

# AMERICAN PENSTEMON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Val Myrick, Editor  
vkmyrick@pacbell.net

## ALL ROADS LEAD TO ELY 2008 ANNUAL MEETING -THE TEASER-

*Bob Pendleton*

On June 13, Penstamaniacs will converge on Ely, White Pine County (WPC), Nevada, for the 2008 American Penstemon Society Annual Meeting.

Ely has been selected for its central location in White Pine County, perhaps the richest penstemon county in the country, with at least\* 20 verified species occurring naturally.

We will meet at our Prospector Hotel for a Friday night mixer to meet other members and enjoy a keying seminar featuring Loraine Yeats of the Denver Botanic Gardens' herbarium and Drs. Pat and Noel Holgren of Logan, UT and the New York Botanic Gardens and the authors of *Intermountain Flora*. Plans include the use of digital techniques to enable us to really see what the identifying characteristics really are. Of course we will also discuss the many tours that will occur Saturday and Sunday, as well as fully explain the "after tours" that will be offered.

Tours for the next two days will include trips to the White River Basin, led by Steve Caicco, a career botanist and plant ecologist with an intimate knowledge of Great Basin plants. These tours will

feature the high desert grass lands, clay deposits, silts, sands, playas, desert pavements, and tufa mounds. At first glance they will appear devoid of interesting plants, but likely we will see *Penstemon dolius*, *P. confusus*, *P. barnebyi*, and *P. immanifestus*. Other plants of note will include *Lepidium nanum*, *Eriogonum schockleyi*, *Astragalus jejunus*, *A. toanus*, *Phlox hoodi* ssp. *muscooides*, *Enciliopsis nudicaulis*, *Cryptantha welshii*, plus rarities like *Mentzilia tiehmii*, *Frasera gypsicola*, *Phacelium parishii*, and the dwarf shrubby *Artemesia pygmaea*.



*Penstemon palmeri*

Great Basin National Park (GBNP) must be considered a gem in any plant tour, with its 15 species of Penstemons, including the endemics, *P. concinnus* and *P. leiophyllus* var. *francisci pennellii*. The *Flora of South Snake Range*, which encompasses the GBNP and its

drainages, is some 139 pages and packed with all sorts of floristic gems, not the least of which is the Park's signature plant, the Great Basin Bristlecone pine, *Pinus longaeva*.

Other tours will venture into the sagebrush steppe, the pinon-juniper woodland, and as far up slope into the sub-alpine as the melting snows will permit. Remember the asterisk (\*) back in the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph? One of our planned activities will be to determine whether the count is 20 or 21 and whether the occurrence of *Penstemon palmeri* var. *macranthus* in the county is valid or not. We will legally gather samples of the *P. palmeri* from the attributed location, and using the resources of our group and its technical expertise, prepare specimens for herbarium use and taxonomically determine the authenticity of the citations. Again we will do this using some exciting digital enhancements, so that each of us can truly see what is involved in the procedures.

Of course, one could blow off the botanizing entirely, (heresy!!), and still find plenty to do in WPC. The Lehman Caves are worth a visit alone, and there are always the archeological sites, both ancient and of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century mining communities. There are opportunities to dig for your own garnets and other mineral treasures, or observe the state of mining and reclamation at Ruth, a huge open pit copper mine. There is a golf course and one could take part in Nevada's principle tourist activity, gambling.

**A PENSTEMON TREASURE  
TROVE  
2008 ANNUAL MEETING  
ELY, NEVADA  
-FACTS AND FIGURES-**

*Bob Pennington*

The 2008 American Penstemon Annual Meeting will occur on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> of June, in Ely, White Pine County, Nevada. Much has already been written about how special the location is and about its wealth of penstemon and other botanical treasures. The theme for the weekend is finding and identifying this treasure trove. For this we will be blessed, as we will have in attendance and to our benefit some very gifted and special people.

Loraine Yeatts, a field botanist and taxonomist with the Denver Botanic Garden's Katryn Kalmbach Herbarium, will take us through the use of herbaria and herbarium specimens in the pursuit of identification.

Steve Caicco, also a field botanist, has spent many years traipsing throughout the Great Basin and is particularly well acquainted with the White River Basin where he will lead us on field trips. Also, he will be speaking to us about the issue of "Plant Endemism", an event we will be observing on our field trips.

Finally the Holmgrens, Pat and Noel, will be with us for the weekend. Noel is the reigning "Godfather of Penstemons", having discovered and or described many species new to science. Many of his discoveries are right here in White Pine County. Expect expert ID advice, and perhaps, weather willing, returning to the scene of some of his discoveries.

Besides these botanical all-stars, one of the major aspects making any Penstemon Weekend worthwhile and exciting is the level of camaraderie we experience with our fellow Penstemaniacs. So by all means get your reservations in early. We expect that attendance will be high and, as we have some meeting hall and other population constraints, when we meet the meeting room capacity we will cut off registration.

Our head quarters is the Prospector Hotel and Casino, 1 800 750-0557, where one can make ones' own reservations. If you do, please identify that you are with the APS group to qualify for the offered discounted room rate of \$72 per night until March 31. There are other hotels/motels in town. There is also an RV park attached to the Prospector, as well as other RV facilities. As to camping, the Ely KOA is well appointed with all the necessary and usual KOA accommodations. The Ward Mountain Recreation Area is both close to Ely and a particularly pleasant camping area.

Weather in the higher reaches of the Great Basin is usually quite pleasant in June with expected bright sunny days and chilly evenings. High country trekking could be fairly cool, with left-over winter snow at higher elevations always a possibility. So bring clothing for several expected temperature ranges, and by all means bring a hat, sunglasses, sun screen, and lots of drinking water. During the days, we will be out and about, so you will be expected to pack your own lunches, bearing in mind that picnic areas are few and concessionaires are even rarer. Although encountering the Great Basin Rattlesnake, a very timid desert recluse, is possible, it is unlikely that this snake or any other animal is truly likely

to cause us any risk, but be forewarned that nature happens.

**Getting there:** Ely is located at the intersection of three major US highways: 6, 50, and 93, and is therefore easily accessed by automobile. Otherwise, it is out in the proverbial middle of nowhere. The closest major airports are Las Vegas and Reno in Nevada, and Salt Lake City in Utah.

