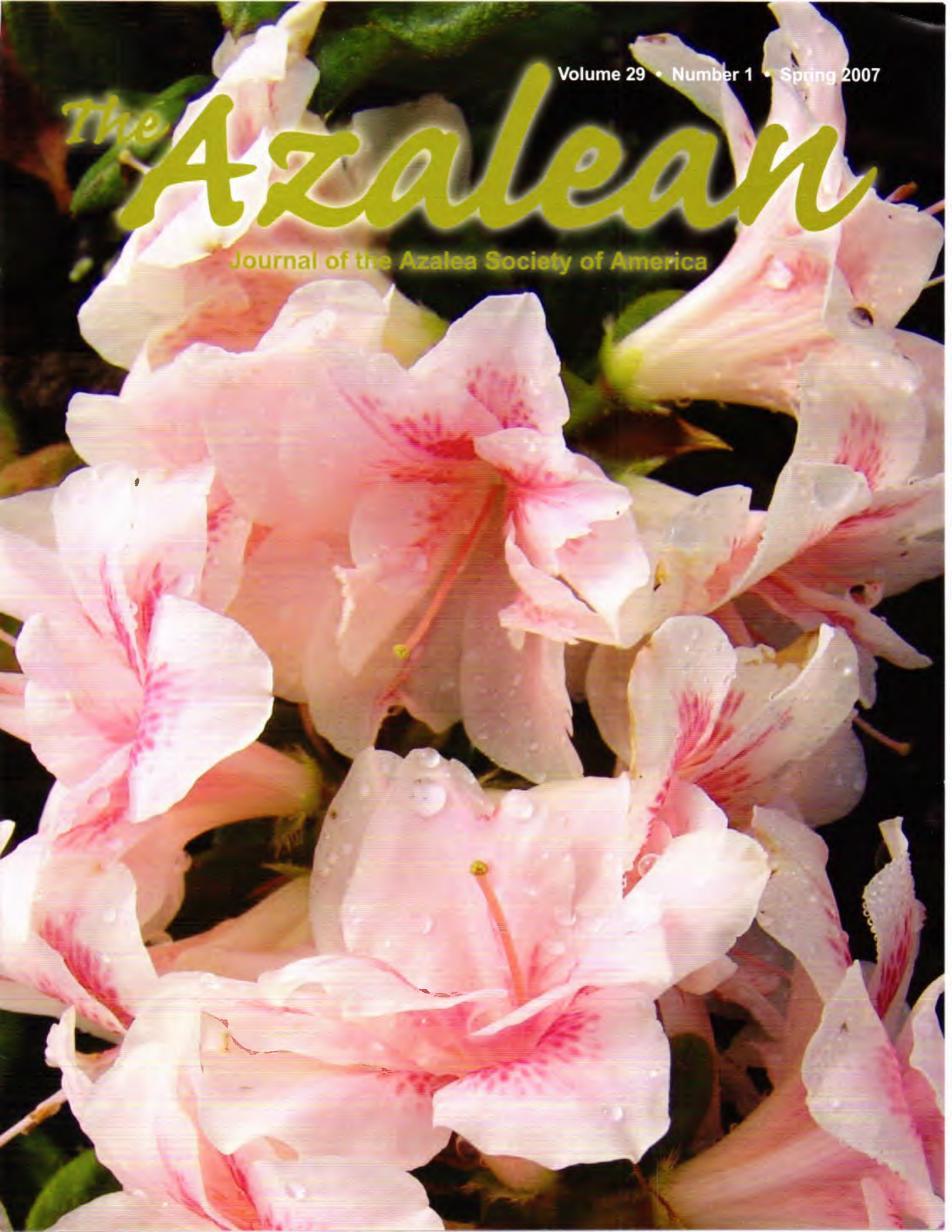


Volume 29 • Number 1 • Spring 2007

# *The Azalean*

Journal of the Azalea Society of America





# President's Letter

Robert (Buddy) Lee — Independence, Louisiana

Greetings! I hope that you are having a great spring. With all the ups and downs with the weather this year, such as cherry blossoms opening in early January in Washington, DC, and flooding in the Gulf States, it sure puts our azaleas to the test.

I'm convinced that gardeners are much more aware of the weather than the rest of the population. We tend to mention past seasons not so much with dates but with phrases like "that was the spring that had the best azalea blooms I've ever seen" or "remember that was the spring with the late frost that nipped some of the azalea buds" and "that was the winter when the snow was perfect for protecting the azaleas."

