



# ***THE MASON-DIXON LINE***

## **NEWSLETTER OF THE MASON-DIXON CHAPTER**

**THE NORTH AMERICAN ROCK GARDEN SOCIETY**

**JANUARY – MARCH 2010**

### ***Chairman's Letter***

We've certainly had more than our share of moisture thus far in December. The last measurement I took of our snow storm was 20 inches. It was really beautiful and I didn't need to travel, so I enjoyed the storm. I did miss my evening walkabout with my glass of wine to check on the plants for five days ( I still had the glass of wine ). The snow lasted until Christmas and then it rained for two days and the temperature went from the 20's to the 50's. There are only a few spots of snow remaining and it's a springlike day today (December 27). I'm sure the next storm is just around the corner.

I have four different rosemary plants near the greenhouse and somewhat protected. They are supposed to be hardy and they still are green and look good. I've never had any make it through the winter here. I always take cuttings and root them in the greenhouse, if these make it I'll root some for our plant sale.

My Musa basjoo has about ten stalks that got to be 15 feet tall, but no flowers. I got an email from Bobby Ward in Raleigh and he had fruit on his plant. No such luck here in Jarrettsville. I do have a Camellia that is six feet tall and still had a lot of blooms the first week of December. The rock garden areas are doing well with many plants still visible. The Cyclamen hederifolium are forming fairly large clumps and the variegated leaves really look good.

I'm very remiss in placing my seed order to NARGS and haven't ordered yet. I will do so

before the new year. Thank you to the Mason-Dixon volunteers who took their time to pack the seeds for the National. We may hold a training session at one of our meetings this year to demonstrate how easy it is to do, and try to drum up a few more volunteers. Starting a plant from seed is great fun and a very inexpensive way to expand your variety of plants with a low cost. I've already planted a number of seeds from plants in my yard and hope to see them germinate in the spring. I just put the seeds in flats and leave them out in the yard and most will germinate (some don't for whatever reason??).

Don't forget the upcoming Eastern Winter Study Weekend in the Boston area this year. You can go online to get the details and make your arrangements. The speakers are always great and it's comforting to be around plant people who are as crazy as yourself! An added bonus is all the vendors who sell all those new plants that you can't live without.

The National meeting is in Colorado this year (July) and I don't think I'll ever tire of walking or riding in the Rockies!

Hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Year!

Dick

Dues for 2010 are due now. See the form in this newsletter. Now is also a good time to join NARGS ([nargs.org](http://nargs.org)). The website lists the many benefits of membership. It has been redesigned and if you haven't visited for a while, you will be surprised.

# Why am I a Rock Gardener

By Panayoti Kelaidis

In the depths of what seems to be an early and rather fierce winter, we look at a lot of challenges ahead: hosting a meeting for NARGS in July, seed packaging galore, Study Weekends and no end of things to do. As a type-A personality, none of this daunts me too much, but if this sort of activity were what the club was about for me, I would quit in a minute.

I am a rock gardener because I'm crazy about little plants. I confess, I am a plant nerd. Of course, I have come to appreciate all my fellow sufferers in the club, but the real reason I belong is because this is the place we plantaholics come together to swap, buy, learn about and just generally worship those tiny treasures that grow on the world's high crags, that cover the steppes of Eurasia and the American west with miracle blossoms in the spring, and glimmer on steep subalpine cliffs in the apricot half light of dawn.

There is something enormously gratifying about having a saxifrage knit a cluster of rocks together in a trough, making the trough look like one big rock, and when they bloom it knocks your socks off. I can't wait to get my cup of coffee in the morning and go out into the garden—if it's snowy and cold, I may just peer out, but even in winter, when it's open, the rock garden is the place to be...all those gratifying mounds and cushions, the contrasts and echoes and remembrances of places high and sacred and profound.

The cushions may be dormant to some people's eyes but rock gardeners can recognize the growth buds and the hint of flower stems in the center of the draba rosettes even in November. We are the ones who notice the tiny rock fern on the road cut as we zip by at 60 miles an hour, and groan when we see "Colombine" misspelled in the newspaper.