Although one can do this trip in just about any car in good condition, it is imperative that it be so. Tires must be adequate for considerable travel on gravel roads. High clearance is an asset. If you are thinking of renting a car, do so in one of the large cities previously mentioned, and consider a SUV, or other 4-wheel, or all wheel drive options as a good investment. We realize that some people will not have transportation, and we will do our best to enable ridesharing. Please correspond with us further on this issue. We have developed a blog through [WWW.APSdev.org](http://WWW.APSdev.org) to facilitate ridesharing.

Send in your registration to me, Bob Pennington, 1409 Agua Fria St, Santa Fe, NM 87505-0907, and/ or pay via PayPal on our website [WWW.APSdev.org](http://WWW.APSdev.org). (See Dwayne's article on PayPal on p. 5 for further information.)

### **BRING ONE, TAKE ONE**

*Dwayne Dickerson*

Have a stack of garden books or more penstemons of one variety than any garden needs? Please share them at the Ely meeting in June. Bring along a box of books or a flat of seedlings and your fellow APS members will give them a good home.

Some insist on properly labeled pots but I'd just as soon be surprised so any nameless orphans will find a home in one of my three gardens. And I have several new bookshelves which need to be filled. I'll bring along several boxes of surplus quarterlies for new members or to round out your own library.



Steve and *P. fruticosus* var. *scouleri*

### **ADOBE ACROBAT READER AT YOUR SERVICE**

*Dwayne Dickerson*

Almost 200 APS members receive our newsletter and other communications via e-mail, greatly reducing our printing and mailing costs.

To facilitate this, we convert our attachments into a .pdf or portable data format which comes to you under the Adobe icon. The 8.0 reader can be downloaded for free at hundreds of sites. Just Google "Adobe Acrobat Reader download" and pick a site.

Several of you have mentioned you received a message warning you that our attachments contain a virus. If you have set your security level very high on your Internet server, you may receive a warning that attachments may contain viruses or that your browser stripped off the attachment. You will have to "allow" our attachment if you wish to read it.

Phone or e-mail if we can be of any other help, 1.800.889.8579 or [dwaynedickerson@gmail.com](mailto:dwaynedickerson@gmail.com).

### **AN OPEN LETTER FROM STEVE LOVE, OUR NEW BULLETIN EDITOR**

Dear APS Member,

Dale Lindgren has served magnificently for many years as editor of the APS Bulletin and we owe him a debt of gratitude. I would like to introduce myself as the new editor for the APS Bulletin. My name is Dr. Stephen Love and I am employed by the University of Idaho as a consumer horticulture specialist. I have a special love for native plants and duties related to them. Because penstemons are among the most beautiful of our native plants, I have great interest in educating people concerning this under-appreciated genus of wildflowers. For that reason, I am happy to become a contributing member of this society.

I have many years of experience in technical writing and am looking forward to the challenge of maintaining the quality of the Bulletin. I will obviously need the help of the membership to supply interesting written materials. I encourage all members to put their penstemon knowledge and experiences on paper and share them with the rest of us. You can send your contributions directly to me at:

Stephen Love  
 University of Idaho  
 Aberdeen R & E Center  
 1693 S 2700 W  
 Aberdeen, ID 83210 USA  
[slove@uidaho.edu](mailto:slove@uidaho.edu)  
 (208) 397-4181

The best way to submit a contribution is in electronic form, such as an email attachment or as a file on a CD.

However, I will take them in any form you see fit to submit them. Also, we would like to see more pictures in the bulletin, so send beautiful penstemon photographs along with your articles. They can be negatives, actual photographs, or digital images. Thank you and I look forward to your contributions.

Best wishes,

Stephen

## **MEMBERSHIP BLOSSOMING**

*Dwayne Dickerson*

Thanks to many of you for referring friends, buying gift memberships for children or garden club associates and mentioning APS to others. Just in the past several years our membership roster has grown from 200 members to today's tally of 328 households. Bob McFarlane and Dwayne Dickerson have set a goal for themselves to expand the membership to 400 households by December 2008.

Penstemon fans who have seen our exciting new website are now joining by downloading an application. Others saw our new three-piece brochure at the

Rocky Mountain-NARGS meeting in October and signed up on the spot. But, we are looking for new ways to spread the word about one of our favorite plants.

If you could help by handing out the brochure at your next garden club meeting, please contact Dwayne at [dwaynedickerson@gmail.com](mailto:dwaynedickerson@gmail.com) and he will send you a stack of brochures. Now that many of you are receiving the newsletter by e-mail, you might forward it to all your botanical friends.

We are looking for new ideas to market our organization. Let us know your suggestions. Meanwhile, if you haven't already sent your 2008 dues check, you may want to try out our PayPal link on the website at [www.APSdev.org](http://www.APSdev.org). (See following article.) Checks can be mailed to Dwayne Dickerson, 600 South Cherry Street, Ste. 226, Denver, CO 80246.

## **APS ADOPTS PAY PAL RESOURCE**

*Dwayne Dickerson*

Many members, especially outside the US, have encouraged us to create a PayPal account to avoid securing US currency or a postal money order. Mission accomplished!

If you go to [www.APSdev.org](http://www.APSdev.org), you will see a "membership" header on the left side of the page. After clicking, you can scroll to the bottom of the page where a US and Canada option is available for the \$15 memberships and a second PayPal icon for paying the \$20 foreign option.

You have a choice of paying by using your credit card or logging into your own PayPal account and debiting it. About 15

members have already used this method to renew their membership or pay for seeds from the exchange. Additionally, you have an instant receipt, no postage is involved and it is less paperwork for everyone.

Thanks to Hugh MacMillan for setting this up for us and to Bob McFarlane for gently nudging us forward. Treasurer Dave Bentzin and Membership Chair Dwayne Dickerson have readily caught on, once again proving that old dogs do learn new tricks when enough rewards are involved.



**LIBBY WHEELER, CHAIR  
NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

When Bob McFarlane called and asked me, with my limited knowledge of penstemons, to chair the nominating committee, I decided it was payback time as my late husband and I enjoyed so many western field trips organized by Society volunteers. My husband knew the plants; I liked the people.