I'm sure that you can come up with many similar "phrases" from your own past azalea experiences. One thing for sure, every year brings not only new challenges in caring for our azaleas, but also a renewed and invigorated enjoyment of these beautiful plants.

Speaking of seasons, I guess you could say that I'm in the "winter" of my presidency of our Society. It's hard to believe that I have been president for four years. The time has passed "fast and furiously," and there seemed to always be something to complete or someone to contact.

Overall, it has been a wonderful and gratifying experience. I would like to thank the board of directors, officers, and membership for giving me the opportunity to serve and for their support during the last four years. My wish is that what has been accomplished during my tenure has had a positive impact on our Society.

I hope everyone is having a great spring, and someday in the future you can say "that was the spring that had the most fantastic azalea blooms ever."

Sincerely,

**Robert 'Buddy' Lee**

## On the Cover

The Encore® Azalea **Autumn Bell**™ ('Robleo' PPIP) was introduced in 2006. With light green foliage and ruffled pale pink flowers embellished by delicate white lacing and magenta freckles, it is a garden designer's delight.



Photo Robert Lee



The Azalea Society of America, organized December 9, 1977 and incorporated in the District of Columbia, is an educational and scientific non-profit association devoted to the culture, propagation, and appreciation of azaleas Subgenera *Tsutsusi* and *Pentantha* of the genus *Rhododendron* in the Heath family (*Ericaceae*).

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Opinions and views expressed in *The Azalean* are those of the contributors or editor, not necessarily those of the Society, and are presented to foster a wider appreciation and knowledge of azaleas. Advertisements are presented as a service to our readers and do not imply endorsement by the Azalea Society of America. Advertising and other contributions to *The Azalean* are used exclusively to help defray the costs of publishing *The Azalean*.

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# *Rhododendron semibarbatum*: Not Your Mother's Favorite Azalea

John and Sally Perkins—Salem, New Hampshire

The small and nearly hidden flowers of *Rhododendron semibarbatum* are not showy enough for just anyone, let alone your mother, to consider it among her favorites. Normally reference books classify *R. semibarbatum* not as an azalea but in a monotypic subgenus *Mumeazalea*. Yet, *R. semibarbatum* has five stamens as do many azaleas. Moreover, current DNA research by Loretta Goetsch, Andrew Eckert, and Benjamin Hall indicates that the genus *Menziesia* as well as *R. vaseyi*, *R. albiflorum*, and *R. semibarbatum* ally with the proposed expansion of subgenus *Azaleastrum* including the sections previously classified as *Azaleastrum*, *Viscidula*, *Sciadorhodon*, and *Tsutsusi*. *R. semibarbatum*, having always been considered by rhododendron experts as a loner and an outsider, may in fact be merely the first “false azalea” to be correctly recognized as a rightful member of the genus *Rhododendron*.

*R. semibarbatum* is a rare species native to mountainous regions of Japan's Honshu, Shikoku, and Kyushu providences, growing in thickets and forests. Although normally maturing at two to six feet, *R. semibarbatum* may occasionally be as tall as 10 feet. The plant habit is erect; being taller than broad. The deciduous, paper-thin, wavy-edged elliptic two-inch leaves are especially attractive when in its yellowish orange to red fall color. Pat Halliday in *The Illustrated Rhododendron* captures the beauty of this unusual species.

This species is unique in having five dimorphic (unequal) stamens where the two shorter stamens are densely pilose (having dense soft hairs) with globose-ovoid anthers. In fact “semibarbatum” refers to these partially bearded stamens. The small (1/2 to 3/4 inch), white, rotate flowers are borne in clusters of one to three flowers in the axils after the leaves are fully expanded. The seeds are unwinged.

*R. semibarbatum* was first sent by the Japanese collector called Tschonoski to the Botanical Garden in St. Petersburg, where it was named by Maximowicz in 1870. Seed was collected by E.H. Wilson in 1914 and sent to the Arnold Arboretum and later to Kew in Britain.

In the fall of 1991 we purchased a seedling of *R. semibarbatum* at the Arnold Arboretum Case Estate's plant sale. Our little plant was not given winter shelter in a cold frame but instead planted on a northern slope with dense shade. We thought it would die and were surprised to notice it pushing little green buds late the following spring. The first week of July in 1994 we noticed small white flowers had fallen to the ground near *R. semibarbatum* and we wondered from where. Amazingly, hidden in the foliage were two more flowers. We quickly consulted Davidian's *The Rhododendron Species Volume III* and were pleased to



▲ *Rhododendron semibarbatum* matures at two to six feet.