I have been lucky to find hundreds of treasured alpines on five continents, and grow thousands of their cousins in my home garden and at a great public garden—and after over 50 years, I feel as though I have barely scratched the surface.

I find it sad that so many people are obsessed with electronics and media, with man made things: with iron and steel and plastic and inanimate, humanoid structures.

I have yet to see a television that can channel all the qualities of light that my rock garden does in just a few minutes. No computer could tabulate the ways that plants vary from day to day, from year to year, the way they blossom in my heart. We humans have bombed them, driven over them with hordes of steppe ponies and camels, pummeled them with Humvees and ATV's, built endless Walmarts over them, and we still expand marginal agriculture and suburban sprawl over their gentle homes.

But in our club, we champion and honor and respect the gemlike trophies of Mother Earth: we are her knights. Her wizards. Her minions, and I believe we garner a glimmer of eternity pursuing this hobby that I feel at times is an act of grace.

If everyone on earth had a trough (if not a full scale rock garden) I think there'd be a lot more love and a lot less war.

Reprinted with permission from [Saximontana](#), the newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Chapter, January 2010. You can visit Panayoti and his plants by attending the annual meeting in July.

## ***Getting Acquainted with Alpine-L***

*by Marika Sniscak*

Some time ago, I signed up to join Alpine-L, the electronic website of interest to rock gardeners. Not being a rock gardener myself, I had a general interest in finding out what it was about. Since I use my computer at work all day long, and seldom turn it on otherwise, the fact that I received email postings to Alpine-L every few days (and a dozen or more on some days when a hot topic came up), it quickly became apparent that I couldn't read every posting. So I started saving the postings to an email folder with the intention of reading them later, and when I started cleaning out my folders this month in preparation for making new ones for 2010, discovered that I had saved over 800 emails!

The postings to the site are copyrighted, and my purpose here is to make you aware of the site and some of the topics that come up which are of interest to everyone who gardens, not just rock gardeners. I consider myself primarily a woodland gardener with an interest in growing simple, reliable plants and adding some that I believe (fear? hope?) will be a challenge and a source of much satisfaction if all goes well.

Many of the postings are of photographs that are an education in plant identification and are often stunningly beautiful.

For those who have not joined a Listserve before, at the end of this article is some information reprinted from the site.

Sometimes the posting is a one-line question where you can visualize the gardener pulling off his gloves and typing a quick query in hopes of getting information he needs now. Other postings can be longer, although it is often the answer, not the question, that takes a whole page. And some philosophical discussions can be lengthy and strongly opinionated.

Many topics have been of interest to me, including:

Cyclamen coum

Plants in troughs in winter

E-permits of small lots of imported seed

Jeffersonia diphylla

Fungus gnats

Squirrels and guinea fowl

Slugs

Salvia jurisicii

Web pages of Czech seed collectors

Pink Dicentra cucullaria

Daphne

Garden auriculas in the Middle Atlantic States

Seed germination references

The Ingwersens and the RHS

Anemonopsis seed

Sanguinaria in sun?

Archives are available on the website for those who don't want to save emails.

The contributors (from all over the world) sometimes add a note on the day's weather or their location, which makes the postings seem much more immediate, more like a conversation. Some examples:

(Denver) Summer doldrums...finally!

(Denver) Rain again!

(Victoria, British Columbia) maritime zone 8, cool Mediterranean climate, mild rainy winters, mild dry summers

(Buckinghamshire, England,) circa zone 8, minus 2C lowest so far this winter

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A Listserve is an electronic mailing list that uses email to allow for widespread distribution of information to many Internet users. It is similar to a traditional mailing list of names and addresses, as might be kept by an organization for sending publications to its members.

Alpine-L calls itself "The Electronic Rock Garden Society for Rock Gardening and for Dwarf and Alpine Plants, including their botany."