By training, I am an historian with a PhD in Modern European History from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. For 23 years I worked with

students, faculty and parents in the Dean's Office of the College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Over the years I've been, and remain, an active volunteer in our local Mental Health Association and the League of Women Voters. I am currently helping to write a history of the Noark Girl Scout Council.

It appears I am on three nominating committees this year, so I hope that Penstemon Society members will step up if called. In the past, some members have served very long terms; our goal is a two year commitment, renewable if desired. We don't want agreeing to serve to be a life sentence!

I'm looking forward to seeing all in Ely.

Libby Wheeler

## **PENSTEMON OUTREACH ON COLORADO'S WESTERN SLOPE**

*Betty Hall and Charles Baker*

### Betty's Introduction

Landscapes West is an annual early February gathering of plant aficionados here on the Western Slope in Grand Junction. It gives us a taste of spring in the air as the conference also includes a garden show.

Past Landscapes West weekends have featured speakers such as Panayoti Keloides, Marcia Tatroe, Dr. Jim Klepp, Ed Gilman, David Salman and David Whiting. This year's featured speaker will be Jeff Gillman with 'Myths in

Gardening'. It is scheduled for February 1-3. Further information can be found at 'westslopegardening.org'

In 2006, Charles Baker and I were tapped to give one of the lectures on 'Growing Penstemons'. Charles, because he actually grows and propagates them at his home in Cedaredge (6100 ft.) and I, just because I love native plants, especially penstemons.

I got introduced to penstemons myself after we moved to Grand Junction from California over 25 years ago. As I am a lazy gardener, I insist that things in my garden must be adaptable and easy to grow. I found penstemons, which seem to just love our high pH, dry climate and hot summers. Search over!

Charles and I decided to concentrate on the native penstemons that are found in the Four Corners states of Colorado, Utah., Arizona, and New Mexico. We ended up with 30 species only because we didn't want to overwhelm our audience.

We used extensively the CD "Penstemons - a Photographic Guide" which was put together by William Gray and which complimented the book *Growing Penstemons* by Dale Lindgren and Ellen Wilde. It was invaluable!

The easiest penstemons to grow here, based on our experience and also comments from the audience are:  
 P. barbatus, P.comarrhenus,  
 P. cyanocaulis, P.eatonii, P. grandiflorus,  
 P. linarioides, P. mensarum, P.strictus,  
 P.palmeri, P. pinifolius, P.  
 pseudospectabilis, and P.utahensis.

### Charles' Propagation Recipe and Observations

In February I mix a potting mix with one half sand and plant penstemon seed in 4 inch pots and 12" X 16" flats. After a thorough soaking, they go outside in a protected spot on the east side of a privet hedge for the rest of the winter. Penstemons need a longer period of cold stratification than most other perennials.

In the past I have potted up the seedlings into 2 inch pots in the spring. This year I waited until late summer and I had fewer casualties. I am wondering whether the type of penstemon makes any difference as to when to pot. Ellen Wilde encourages us to plant dry land species in the ground as soon as possible. You are not as likely to drown a xeric penstemon in the ground as compared to a pot.

By planting penstemons from seed, you have an ample supply of plants to try in various locations to find out where they grow the best.

It is no surprise that P. strictus is the easiest and most long lasting penstemon. Another is P. 'prairie dusk' which is a cross of P. strictus. One that has done surprisingly well is P. clutei, grown in a road base. I have run out of room gardening in good soil and now have plants in my driveway. P. mensarum is an endemic that grows on the side of the Grand Mesa only 20 miles from my home in Cedaredge. P. mensarum is a beautiful blue that blooms for me for three to four years and then dies. But there are plenty of volunteers and usually the volunteers grow more vigorously than their mothers did.

A few more that do well are: *P. barbatus*,  
*P. angustifolius*, and *P. pachyphyllus*.

### **FAREWELL, RAMONA**

*Louise Parsons*

Ramona Osburn, who was very active in APS and in NARGS, passed away on September 19 at the age of 91.

Ramona had an incredible open-forest garden that blended right into a lovely wildflower area in Jackson County, Oregon. *Lewisia cotyledon* and a staggering number of penstemons that she planted would self-sow on her hillside yard. You could visit and wander on wildflower trails right from her lovely home. Every visit revealed something new. She had Czech rock garden master-builder Josef Halda create crevice gardens from large rocks that had been left at the bottom of the hillside. These she quickly filled with an amazing array of small penstemons and other rock garden gems.

Those of you who knew her will remember a spirited lady who loved to trek boundlessly. Ramona served as a Member at Large on the APS Board from 1977 until 1982. She was vice-president of APS for over a decade, serving from 1992 until 2003. She was a prolific writer and director of the Small Penstemon Robin from 1980 until 2007. Ramona was inspired by the early plant explorers of the Siskiyou.. She wrote about them for the Rock Garden Quarterly.

### **ERMA PILZ REMEMBERED**

*Ellen Wilde*

The Penstemon Society recently lost long time member Erma Pilz of Albuquerque. When Erma first came to Albuquerque from the Chicago area, she and her husband started a native plant group that went out for walks all around the the state, becoming acquainted with the trees, flowers, shrubs and bird, animal, and insect life, making a point of learning, in depth, about everything they found. Thus, she became a resource who everyone called when they had questions about flowers. A very lively person, interested in all kinds of things, she was always studying and encouraging others to learn new subjects.

I recently came across a trip report letter from Erma in the December 1977 APS Bulletin. She writes, "Truly the high point of the year was visiting Gussie Schooley's Colorado ranch, in the third and lesser known of the Colorado 'parks'. We approached this 'end of the rainbow' by crossing the Wet Mountains, whose lush growth and wealth of bloom in August are enough to send anyone into lyrical ecstasies. After emerging from the Mountains one comes to an immensely wide valley backed by the crenelated peaks of the Sangre de Cristos on one side, the Wet Mountains on the other, with Pikes Peak and the Presidential Range to the north, and to the south, the Spanish Peaks. Two little towns are lost in the Valley but Gussie's 1000 acre ranch is not, for it carries your eye right up to the mountain boundaries.