▼ The small white rotate flowers are borne in clusters.



find that the label fit the description. It has flowered in June every year since, making *R. semibarbatum* one of about 50 rhododendrons that have bloomed for more than 10 straight years in our garden. In 2006, although having its best bloom ever with flowers on nearly every branch, one still had to get close to appreciate the floral display lasting nearly a month.

Our plant is four feet high by five feet wide in 15 years and has never shown any significant winter damage blooming fully at 17°F defying the Zone 7 hardiness rating usually assigned to the species. In 2004 after a very cold January where night time temperatures hovered near or below 0° F for more than 20 days, *R. semibarbatum* experienced partial flower bud blast but no foliage damage, performing better than many rhododendron species commonly grown in New England such as *R. degronianum*.

*Continued on Page 17.*



# Six Communities Receive "Azalea City" Designation Since Program Inception

In 2004, the Azalea Society of America launched its "Azalea City" program to recognize municipalities that promote and display azaleas.

Since the inception of the program, six cities have received the "Azalea City" designation: Nacogdoches, TX; McComb, MS; South Gate, CA; Tyler, TX; Palatka, FL; and Houston, TX.

In general, successful applicants for "Azalea City" status have shown a dedication to highlighting azaleas through proclamations for an Azalea Week, festivals, tours, and the prominent display of azaleas in public gardens and landscapes.

The certification is for five years and is contingent upon a continuing azalea emphasis in the community. There is no application fee.

## Nacogdoches, Texas

Nacogdoches was the first city in the United States to earn the distinction of "Azalea City of America" by the Azalea Society of America. The East Texas city has also been selected to host the ASA's 2007 annual convention, which will be held March 29 to April 1.

Nacogdoches is home to Texas' largest azalea garden, the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden at Stephen F. Austin State University. With its acres of picturesque blossoms in every imaginable hue, the garden features more than 7,000 evergreen and native azaleas nestled in a loblolly pine forest alongside the historic Lanana Creek. The garden explodes with color in springtime and is the crowning jewel of the city's nationally recognized Azalea Trail which runs March 17-31, 2007.

The eighth annual Azalea Trail features more than 20 miles of self-guided driving routes through the oldest town in Texas, showcasing the flowering shrubs at their peak of color. Special events, including a gardening symposium, floral-design exhibit, photography contest, and plant sale are also planned each weekend during the Azalea Trail.

"The best way to enjoy our city's beautiful azaleas is to drive the designated trails that meander through the city," said Melissa Sanford, executive director of the Nacogdoches Convention & Visitors Bureau.

"Along those trails you'll see the pride our residents take in their personal gardens, as well as the beautiful landscaping on the college campus, including the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden which just takes your breath away."

Barbara Stump, the primary designer of the Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden, said the acidic soil of the Deep East Texas piney woods is perfect for growing azaleas. The garden boasts both common and rare varieties, making it



Photo Nacogdoches Convention & Visitors Bureau

▲ The Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden on the campus of Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches is the largest azalea garden in Texas.

▼ More than 20 miles of driving trails through beautifully manicured residential districts are featured during the annual Azalea Trail in Nacogdoches, Texas.



Photo Nacogdoches Convention & Visitors Bureau

one of the most diverse azalea collections in the United States.

"The garden is designed in a naturalistic style to showcase the full range of azalea colors, as well as camellias in the winter, Japanese maple color throughout the year, and more than 1,000 other ornamental trees," Stump said.

For more information about Nacogdoches Azalea Trail events call the Convention & Visitors Bureau at 1-888-OLDEST-TOWN or log onto [www.visitnacogdoches.org](http://www.visitnacogdoches.org).





Photo: McComb Visitors Bureau

▲ In McComb, Mississippi, area residents light their landscapes during the evening hours to showcase the azaleas.

## McComb, Mississippi

Located in southwest Mississippi, McComb was designated an “Azalea City” on March 28, 2005. It was the second city in the United States to receive the designation.

McComb is home of the Pike County Azalea Festival. The two-week event runs from March 19–31, and it is a time honored tradition, according to Carmen Walsh, executive director of the McComb Visitors Bureau.