TO JOIN: <http://www.thealpinegarden.com/alpine-l.htm>

ALPINE-L'S AIMS:

Alpine-L was founded in order to bring closer together the rock gardeners of the planet, to serve some of their information needs, to provide for a freer exchange between rock garden clubs and their members, to speed that exchange and provide for more rapid adoption of ideas, policies and knowledge resulting from it, and to promote the exchange of knowledge across national boundaries. As one member of Alpine-L (Lois Addison) has put it: "For those of us who either because of [economics] or time or dislike of travel, etc. don't make it to [club] meetings, this is a wonderful way to:

1. form some connections with people you would otherwise not come in contact with
2. learn from the questions that go back and forth
3. get immediate access to information that you need or are curious about.

## Mason-Dixon Chapter Programs 2010

We meet at: Norrisville Library and Recreation Center, 5340 Norrisville Road,  
Norrisville, MD 21162

All meetings begin at 1:00 pm; the meeting room is available at 12 noon for a social hour  
before the event. Bring your own bag lunch.

### January 16, Saturday

Member's meeting. Bring pictures and slides to share and books to sell. Show us  
which tools, gizmos, and techniques you use in your garden.

### February 20, Saturday

Stan Kollar of Kollar's Nursery will talk about the use of native plants in our  
gardens. Later in the year we will visit his nursery. [www.kollarnursery.com](http://www.kollarnursery.com)

### March 4-7 Western Study Weekend

Medford, Oregon, hosted by the Siskiyou Chapter.  
Contact: Kathleen Pyle, [kmpyle2@yahoo.com](mailto:kmpyle2@yahoo.com)

### March 20, Saturday

TBA

### March 19-21 Eastern Study Weekend

Rock Gardens of the Future. Devens, MA, hosted by the New England Chapter.  
Hear about terrific new plants for your garden; learn design principles you can use  
to make your garden more interesting and pleasing; buy great plants; enter a plant  
show; and mingle with other obsessed gardeners. Devens is the new town on the  
site of the former Fort Devens, 30 miles west of Boston. Contact: Rosemary  
Monahan, [rosemonahan@comcast.net](mailto:rosemonahan@comcast.net)

### April 24, Saturday Garden visit 10:00 AM

Rocky Hollow Garden, 27 Halls Rd., Red Lion, York County PA. 17356  
A private landscape owned and gardened by Nicholas Klise and Morris West.  
Started over thirty years ago, the garden hosts a rock garden, wildflower field,  
woodland walk and a tree and shrub section. The plants include native species and  
plants of interest from their travels all over the world.

From the north: From Red Lion, Pa. travel app. 4 miles south to Snyder Corner  
Rd. Turn left onto Snyder Corner and travel app. 0.7 miles to Halls Rd. Turn right  
onto Halls Rd. and look for the driveway on the left.

### May 15, Saturday Garden visit 1:00 PM

Carol Warner, is well known as the iris lady. She is the proprietor of Draycott  
Gardens. <http://www.draycott-gardens.com/newsframe.html>, (410-374-4788),  
[draycott@qis.net](mailto:draycott@qis.net)

Upperco is located in northern Baltimore County, Maryland, and Falls Road is MD 25, which runs from Baltimore north to the Pennsylvania state line. Email or call Carol for detailed driving instructions.

Carol sells over 100 Siberian, 80 Japanese, 70 bearded and about eight iris species, as well as over 20 daylilies, through her simple, black and white catalog. She also has peonies, rhododendrons, hostas, dahlias and other perennials. Carol recommends the nearby Friendly Farms Restaurant.

June 19, Saturday 10AM Plant sale in the Norrisville Library pavilion.

June 26, Saturday Garden Visit 9:00 AM  
Kollar's Nursery, 5200 West Heaps Rd, Pylesville, MD 21132  
Kollar Nursery specializes in native plants for field, forest, and wetlands.  
[www.kollarnursery.com](http://www.kollarnursery.com), [kollars@earthlink.net](mailto:kollars@earthlink.net), 410-836-0500

July 4, Sunday  
Picnic at Nick & Morris's Rocky Hollow Garden  
Bring a dish to share and your lawn chairs.  
See April 24 event for directions.