We saw Larkspur and Gila and Leather Flower, Penstemon virgatus or unilateralis, Gentiana thermalis and so much more! It was a lovely experience. I do not yearn for everlasting life, when here and now such heaven exists!"

After a bad fall five or six years ago made it impossible for her to remain alone in her home any longer, she moved to a residential care facility, where she became one of the most popular guests. She taught herself to knit and then taught other residents and employees! She was always cheerful and full of stories and reminiscences. Portrait painting became a new hobby after she was there a short while and she had almost done everyone there by the time she passed on in July at just under 100 years of age. What an admirable life!

## NEW MEMBERS, WELCOME!

Welcome to the following new and returning members:

Nell Backus, Sequim, WA  
 Gail Beasley, Beaverton, OR  
 Rozann Brittain, Waldport, OR  
 Brad Coleman, Salt Lake City, UT  
 Joan & Clarence Dodson, Los Lunas, NM  
 Scott Ellis, LaPorte, Co  
 John Flannery, Seattle, WA  
 Kathleen Howard, Scottsdale, AZ  
 Emily and Tina Lewis, Gilbert, AZ  
 Arabelle Luckhardt, Santa Fe, NM  
 Marilyn O'Leary, John Day, OR  
 Joe Ward, Farmington, NM  
 Barbara Weintraub, Santa Fe, NM

## PENSTEMON SOURCES

As part of her work on the Cultivation Tab of our new APS website, Barbara Lewis has put together a list of resources for penstemon plants and seeds. The list's current version follows. Updated versions will be found on our website. Barbara invites you to contact her with additions at 303 791-0456 or [blewis@iriscolorado.com](mailto:blewis@iriscolorado.com)

Seedlings*Name	Address	Phone	Email	Website (www)
Agua Fria Nursery	1409 Agua Fria St. Santa Fe, NM 87505-0709	505-983-4831	aguafrianr@aol.com	no website
Annie's Annuals and Perennials	801 Chesley Ave. Richmond, CA 94801-2135	888-266-4370	contact@anniesannuals.com	anniesannuals.com
Arrowhead Alpines	P.O. Box 857 Fowlerville, MI 48836	517-223-3581	danielapresley@hotmail.com	arrowheadalpines.com
Beaver Creek Greenhouses	PMB#364-4155 Deep Lake Boundary Rd. Colville, WA		bvcreek@netidea.com	rockgardenplants.com

	99114 and Box 129 Fruitvale British Columbia VOG 1L0 (zero) Canada			
Digging Dog	P.O. Box 471 Albion, CA 95410	707-937- 1130	business@diggingdog.com	<a href="http://www.diggingdog.com">www.diggingdog.com</a>
Granite Gardens Rare Plants	P.O. Box 4050 Sonora, CA 95370	209-532- 3029	ggrp@sonnet.com	ggrareplants.com
High Country Gardens	2902 Rufina St. Santa Fe, NM	800-925- 9387		
Joy Creek Nursery	20300 NW Watson Rd Scappoose, OR 97056	503-543- 7474	catalogue@joycreek.com	joycreek.com
Laporte Avenue Nursery	1950 Laporte Ave. Fort Collins, CO 80521	970-472- 0017	klehrer23@msn.com	<a href="http://laporteavenuenursery.com">laporteavenuenursery.com</a>
Las Pilitas Nursery	3232 Las Pilitas Rd. Santa Margarita, CA 93453 and 8331 Nelson Way Escondido, CA92026	805-438- 5992 (Santa Margarita)  760-749- 5930 (Escondido)		laspilitas.com
Milestone Nursery	620 State St. P.O. Box 907 Lyle, WA 98635	509-365- 5222		
Mt. Tahoma Nursery	28111 112 <sup>th</sup> Ave E. Graham, WA	253-847- 9827		<a href="http://backyardgardener.com/mttahoma/index.html">backyardgardener.com/ mttahoma/index.html</a>
Plants of the Southwest	3095 Agua Fria St. Santa Fe, NM 87507		contact@plantsofthesouthwest.com	plantsofthesouthwest.com
Siskiyou Rare Plant Nursery	2115 Talent Ave. Talent, OR 97540	541- 535- 7103	customerservice@srpn.net	siskiyourareplantnursery.com
Sunscapes Rare Plant Nursery	330 Carlile Ave Pueblo, CO 81004	719- 546- 0047	Sunscapes@comcasst.net	
Wrightman Alpines	RR#3 1503 Napperton Dr. Kerwood, ON NOM 2BO Canada		info@wrightmanalpines.com	wrightmanalpines.com

\*For a comprehensive list by state: [www.hort.usu.edu](http://www.hort.usu.edu)

**Seeds\***

Name	Address	Phone	Email	Website
Alplains	P.O. Box 489 Kiowa, CO 80117-0489	303-621-2590		
Beaver Creek Greenhouses	PMB#364-4155 Deep Lake Boundary Rd. Colville, WA 99114 and Box 129 Fruitvale British Columbia VOG 1L0 (zero) Canada		bvcreek@netidea.com	rockgardenplants.com/ seedscatmain.htm
Northwest Native Seed	Ron Ratko Northwest Native Seed 915 Davis Pl S Seattle, WA 98144		oreonana@zipcon.com	
Rocky Mountain Rare Plants	1706 Deerpath Rd. Franktown, CO 80116-9462			
Southwestern Native Seeds	P.O. Box 50503 Tucson, AZ 85703			southwesternnativeseeds.com

\* Members of the American Penstemon Society are eligible for our Annual Seed Exchange

\*\* The North American Rock Garden Society also sponsors an annual seed sale to its members

**We invite nurseries not listed to submit their names for publication on our website, [apsdev.org](http://apsdev.org)**

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## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Sign me up-  
Name-

Address-

Phone #

E-mail

US and Canadian dues \$15 US

Elsewhere \$20 US, no cash please We do not sell, share or distribute member data in any manner.

APS-2008

**JUNE 13-15, 2008  
REGISTRATION FORM**

Names of Registrants \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Cost**

Cost of Registration is \$100. per person. This includes buffet dinner on Friday night, a sit-down dinner on Saturday night and other related expenses. Both dinners will be held at the Prospector Hotel in Ely.