“Each day of the two week span is jam packed with special activities and events hosted by local businesses, civic groups and private citizens, in celebration of the glory and splendor of our native flora,” said Walsh.

During the festival hundreds of area residents and businesses add lights to their landscapes to showcase the native azaleas during evening hours. Guided bus tours of the lighted azaleas are also offered.

Art is also a major part of the festival. The Pike County Arts Council sponsors a Juried Art Show, and Festive Flower Shows are sponsored by the McComb, Magnolia, and Summit Garden Clubs.

The works of local artists are exhibited at local businesses throughout the festival. On one special evening, the McComb Main Street Association hosts Art A’la Carte to provide visitors with an opportunity to discuss their works with the artists.

Other activities include historic home tours, a 5K run, and golf tournament.

For more information contact the McComb Visitors Bureau at (601) 249-0116.

## South Gate, California

The City of South Gate was designated an “Azalea City” on September 20, 2006. In 1965 the city adopted the

azalea as its official flower and implemented an annual Azalea Festival in celebration of the plant.

Now in its 41st year, the festival is a well established community event that attracts residents of all ages. Each year an “Azalea Queen” is chosen from among senior citizens who have demonstrated excellence in community service.

Co-sponsored by the City of South Gate, the event receives support from the Parks & Recreation Department taking advantage of the City’s many outstanding facilities centrally located at South Gate Park. The next Azalea Festival will run from March 18 to March 25 ending with the Azalea Parade.

## Tyler, Texas

Designated as an “Azalea City” in January 2007, the City of Tyler has an abundance of unique attractions and events, but one of the most popular is the Annual Azalea and Spring Flower Trail.

The annual celebration features eight miles of beautiful home gardens filled with colorful azaleas, dogwoods, tulips, wisteria and red buds. This year’s event is set for March 16 to April 1.

“Visitors to our city can view these wonderful plants during their peak blooming season and experience the beauty and vibrant colors that only an East Texas spring can provide,” said Justin Turner of the Tyler Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The eight-mile driving tour begins at 500 S. Broadway (Hwy 69/Business Route) and E. Houston St. From there, visitors can follow the posted Azalea Trail signs as they

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“This is a great opportunity for young people to learn about our city and all it has to offer the visitor. Many of these young people go on to be great ambassadors for our city.”

**—Justin Turner**

*Tyler Convention & Visitors Bureau*

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tour one of Tyler’s most attractive residential areas. For the more industrious visitor, walking is a great way to enjoy the trail and allows the opportunity to take pictures.

On each weekend beginning March 16, visitors have the chance to meet the “Azalea Belles,” high school co-eds who serve as official greeters to the beautiful flower city. The “Azalea Belles” are dressed in antebellum style fashion and are available for photographs and to answer questions about the City of Tyler.

“This is a great opportunity for young people to learn about our city and all it has to offer the visitor,” said Turner. “Many of these young people go on to be great ambassadors for our city.”





Photos: Tyler Convention & Visitors Bureau

The Tyler Convention and Visitors Bureau awards prizes in four categories to homeowners along the trail. The awards are Best Display of Azaleas and Spring Flowers, Best Landscaped Yard, Best of Show (a combination of the first two) and the President's Azalea Trail Award. This year awards will be given to homeowners on two trails so there will be two awards in each category, with only one President's Award.

Homes are judged on a number of different qualities such as unique landscape styles, floral display, garden architecture, and use of garden plants. Houses are judged by a committee of Chamber volunteers, and judging takes place the weekend prior to opening day.

Other events include the Azalea Trail Arts and Crafts Fair, Historic Tyler on Tour, McClendon House Tours, Azalea Quilt Show and Sale, Rose City Kiwanis Antique Show and Sale, Apache Belle Spring Show, living history demonstrations, a plant and cut flower sale, and historic home tours.

There are several other events planned for this spring including the Spring Fling Plant Sale, Old School Cruizers Auto Show, Spring Home Garden Tour, and the Four Winds Renaissance Faire. Several public gardens are open during

- ▲ In Tyler, Texas, high school co-eds dress in antebellum style fashion and are available for photographs and to answer questions about the city's Azalea Trail.
- ▼ Tyler's Azalea Trail features eight miles of beautiful home gardens filled with colorful azaleas, dogwoods, tulips, wisteria and red buds.





the early spring for tours such as Ms. Lee's Daffodil Garden, the Tyler Municipal Rose Garden (Azalea Section), and the Ina Brundrett Azalea Garden on the Tyler Jr. College Campus.

