

watered with power supplied by a gas generator. The extreme heat and drought that followed the storm for several weeks severely stressed and killed many older, established azaleas in the area. Cleanup is still underway, with mostly removal of small debris from the flowerbeds.

#### **Hurricane Rita Damage**

**Robert Turley, Calcasieu Agricultural Center, Lake Charles, Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana.** Wind damage to azaleas planted in the ground was minimal; however, damage was severe to those that were subjected to tree fall and flying debris. Calcasieu Parish is in the southwest tip of Louisiana, and has an extended shoreline—both Gulf Coast and Mississippi River—and therefore is subject to tidal surges on two sides resulting in severe flooding. The heavily treed Allen, Beauregard, and Vernon parishes surrounding Calcasieu, all north and east of Lake Charles, suffered extensive damage.

**Hodges Gardens** is located on US Highway 171 in Sabine Parish, between Many and Leesville, Louisiana. This area is well known to fishermen (Toledo Bend Lake

and soldiers (Ft. Polk) and is heavily treed with second-growth pine and various oaks. Lynn Musick is the director and was not available when I called, but a spokesperson told me that while the garden had sustained considerable damage, “the garden is open and looking forward to the spring.”

#### **Conclusions**

1. Azaleas are tough and resilient.
2. They do not like salt-water baths.
3. They are very tolerant of pine trees, but not when hurricane winds are in the neighborhood.

*Bill Bode has been president of the Louisiana Chapter 1995-1996 and 2005-2006 and was president of the Men's Garden Club of Baton Rouge from 1969-1970. He was president of the ASA from 1999 to 2001. He retired from a career as a hospital representative of the pharmaceutical industry (Merrell-Dow) in 1985. Buddy Lee is currently president of the ASA.*

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## *New Members*

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*The following members joined the Society as of March 31, 2006.*

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#### **Ben Morrison Chapter**

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