**Payment**

My/our check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed. PayPal may also be used, see website [www.apsdev.org](http://www.apsdev.org).

**Disclaimer**

There are inherent risks involved in a trip of this nature, including but not limited to car problems, accidents and medical difficulties. Each participant registering must be responsible for his or her own well being and belongings. Keep in mind that at times, you may be hours away from a hospital during the trip. If you have any health issues that are of concern, you should discuss them with your health professional before you sign up for this trip. Information provided by the APS is believed to be from reliable sources, but each participant is encouraged to verify it for themselves. Each participant agrees by registering and signing below to hold the APS, its officers, agents and members harmless for any and all problems that may occur during the Annual Meeting and Field Trips.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Registrants Signature(s)

Send to:

Bob Pennington  
 Agua Fria Nursery  
 1409 Agua Fria St.  
 Santa Fe, NM 87505-0907  
 505-983-4831  
 aguafrianr.aol.com

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drainages, is some 139 pages and packed with all sorts of floristic gems, not the least of which is the Park's signature plant, the Great Basin Bristlecone pine, *Pinus longaeva*.

Other tours will venture into the sagebrush steppe, the pinon-juniper woodland, and as far up slope into the sub-alpine as the melting snows will permit. Remember the asterisk (\*) back in the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph? One of our planned activities will be to determine whether the count is 20 or 21 and whether the occurrence of *Penstemon palmeri* var. *macranthus* in the county is valid or not. We will legally gather samples of the *P. palmeri* from the attributed location, and using the resources of our group and its technical expertise, prepare specimens for herbarium use and taxonomically determine the authenticity of the citations. Again we will do this using some exciting digital enhancements, so that each of us can truly see what is involved in the procedures.

Of course, one could blow off the botanizing entirely, (heresy!!), and still find plenty to do in WPC. The Lehman Caves are worth a visit alone, and there are always the archeological sites, both ancient and of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century mining communities. There are opportunities to dig for your own garnets and other mineral treasures, or observe the state of mining and reclamation at Ruth, a huge open pit copper mine. There is a golf course and one could take part in Nevada's principle tourist activity, gambling.

**A PENSTEMON TREASURE  
TROVE  
2008 ANNUAL MEETING  
ELY, NEVADA  
-FACTS AND FIGURES-**

*Bob Pennington*

The 2008 American Penstemon Annual Meeting will occur on the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> of June, in Ely, White Pine County, Nevada. Much has already been written about how special the location is and about its wealth of penstemon and other botanical treasures. The theme for the weekend is finding and identifying this treasure trove. For this we will be blessed, as we will have in attendance and to our benefit some very gifted and special people.

Loraine Yeatts, a field botanist and taxonomist with the Denver Botanic Garden's Katryn Kalmbach Herbarium, will take us through the use of herbaria and herbarium specimens in the pursuit of identification.

Steve Caicco, also a field botanist, has spent many years traipsing throughout the Great Basin and is particularly well acquainted with the White River Basin where he will lead us on field trips. Also, he will be speaking to us about the issue of "Plant Endemism", an event we will be observing on our field trips.

Finally the Holmgrens, Pat and Noel, will be with us for the weekend. Noel is the reigning "Godfather of Penstemons", having discovered and or described many species new to science. Many of his discoveries are right here in White Pine County. Expect expert ID advice, and perhaps, weather willing, returning to the scene of some of his discoveries.

Besides these botanical all-stars, one of the major aspects making any Penstemon Weekend worthwhile and exciting is the level of camaraderie we experience with our fellow Penstemaniacs. So by all means get your reservations in early. We expect that attendance will be high and, as we have some meeting hall and other population constraints, when we meet the meeting room capacity we will cut off registration.

Our head quarters is the Prospector Hotel and Casino, 1 800 750-0557, where one can make ones' own reservations. If you do, please identify that you are with the APS group to qualify for the offered discounted room rate of \$72 per night until March 31. There are other hotels/motels in town. There is also an RV park attached to the Prospector, as well as other RV facilities. As to camping, the Ely KOA is well appointed with all the necessary and usual KOA accommodations. The Ward Mountain Recreation Area is both close to Ely and a particularly pleasant camping area.

Weather in the higher reaches of the Great Basin is usually quite pleasant in June with expected bright sunny days and chilly evenings. High country trekking could be fairly cool, with left-over winter snow at higher elevations always a possibility. So bring clothing for several expected temperature ranges, and by all means bring a hat, sunglasses, sun screen, and lots of drinking water. During the days, we will be out and about, so you will be expected to pack your own lunches, bearing in mind that picnic areas are few and concessionaires are even rarer. Although encountering the Great Basin Rattlesnake, a very timid desert recluse, is possible, it is unlikely that this snake or any other animal is truly likely

to cause us any risk, but be forewarned that nature happens.

**Getting there:** Ely is located at the intersection of three major US highways: 6, 50, and 93, and is therefore easily accessed by automobile. Otherwise, it is out in the proverbial middle of nowhere. The closest major airports are Las Vegas and Reno in Nevada, and Salt Lake City in Utah.

Although one can do this trip in just about any car in good condition, it is imperative that it be so. Tires must be adequate for considerable travel on gravel roads. High clearance is an asset. If you are thinking of renting a car, do so in one of the large cities previously mentioned, and consider a SUV, or other 4-wheel, or all wheel drive options as a good investment. We realize that some people will not have transportation, and we will do our best to enable ridesharing. Please correspond with us further on this issue. We have developed a blog through [WWW.APSdev.org](http://WWW.APSdev.org) to facilitate ridesharing.

Send in your registration to me, Bob Pennington, 1409 Agua Fria St, Santa Fe, NM 87505-0907, and/ or pay via PayPal on our website [WWW.APSdev.org](http://WWW.APSdev.org). (See Dwayne's article on PayPal on p. 5 for further information.)

### **BRING ONE, TAKE ONE**

*Dwayne Dickerson*

Have a stack of garden books or more penstemons of one variety than any garden needs? Please share them at the Ely meeting in June. Bring along a box of books or a flat of seedlings and your fellow APS members will give them a good home.