Visitors may obtain trail maps and information at the Visitors Information Center located in the Chamber of Commerce, 315 N. Broadway from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. For a complimentary visitors packet please call (800) 235-5712 or visit [www.tylerazaleatrail.com](http://www.tylerazaleatrail.com).

## Palatka, Florida

In January 2007, Palatka, Florida joined the distinguished ranks of "Azalea Cities" as designated by the ASA.

Two events showcase azaleas in Palatka. The 61st Annual Florida Azalea Festival runs March 3 and 4 in historic downtown Palatka. The event features a Shriners' parade, and participants are encouraged to decorate floats with azaleas. Other activities include an antique show, sailboat regatta, dog show, musical entertainment, car show, arts and crafts, fashion show, and barbecue cook-off.

Old-fashioned family fun is featured at the 11th Annual Azalea Days set for March 10 and 11 at the Ravine Gardens State Park near Palatka. Local nurseries sell blooming azaleas and a wide variety of yard plants, and craft vendors provide an array of hand-crafted items. The event also features an art show, educational programs, and musical entertainment.

Wagon tours of the 1.8 mile ravine loop give visitors a close look at some of the 100,000 azaleas in 64 varieties that enliven the park. The blooming azaleas resemble a patchwork quilt blanketing the ravine walls with color.

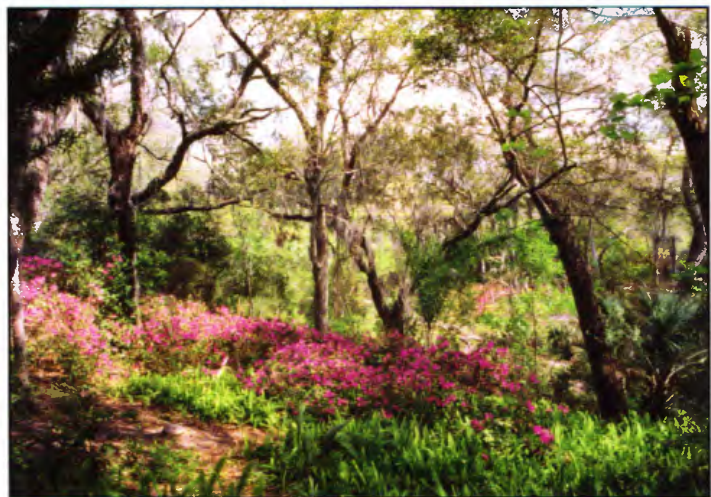
Other Palatka attractions include two historic districts containing 77 properties having historical significance and some 30 outdoor murals depicting the historical, cultural, and natural riches of Palatka. The City is centrally located in Northeast Florida within an hour or so drive from Jacksonville, St. Augustine, Daytona, Orlando, Ocala, and Gainesville.

For information about the Florida Azalea Festival, call (386) 329-0195 or go to [www.flazaelafest.com](http://www.flazaelafest.com). For information about Azalea Days at Ravine Gardens State Park call (386) 329-3721 or visit [www.floridastateparks.org/ravinegardens](http://www.floridastateparks.org/ravinegardens).

## Houston, Texas

Houstonians celebrate the arrival of spring each year with the opening of the Azalea Trail. This year will mark the 72nd annual Azalea Trail hosted by the River Oaks Garden Club. Held the first Friday through Sunday in March (2-4), the trail offers guests seven different homes and gardens to enjoy.

Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens, Rienzi, and the Forum of Civics Building are perennial favorites, while the remaining four are private homes and gardens of River Oaks Garden Club members. The trail, with its rich history, has been instrumental in establishing and increasing the popularity of azaleas in the Houston area.



Photos Ravine Gardens State Park

▲ Ravine Garden State Park near Palatka, Florida, hosts the annual Azalea Days celebration.

▼ The park features more than 100,000 azaleas in 64 varieties.



Photos Ravine Gardens State Park

The city eagerly anticipates this annual rite of spring. This year will be especially memorable as it coincides with the Azalea Society of America's designation of the City of Houston as an Azalea City of America, the largest recognized Azalea City in the country. This distinction was the result of the combined efforts of the City of Houston, the River Oaks Garden Club, and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Azalea Trail will officially open at 10:45 a.m. on Friday, March 2 with a ribbon cutting at the residential entrance to Bayou Bend Collection and Gardens, the early American decorative arts center of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston (MFAH).