**July 11-14 Annual General Meeting**  
Salida, Colorado, hosted by the Rocky Mountain Chapter.  
Contact: Randy Tatroe, [rltaurora@aol.com](mailto:rltaurora@aol.com)

July 17, Saturday Annual picnic 12:00 noon  
Bring a dish to share and your lawn chairs.  
Hostess: Susie Leslie  
5404 First Ave., Upperco, MD 21155, Ph: 410-429-4954  
Park on roadside or in bank parking lot. Directions to follow.

September 18, Saturday  
Plant sale in the pavilion.

October 16, Saturday  
TBA

November 20, Saturday  
  
Larry Klotz  
Cumberland plateau

December, no meeting

## *Mason-Dixon Chapter NARGS*

### *Membership Renewal for 2010*

It's renewal time. Please check your mailing label. The 2-digit number following your name shows if you have paid ahead for 2010. If it shows 2009, please mail the form with your check for \$10 or bring it to the January meeting. If it shows 2008, you can continue to receive the newsletter and enjoy membership benefits by sending your check for \$20.

If you notice an error on your mailing label, please email Jerry Hudgens at [gahudgens@comcast.net](mailto:gahudgens@comcast.net).

Thank you!

If no change, check here   
If information has changed, check here

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Yearly dues are \$10.00 (single or joint at the same address). Please make check payable to M-DC/NARGS.**

**Mail to Jerry Hudgens, Membership Secretary, 3115 Woolsey Drive, Churchville, MD 21028. Email: [gahudgens@comcast.net](mailto:gahudgens@comcast.net). Phone 410-836-2469.**

**Please remember to mail your membership dues to national NARGS separately.**

## OUR NEXT PROGRAMS

To assist our Program Chair, please contact her with suggestions for speakers, field trips, workshops, or whatever you believe would be enjoyable to our members. Joan King's email is [jsking1@lycos.com](mailto:jsking1@lycos.com) and phone is 717-284-5239.

**January 16**                      **12 noon social, 1p.m. meeting**                      **Norrisville Library**

Our annual members' meeting, slide show and used book sale. This meeting brings out the best that our members have to offer as we look back at the past year, share our gardening successes and disappointments, pass on tips that worked and ask for help where we need it, and tell each other about new plants, tools, techniques, and travel. It's a great way to start your gardening year. Digital projector will be available. Contact Joan if you need other equipment.

**February 20**                      **12 noon social, 1 pm meeting**                      **Norrisville Library**

Stan Kollar of Kollar's Nursery will talk about the use of native plants in our gardens. Kollar's Nursery specializes in plants native to the east coast of the United States. They also recognize the tremendous diversity and beauty of plants from around the world and cultivate selected species from the temperate zone to the tropics.

**March 20**                      **12 noon social, 1 pm meeting**                      **Norrisville Library**

To be announced. We will send an email to members well in advance of the date to tell you about the March meeting.

NOTE: In case of threatening weather, call one of the weather captains below to check on roads and meeting status.  
Weather Captains: Dick Arnold, Jarrettsville MD (410) 692-9622; Bill/Sue Yonkers, Baltimore MD (410)560-1853; Jerry Hudgens, Churchville MD (410)836-2469; Jane Grushow, Lancaster PA (717)733-4287

### THE MASON-DIXON LINE

**RETURN UNDELIVERED COPIES TO:**

Jerry Hudgens, Membership Secretary  
3115 Woolsey Drive  
Churchville, MD 21028

Yearly dues for the Mason-Dixon  
Chapter of the North American Rock  
Garden Society (NARGS) are \$10  
(single or joint at same address).  
Make checks payable to M-DC/NARGS.  
Mail to Jerry Hudgens.  
Phone: 410-836-2469  
Email: [gahudgens@comcast.net](mailto:gahudgens@comcast.net)

Marika Sniscak, Editor  
9059 Meadowvale Court  
Ellicott City, MD 21042  
Phone: 410-461-1923  
Email: [msniscak@dssr-inc.com](mailto:msniscak@dssr-inc.com)

Newsletter is published four times a year and lists all events, plant sales and field trips. Meetings are held at Norrisville Library, Norrisville, MD, a few miles south of the Mason-Dixon Line.