Some insist on properly labeled pots but I'd just as soon be surprised so any nameless orphans will find a home in one of my three gardens. And I have several new bookshelves which need to be filled. I'll bring along several boxes of surplus quarterlies for new members or to round out your own library.



Steve and *P. fruticosus* var. *scouleri*

### **ADOBE ACROBAT READER AT YOUR SERVICE**

*Dwayne Dickerson*

Almost 200 APS members receive our newsletter and other communications via e-mail, greatly reducing our printing and mailing costs.

To facilitate this, we convert our attachments into a .pdf or portable data format which comes to you under the Adobe icon. The 8.0 reader can be downloaded for free at hundreds of sites. Just Google "Adobe Acrobat Reader download" and pick a site.

Several of you have mentioned you received a message warning you that our attachments contain a virus. If you have set your security level very high on your Internet server, you may receive a warning that attachments may contain viruses or that your browser stripped off the attachment. You will have to "allow" our attachment if you wish to read it.

Phone or e-mail if we can be of any other help, 1.800.889.8579 or [dwaynedickerson@gmail.com](mailto:dwaynedickerson@gmail.com).

### **AN OPEN LETTER FROM STEVE LOVE, OUR NEW BULLETIN EDITOR**

Dear APS Member,

Dale Lindgren has served magnificently for many years as editor of the APS Bulletin and we owe him a debt of gratitude. I would like to introduce myself as the new editor for the APS Bulletin. My name is Dr. Stephen Love and I am employed by the University of Idaho as a consumer horticulture specialist. I have a special love for native plants and duties related to them. Because penstemons are among the most beautiful of our native plants, I have great interest in educating people concerning this under-appreciated genus of wildflowers. For that reason, I am happy to become a contributing member of this society.

I have many years of experience in technical writing and am looking forward to the challenge of maintaining the quality of the Bulletin. I will obviously need the help of the membership to supply interesting written materials. I encourage all members to put their penstemon knowledge and experiences on paper and share them with the rest of us. You can send your contributions directly to me at:

Stephen Love  
 University of Idaho  
 Aberdeen R & E Center  
 1693 S 2700 W  
 Aberdeen, ID 83210 USA  
[slove@uidaho.edu](mailto:slove@uidaho.edu)  
 (208) 397-4181

The best way to submit a contribution is in electronic form, such as an email attachment or as a file on a CD.

However, I will take them in any form you see fit to submit them. Also, we would like to see more pictures in the bulletin, so send beautiful penstemon photographs along with your articles. They can be negatives, actual photographs, or digital images. Thank you and I look forward to your contributions.

Best wishes,

Stephen

## **MEMBERSHIP BLOSSOMING**

*Dwayne Dickerson*

Thanks to many of you for referring friends, buying gift memberships for children or garden club associates and mentioning APS to others. Just in the past several years our membership roster has grown from 200 members to today's tally of 328 households. Bob McFarlane and Dwayne Dickerson have set a goal for themselves to expand the membership to 400 households by December 2008.

Penstemon fans who have seen our exciting new website are now joining by downloading an application. Others saw our new three-piece brochure at the

Rocky Mountain-NARGS meeting in October and signed up on the spot. But, we are looking for new ways to spread the word about one of our favorite plants.

If you could help by handing out the brochure at your next garden club meeting, please contact Dwayne at [dwaynedickerson@gmail.com](mailto:dwaynedickerson@gmail.com) and he will send you a stack of brochures. Now that many of you are receiving the newsletter by e-mail, you might forward it to all your botanical friends.

We are looking for new ideas to market our organization. Let us know your suggestions. Meanwhile, if you haven't already sent your 2008 dues check, you may want to try out our PayPal link on the website at [www.APSdev.org](http://www.APSdev.org). (See following article.) Checks can be mailed to Dwayne Dickerson, 600 South Cherry Street, Ste. 226, Denver, CO 80246.

## **APS ADOPTS PAY PAL RESOURCE**

*Dwayne Dickerson*

Many members, especially outside the US, have encouraged us to create a PayPal account to avoid securing US currency or a postal money order. Mission accomplished!

If you go to [www.APSdev.org](http://www.APSdev.org), you will see a "membership" header on the left side of the page. After clicking, you can scroll to the bottom of the page where a US and Canada option is available for the \$15 memberships and a second PayPal icon for paying the \$20 foreign option.

You have a choice of paying by using your credit card or logging into your own PayPal account and debiting it. About 15

members have already used this method to renew their membership or pay for seeds from the exchange. Additionally, you have an instant receipt, no postage is involved and it is less paperwork for everyone.

Thanks to Hugh MacMillan for setting this up for us and to Bob McFarlane for gently nudging us forward. Treasurer Dave Bentzin and Membership Chair Dwayne Dickerson have readily caught on, once again proving that old dogs do learn new tricks when enough rewards are involved.



**LIBBY WHEELER, CHAIR  
NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

When Bob McFarlane called and asked me, with my limited knowledge of penstemons, to chair the nominating committee, I decided it was payback time as my late husband and I enjoyed so many western field trips organized by Society volunteers. My husband knew the plants; I liked the people.

By training, I am an historian with a PhD in Modern European History from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill. For 23 years I worked with

students, faculty and parents in the Dean's Office of the College of Agricultural, Food and Life Sciences at the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. Over the years I've been, and remain, an active volunteer in our local Mental Health Association and the League of Women Voters. I am currently helping to write a history of the Noark Girl Scout Council.

It appears I am on three nominating committees this year, so I hope that Penstemon Society members will step up if called. In the past, some members have served very long terms; our goal is a two year commitment, renewable if desired. We don't want agreeing to serve to be a life sentence!

I'm looking forward to seeing all in Ely.

Libby Wheeler

## **PENSTEMON OUTREACH ON COLORADO'S WESTERN SLOPE**

*Betty Hall and Charles Baker*

### Betty's Introduction

Landscapes West is an annual early February gathering of plant aficionados here on the Western Slope in Grand Junction. It gives us a taste of spring in the air as the conference also includes a garden show.