Bayou Bend, with its fourteen acres of beauty, is the largest of the featured gardens. Built in 1927-1928, Bayou Bend offers a combination of formal and natural gardens anchored by azaleas. The gardens are accented with flowering trees, shrubs, and thousands of tulips. Rienzi, the European decorative arts center of the MFAH, is a five-acre estate and garden which showcases azaleas along with many varieties of spring blooming bulbs in naturalized settings.



The Forum of Civics Building, home of the River Oaks Garden Club, features five gardens of different styles, all showcasing the azalea.

In addition, each of the four private homes featured represents different garden and architectural designs offering the best of Houston's estates.

The River Oaks Garden Club also has experts on hand during the event to answer visitor's questions about azaleas and other topics specific to the Houston area. These topics often include local plant ideas, fertilization and watering, and the increasingly popular topic of organic gardening. These experts play a vital role in the educational responsibility that the Garden Club and the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, have to the community.

Taking part in the Azalea Trail is a tradition enjoyed by thousands every year. This event helps to educate, enlighten, and entertain Houstonians of all ages about the beauty of the azalea. Houston invites everyone to help welcome in spring at this year's 72nd annual Azalea Trail. Go to [www.riveroaksgardenclub.org](http://www.riveroaksgardenclub.org) for hours, ticket prices, and other information.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

### Houston, Texas

[www.riveroaksgardenclub.org](http://www.riveroaksgardenclub.org)

### McComb, Mississippi

Ph: (601) 249-0116

### Nacogdoches, Texas

Ph: (888) OLDEST-TOWN or  
[www.visitnacogdoches.org](http://www.visitnacogdoches.org)

### Palatka, Florida

Ph: (386) 329-0195 or [www.flazaelafest.com](http://www.flazaelafest.com)

### South Gate, California

Ph: (323) 563-9502

### Tyler, Texas

Ph: (800) 235-5712 or [www.tylerazaleatrail.com](http://www.tylerazaleatrail.com).

## How to Become a Certified Azalea City

One of the principal goals of the Azalea Society of America is to promote the appreciation of azaleas in public and private landscapes. To help achieve that goal, we put an Azalea City program into place in early 2004 to find, recognize, and certify those municipalities that promote and display azaleas as Azalea Society of America Azalea Cities.

We invite you to explore the requirements to be recognized and certified as an official Azalea City. In general, successful applicants for Azalea City status will have shown a dedication to highlighting azaleas through proclamations for an Azalea Week, festivals, tours, and the prominent display of azaleas in public gardens and landscapes.

When you become certified as an Azalea City:

- we will provide you with a news release package appropriate for local media;
- an Azalea Society member will present your representatives with an official certificate suitable for hanging in a prominent location; and
- we will document your certification as an Azalea City in our quarterly journal, *The Azalean*.

You could reasonably expect the certification and accompanying publicity to result in increased tourism. The certification period is for five years, contingent upon a continuing azalea emphasis in your municipality. At this time, there is no fee for application and certification as an Azalea City.

The ASA welcomes all municipalities to apply for official designation as an Azalea City. To aid your

municipality with their application, please carefully read the following guidelines before filling out the application. While we do want you to receive our official designation as an Azalea City, we have certain requirements to qualify. Since we wish any municipality receiving our Azalea City designation to consider it a distinct honor and recognition by a national association, we bestow that designation only after careful consideration of your application.

Each section of the Guidelines correlates to the same section in the application.

**Section A:** This section requires the legal municipality name, County/Parish, State, mailing address, and the name and title of the application maker.

**Section B:** In this section, please provide a narrative of how, when, and where your municipality has promoted and/or celebrated Azaleas in public and private spaces over the past three years, or how your municipality is striving to rejuvenate or begin an interest in azaleas, designate a week to celebrate azaleas, plant or re-plant azaleas in public spaces, encourage new interest by the public to use azaleas in their private landscapes, and/or encourage gardens and arboreta to celebrate azaleas. Proof of your narrative is covered in Section C.

**Section C:** In this section, please itemize and summarize your exhibits of proof. They may be, but are not limited to, copies of Municipal Proclamations, newspaper clippings with source citations, magazine articles, photographs with captions and source citations,

• *Continued on next page.*



and/or any records showing the intent, follow-up and implementation of a municipal program with lasting endeavor. Copies of a taped television or radio interview by a local electronic broadcast media may be used as additional proof. Copies of all your forms of proof must accompany the application.

