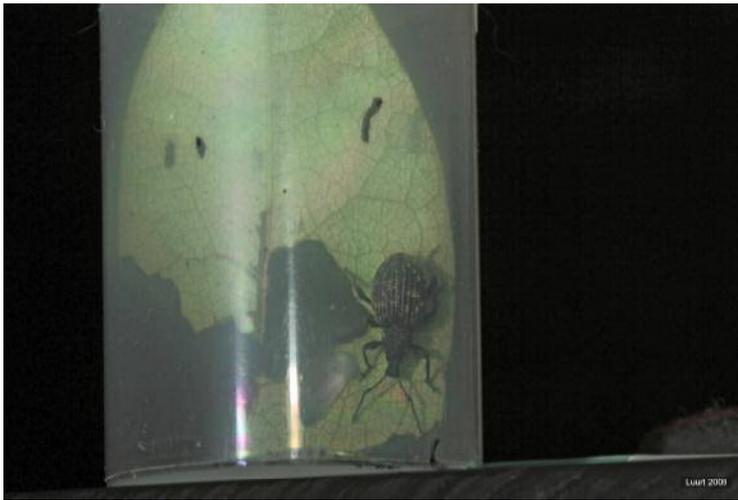
Almost every rhododendron and azalea garden has a lot of this material mixed in among the plants. Do you know what it is?

photos by L. Nieuwenhuis

How do you know when you are suffering from **SEASONAL AZALEA DEPRIVATION SYNDROME**

The symptoms for the disorder, whose acronym is SADS, are often encountered during the winter months. You know that you are suffering when you find yourself keeping a pet root weevil in a jar on top of the computer.

Here is my little one. She(?) was attracted to my electronic bug light in the back yard in late September and spent the night in a barrel of water located below the light. The barrel functioned to collect the bugs that didn't get fried by the electronic grid. I put her in a clear 35mm film jar but she just wouldn't die. Finally I added a piece of *R. ponticum* leaf and she ATE IT.



The film can leaves something to be desired for photographic clarity. Not only are the reflections from the flash distracting but it leaves a diffuse haze over everything. Still, you can see the biting mouth parts that are used to create all of those leaf notches.



Now she is in her new home made from four microscope slides glued together with clear end caps. You can tell she's much happier. She's snoozing in the bottom of her cage, much like a faithful dog.

It is remarkable how long a root weevil can go without eating (at least a month), and also how much one can eat in the course of a single night. The result of all that feasting is shown in the last picture: Scat, droppings, leaf recyclings, evil weevil doo-doo, the evidence of a meal greatly enjoyed.

FINALLY, IF YOU REALLY GET DEPRESSED WITH THE WINTER BLUES, YOU CAN GET YOUR PLIERS AND CRUSH THE LITTLE BLIGHTER.

---Luurt

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December 2006
12 – Study Group -7PM Van Veen Nursery 21 – Christmas Potluck Party TBA – Board Meeting
January 2007
9– Study Group -7PM Van Veen Nursery 18– Chapter meeting – Peter Kendall: 2 summers in the Rockies 23 – Board Meeting
February
6 – Study Group -7PM Van Veen Nursery 15– Chapter meeting – Mike Bones: memberships and rhodfies Companion plant auction 20 – Board Meeting666
Other programs
March – Larry Borlin: companion planting in Portland April – Ron Spendall: composting May – Awards Banquet
Meeting Info
Location: All Saints Episcopal Church on SE 40 th and Wood-stock. There is parking onsite and on the street. When? Third Thursday each month beginning in September and ending with the Awards Banquet in May. What do we do? We have fun activities such as presentations, pot lucks, parties, auctions, tours, and garden events. The social hour includes refreshments and begins at 7 pm. A short business meeting at 7:30 pm follows. Meetings typically include an informative and entertaining presentation of about 45 minutes.

NOTE: An expanded version of this newsletter is also being e-mailed. If you fail to receive an e-mail version this month but would like to get one then you need to send your e-mail address to:
arsportland@wa-net.com

Garden Chairs

Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden

Bob MacArthur
360-256-2522

Beverly Watkins
503-244-0537

Cecil & Molly Smith Garden

Ginny Mapes
503-647-2896

Online Discussion Group

Point your browser to <http://groups.yahoo.com> and look for rhododendrons. Participants include renowned hybridizers, growers and hobbyists.

Portland Chapter Web Site

Paste this address into your browser to see what we're about in the Portland Chapter ARS at www.rhodies.org/index.htm

Send articles, events or ideas for the newsletter to:
arsportland@wa-net.com
or if all you have is the US Postal service, to:
Luurt Nieuwenhuis,
Managing Editor
P.O. Box 2353
Vancouver, WA
98668-2353

Article and idea deadline is at the Chapter meeting. Items received after that time may not be included in the current issue. Questions concerning delivery should be directed to **Maria Stewart** (503) 668-7565.

Do you know an interesting tidbit on how a hybrid received its name? We'd love for you to contribute the information.

Tualatin Valley Chapter

Regularly scheduled meetings on the **second Tuesday of the month**

at 7 p.m. – at the:

First Baptist Church
177 NE Lincoln Street
Hillsboro, OR.

Phone: **Ginny Mapes** 503-647-2896

Email: ginny@coho.net

Siuslaw Chapter

Meets on the **third Tuesday of the month at 7 pm.** at the:

Presbyterian Church of the Siuslaw,
3996 Hwy 101 N.
Florence, OR

A pre-meeting dinner is held at a different restaurant each time at 5 pm. Visit www.siuslawars.org to find out where.

Chapter Officers

(All numbers are 503 unless noted)

President: Irv Snyder 509-427-7738
Vice President: Jan Snyder 509-427-7738
Secretary: Carol McCarthy 245-3533
Treasurer: Dick Cavender 625-6331
(Bookkeeper: Bruce Krohn 668-4842)
Past President: Kathy Van Veen 777-1734

BOARD MEMBERS

Through 6/30/07
Ray Clack Mike Stewart
Kath Collier Dave Collier
Mike Domaschofsky

Through 6/30/08
Steve Hopkins Brenda Ziegler
Steve Kaminski Donna Sell
Maria Stewart

MEMBERSHIP chairman Replacement Wanted:

Ann Clack has asked to be replaced as membership chairperson, a position that she has held for the last 10 years. It will be greatly appreciated if someone will step forward to fill the position.

Our Christmas Banquet is always well attended



photos L. Nieuwenhuis

This was the 2004 banquet
But it will be held in the same
place this year.

If you bring some of the food,
there will be plenty to eat.
If you bring a gift to share with
another, there
will be plenty of presents for all.



The location for the banquet
this year will be in the same
place as these pictures were
taken at..

Everybody bring a few pictures
to share for the evening's
entertainment.

It appears that there will be a
computer projection system
available for digital graphics.



We will close this newsletter, as we
will with many to come, with a
Sunset (or Sunrise) picture

The Columbia River
looking west from Crown Point
To Portland

photos L. Nieuwenhuis

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