Past Landscapes West weekends have featured speakers such as Panayoti Keloides, Marcia Tatroe, Dr. Jim Klepp, Ed Gilman, David Salman and David Whiting. This year's featured speaker will be Jeff Gillman with 'Myths in

Gardening'. It is scheduled for February 1-3. Further information can be found at 'westslopegardening.org'

In 2006, Charles Baker and I were tapped to give one of the lectures on 'Growing Penstemons'. Charles, because he actually grows and propagates them at his home in Cedaredge (6100 ft.) and I, just because I love native plants, especially penstemons.

I got introduced to penstemons myself after we moved to Grand Junction from California over 25 years ago. As I am a lazy gardener, I insist that things in my garden must be adaptable and easy to grow. I found penstemons, which seem to just love our high pH, dry climate and hot summers. Search over!

Charles and I decided to concentrate on the native penstemons that are found in the Four Corners states of Colorado, Utah., Arizona, and New Mexico. We ended up with 30 species only because we didn't want to overwhelm our audience.

We used extensively the CD "Penstemons - a Photographic Guide" which was put together by William Gray and which complimented the book *Growing Penstemons* by Dale Lindgren and Ellen Wilde. It was invaluable!

The easiest penstemons to grow here, based on our experience and also comments from the audience are:  
 P. barbatus, P.comarrhenus,  
 P. cyanocaulis, P.eatonii, P. grandiflorus,  
 P. linarioides, P. mensarum, P.strictus,  
 P.palmeri, P. pinifolius, P.  
 pseudospectabilis, and P.utahensis.

### Charles' Propagation Recipe and Observations

In February I mix a potting mix with one half sand and plant penstemon seed in 4 inch pots and 12" X 16" flats. After a thorough soaking, they go outside in a protected spot on the east side of a privet hedge for the rest of the winter. Penstemons need a longer period of cold stratification than most other perennials.

In the past I have potted up the seedlings into 2 inch pots in the spring. This year I waited until late summer and I had fewer casualties. I am wondering whether the type of penstemon makes any difference as to when to pot. Ellen Wilde encourages us to plant dry land species in the ground as soon as possible. You are not as likely to drown a xeric penstemon in the ground as compared to a pot.

By planting penstemons from seed, you have an ample supply of plants to try in various locations to find out where they grow the best.

It is no surprise that P. strictus is the easiest and most long lasting penstemon. Another is P. 'prairie dusk' which is a cross of P. strictus. One that has done surprisingly well is P. clutei, grown in a road base. I have run out of room gardening in good soil and now have plants in my driveway. P. mensarum is an endemic that grows on the side of the Grand Mesa only 20 miles from my home in Cedaredge. P. mensarum is a beautiful blue that blooms for me for three to four years and then dies. But there are plenty of volunteers and usually the volunteers grow more vigorously than their mothers did.

A few more that do well are: *P. barbatus*,  
*P. angustifolius*, and *P. pachyphyllus*.

### FAREWELL, RAMONA

*Louise Parsons*

Ramona Osburn, who was very active in APS and in NARGS, passed away on September 19 at the age of 91.

Ramona had an incredible open-forest garden that blended right into a lovely wildflower area in Jackson County, Oregon. *Lewisia cotyledon* and a staggering number of penstemons that she planted would self-sow on her hillside yard. You could visit and wander on wildflower trails right from her lovely home. Every visit revealed something new. She had Czech rock garden master-builder Josef Halda create crevice gardens from large rocks that had been left at the bottom of the hillside. These she quickly filled with an amazing array of small penstemons and other rock garden gems.

Those of you who knew her will remember a spirited lady who loved to trek boundlessly. Ramona served as a Member at Large on the APS Board from 1977 until 1982. She was vice-president of APS for over a decade, serving from 1992 until 2003. She was a prolific writer and director of the Small Penstemon Robin from 1980 until 2007. Ramona was inspired by the early plant explorers of the Siskiyou's. She wrote about them for the Rock Garden Quarterly.

### ERMA PILZ REMEMBERED

*Ellen Wilde*

The Penstemon Society recently lost long time member Erma Pilz of Albuquerque. When Erma first came to Albuquerque from the Chicago area, she and her husband started a native plant group that went out for walks all around the the state, becoming acquainted with the trees, flowers, shrubs and bird, animal, and insect life, making a point of learning, in depth, about everything they found. Thus, she became a resource who everyone called when they had questions about flowers. A very lively person, interested in all kinds of things, she was always studying and encouraging others to learn new subjects.

I recently came across a trip report letter from Erma in the December 1977 APS Bulletin. She writes, "Truly the high point of the year was visiting Gussie Schooley's Colorado ranch, in the third and lesser known of the Colorado 'parks'. We approached this 'end of the rainbow' by crossing the Wet Mountains, whose lush growth and wealth of bloom in August are enough to send anyone into lyrical ecstasies. After emerging from the Mountains one comes to an immensely wide valley backed by the crenelated peaks of the Sangre de Cristos on one side, the Wet Mountains on the other, with Pikes Peak and the Presidential Range to the north, and to the south, the Spanish Peaks. Two little towns are lost in the Valley but Gussie's 1000 acre ranch is not, for it carries your eye right up to the mountain boundaries.

We saw Larkspur and Gila and Leather Flower, Penstemon virgatus or unilateralis, Gentiana thermalis and so much more! It was a lovely experience. I do not yearn for everlasting life, when here and now such heaven exists!"

After a bad fall five or six years ago made it impossible for her to remain alone in her home any longer, she moved to a residential care facility, where she became one of the most popular guests. She taught herself to knit and then taught other residents and employees! She was always cheerful and full of stories and reminiscences. Portrait painting became a new hobby after she was there a short while and she had almost done everyone there by the time she passed on in July at just under 100 years of age. What an admirable life!