**Section D:** In this section give the names and addresses of up to five public or private gardens or arboreta that promote or celebrate azaleas in your municipality in the form of spring festivals, tours, special speakers, plant sales or any other way which offers the appreciation of azaleas.

**Section E:** To qualify as an official Azalea City, your municipality must have at least three active members in the Azalea Society of America, residing within the corporate limits of your municipality. This qualification is required to ensure the continuing goals of the Society are met and provide a pool of members for an educational basis within your municipality. Our Society Secretary may be able to provide confirmation of current members residing within your municipality to qualify, or you may submit new members to qualify. If you have a municipal library, you may wish to submit that entity as an annual member to ensure the public availability of the ASA Journal, *The Azalean*.

To submit new members in the spaces provided, please enter their names, addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses, the required annual membership fee of \$25 USA by check or USPS Money Order per member, and enclose with the application. Do not send cash. Members receive our quarterly journal, *The Azalean*, the opportunity to attend National Meetings and Conventions, join and/or form local chapters, participate in plant sales, flower shows and enjoy all the benefits of membership. Articles about your special municipal azalea celebration may be offered for publication in *The Azalean*.

**Fees and submission:** There is no fee for this application or certification as an Azalea City. Electronic applications by fax or E-Mail will not be accepted. All applications and proofs must be sent by US Postal Service mail. Allow 60 to 90 days for a reply on acceptance or denial.

If denied, all materials submitted by you will be held for a period of ninety days, or until we receive your written appeal with additional exhibits of proof, if needed. If accepted, all materials submitted will be placed in permanent records.

Azalea City recognition is for a period of five years and is subject to annual review by the committee and resident members in your municipality. Near the end of the term, you will receive a letter with a re-certification application. This process ensures the ASA that your municipality has an on-going active program of azalea celebration and appreciation.

We encourage you to download, read and understand the Azalea City application at: [www.azaleas.org/azaleacity.html](http://www.azaleas.org/azaleacity.html). We appreciate your interest, and we look forward to receiving your completed application to arrive for our consideration, and hopefully, for certification.

## Old Wives' Tale: Azaleas Have Five Stamens

Don Voss—Vienna, Virginia

The notion that azaleas have five stamens and rhododendrons have ten dates back to Linnaeus. The six Linnean species of *Azalea Pentandria* (five stamens) *Monogynia* (one pistil) are now classified as follows:

Linnean name	Current name
<i>Azalea indica</i> L.	<i>Rhododendron indicum</i> (L.) Sweet
<i>A. pontica</i> L.	<i>R. luteum</i> Sweet
<i>A. lutea</i> L.	<i>R. periclymenoides</i> (Michaux) Shinnery
<i>A. viscosa</i> L.	<i>R. viscosum</i> (L.) Torrey
<i>A. lapponica</i> L.	<i>R. lapponicum</i> (L.) Wahlenberg
<i>A. procumbens</i> L.	<i>Loiseleuria procumbens</i> (L.) Desvaux

This group includes one species of evergreen azalea (*indicum*), three deciduous azaleas, a lepidote rhododendron, and a *Loiseleuria*. It is a poor basis for statements regarding the number of stamens found in azaleas, in particular the evergreen azaleas. The deciduous azaleas (*Rhododendron* subg. *Pentanthera*) have five stamens. But the evergreen azaleas of *Rhododendron* subg. *Tsutsusi* vary in their stamen count. A number of species important in horticulture, together with their stamen counts(1), are listed below:

eriocarpum	c.9
indicum	5
kaempferi	5(-6)
kiusianum	5
macrosepalum	5(-7)
mucronatum	10
nakaharae	10
ripense	10
scabrum	10
simsii	(8-)10
tashiroi	10(-12)
tosaense	5(-10)
yedoense	10

### References:

1. Stamen counts from Chamberlain, D.F. and Rae, S.J. 1990. A Revision of *Rhododendron*: IV Subgenus *Tsutsusi*. *Edinb. J. Bot.* 47(2):89-200]



# Society News

## Azaleas online

By Bob Stelloh

If you haven't seen the many pictures of azaleas we have online, treat yourself and take a look. Thanks to the contributions of many members, we have well over 2000 azalea pictures at <http://www.pbase.com/azaleasociety>. They are organized into "galleries" by azalea type.