## NEW MEMBERS, WELCOME!

Welcome to the following new and returning members:

Nell Backus, Sequim, WA  
 Gail Beasley, Beaverton, OR  
 Rozann Brittain, Waldport, OR  
 Brad Coleman, Salt Lake City, UT  
 Joan & Clarence Dodson, Los Lunas, NM  
 Scott Ellis, LaPorte, Co  
 John Flannery, Seattle, WA  
 Kathleen Howard, Scottsdale, AZ  
 Emily and Tina Lewis, Gilbert, AZ  
 Arabelle Luckhardt, Santa Fe, NM  
 Marilyn O'Leary, John Day, OR  
 Joe Ward, Farmington, NM  
 Barbara Weintraub, Santa Fe, NM

## PENSTEMON SOURCES

As part of her work on the Cultivation Tab of our new APS website, Barbara Lewis has put together a list of resources for penstemon plants and seeds. The list's current version follows. Updated versions will be found on our website. Barbara invites you to contact her with additions at 303 791-0456 or [blewis@iriscolorado.com](mailto:blewis@iriscolorado.com)

Seedlings*Name	Address	Phone	Email	Website (www)
Agua Fria Nursery	1409 Agua Fria St. Santa Fe, NM 87505-0709	505-983-4831	aguafrianr@aol.com	no website
Annie's Annuals and Perennials	801 Chesley Ave. Richmond, CA 94801-2135	888-266-4370	contact@anniesannuals.com	anniesannuals.com
Arrowhead Alpines	P.O. Box 857 Fowlerville, MI 48836	517-223-3581	danielapresley@hotmail.com	arrowheadalpines.com
Beaver Creek Greenhouses	PMB#364-4155 Deep Lake Boundary Rd. Colville, WA		bvcreek@netidea.com	rockgardenplants.com

	99114 and Box 129 Fruitvale British Columbia VOG 1L0 (zero) Canada			
Digging Dog	P.O. Box 471 Albion, CA 95410	707-937- 1130	business@diggingdog.com	<a href="http://www.diggingdog.com">www.diggingdog.com</a>
Granite Gardens Rare Plants	P.O. Box 4050 Sonora, CA 95370	209-532- 3029	ggrp@sonnet.com	ggrareplants.com
High Country Gardens	2902 Rufina St. Santa Fe, NM	800-925- 9387		
Joy Creek Nursery	20300 NW Watson Rd Scappoose, OR 97056	503-543- 7474	catalogue@joycreek.com	joycreek.com
Laporte Avenue Nursery	1950 Laporte Ave. Fort Collins, CO 80521	970-472- 0017	klehrer23@msn.com	<a href="http://laporteavenuenursery.com">laporteavenuenursery.com</a>
Las Pilitas Nursery	3232 Las Pilitas Rd. Santa Margarita, CA 93453 and 8331 Nelson Way Escondido, CA92026	805-438- 5992 (Santa Margarita)  760-749- 5930 (Escondido)		laspilitas.com
Milestone Nursery	620 State St. P.O. Box 907 Lyle, WA 98635	509-365- 5222		
Mt. Tahoma Nursery	28111 112 <sup>th</sup> Ave E. Graham, WA	253-847- 9827		<a href="http://backyardgardener.com/mttahoma/index.html">backyardgardener.com/ mttahoma/index.html</a>
Plants of the Southwest	3095 Agua Fria St. Santa Fe, NM 87507		contact@plantsofthesouthwest.com	plantsofthesouthwest.com
Siskiyou Rare Plant Nursery	2115 Talent Ave. Talent, OR 97540	541- 535- 7103	customerservice@srpn.net	siskiyourareplantnursery.com
Sunscapes Rare Plant Nursery	330 Carlile Ave Pueblo, CO 81004	719- 546- 0047	Sunscapes@comcasst.net	
Wrightman Alpines	RR#3 1503 Napperton Dr. Kerwood, ON NOM 2BO Canada		info@wrightmanalpines.com	wrightmanalpines.com

\*For a comprehensive list by state: [www.hort.usu.edu](http://www.hort.usu.edu)

**Seeds\***

Name	Address	Phone	Email	Website
Alplains	P.O. Box 489 Kiowa, CO 80117-0489	303-621-2590		
Beaver Creek Greenhouses	PMB#364-4155 Deep Lake Boundary Rd. Colville, WA 99114 and Box 129 Fruitvale British Columbia VOG 1L0 (zero) Canada		bvcreek@netidea.com	rockgardenplants.com/ seedscatmain.htm
Northwest Native Seed	Ron Ratko Northwest Native Seed 915 Davis Pl S Seattle, WA 98144		oreonana@zipcon.com	
Rocky Mountain Rare Plants	1706 Deerpath Rd. Franktown, CO 80116-9462			
Southwestern Native Seeds	P.O. Box 50503 Tucson, AZ 85703			southwesternnativeseeds.com

\* Members of the American Penstemon Society are eligible for our Annual Seed Exchange

\*\* The North American Rock Garden Society also sponsors an annual seed sale to its members

**We invite nurseries not listed to submit their names for publication on our website, [apsdev.org](http://apsdev.org)**

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## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Sign me up-  
Name-

Address-

Phone #

E-mail

US and Canadian dues \$15 US

Elsewhere \$20 US, no cash please We do not sell, share or distribute member data in any manner.

APS-2008

**JUNE 13-15, 2008  
REGISTRATION FORM**

Names of Registrants \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Cost**

Cost of Registration is \$100. per person. This includes buffet dinner on Friday night, a sit-down dinner on Saturday night and other related expenses. Both dinners will be held at the Prospector Hotel in Ely.

**Payment**

My/our check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed. PayPal may also be used, see website [www.apsdev.org](http://www.apsdev.org).

**Disclaimer**

There are inherent risks involved in a trip of this nature, including but not limited to car problems, accidents and medical difficulties. Each participant registering must be responsible for his or her own well being and belongings. Keep in mind that at times, you may be hours away from a hospital during the trip. If you have any health issues that are of concern, you should discuss them with your health professional before you sign up for this trip. Information provided by the APS is believed to be from reliable sources, but each participant is encouraged to verify it for themselves. Each participant agrees by registering and signing below to hold the APS, its officers, agents and members harmless for any and all problems that may occur during the Annual Meeting and Field Trips.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Registrants Signature(s)

Send to:

Bob Pennington  
 Agua Fria Nursery  
 1409 Agua Fria St.  
 Santa Fe, NM 87505-0907  
 505-983-4831  
 aguafrianr.aol.com