We also have a (preliminary and partial) index of accepted names of azaleas, together with their published synonyms and spelling variants. Its primary purpose is to become the definitive list of azalea names, useful for checking which names have already been used, their proper spelling, and other such activities.

A related purpose is to link the names to pictures of the azaleas. The current list, published in March 2005, will be updated periodically to include more names and pictures. To see it and use it, go to <http://www.azaleas.org> and click the "Pictures" link in the left margin.

When you don't see pictures of your favorite azaleas at either of those sites (or when you have some better ones), e-mail your digital pictures to Bob Stelloh at [bstelloh@mac.com](mailto:bstelloh@mac.com), along with the plant names, who took them, where they were taken, and when they were taken. He will add them to the picture site and give you credit for them.

Or, if you have a lot of pictures, Bob will help you learn how to add them yourself. Finally, if you have slides or prints that could add to the collection, let him know and we will figure out how to digitize them.

You can help on these projects even if you don't have any pictures, by looking through the name list and/or the azalea pictures for mistakes. Mistakes are a lot easier to make than they are to find, so a lot of "proofreaders" are needed. By working together, we are "writing the book" on azaleas, and in this case, a book that will be updated when errors are found and information on new plants becomes available.

## National membership meeting

The ASA will host its annual national membership meeting 9 to 9:30 p.m., Saturday, March 31, 2007, at the Fredonia Hotel and Convention Center in Nacogdoches, Texas.

The new ASA officers will be installed during the meeting, and membership will consider an amendment to the bylaws that allows the Finance Committee to use excess membership dues for operating expenses, if needed. (See page 90 of Winter 2006 issue of *The Azalean* for a full description of the proposed amendment.)

## Board of Directors meeting

The ASA Board of Directors will meet from 2 to 4 p.m., Thursday, March 29, 2007, in the Rusk Room of the Fredonia Hotel and Convention Center in Nacogdoches, Texas.

The Board will consider chartering a new California Chapter and reviewing the reorganization of the Dallas Chapter into the new Texas Chapter.

The Board will also receive reports on the Azalea City program, North Carolina State University archives, and membership.

A second Board of Directors meeting will be held from 8 to 10 a.m., Sunday, April 1, at the Fredonia Hotel and Convention Center. This will provide an opportunity for newly elected officers to discuss any new business.

## Call for articles

*The Azalean* needs more good articles about azaleas, their care, and their use in the landscape. Ideas for topics include:

- Articles describing new public gardens or special azalea collections being created in your area.
- Descriptions and photographs of Society members' gardens.
- Current research in azaleas being conducted at local universities, extension service gardens, or junior colleges.
- Information about azalea festivals and sales.
- Historic garden restoration stories.
- Articles about noteworthy azalea hybrid groups or new species or cultivar introductions.

Articles should be submitted as Microsoft Word documents, either by CD in the U.S. mail or by e-mail as a Word attachment.

Illustrations are highly encouraged with color print photographs, high resolution digital photographs (minimum 300 dpi), slides, or black-and-white drawings.

The editor needs finished copy and illustrations by the following dates to ensure careful review and production: Summer issue, April 1; Fall issue, July 1; Winter issue, October 1; and Spring issue, January 1.

Submit articles to:

Pam Fitch  
Editor, *The Azalean*  
10006 Homestead Ave.  
Lubbock, TX 79424  
E-mail: [pamfitch@myway.com](mailto:pamfitch@myway.com)



# New Members

## At-Large

Robert A. Bartlett, Jr  
29 Bartlett Lane  
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Judi Blessing  
Garden Club Of Palatka, Inc.  
275 West River Road  
Palatka, FL 32177

Maria Davila  
10035 San Luis Avenue  
South Gate, CA 90280

William (Bill) de Witt  
5485 Gardendale Street  
South Gate, CA 90280

Pam Fitch  
10006 Homestead  
Lubbock, TX 79424-3866

Friends of Ravine Gardens  
1600 Twigg Street  
Palatka, FL 32177

Carolyn Fox  
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Montgomery, AL 36117

Jim Gardiner  
The Garden House, Wisley  
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Susan Mason  
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### **Vaseyi**

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48 Old Laurel Drive  
Laurel Park, NC 28739



# The 25-Year Members' Club

Tadeusz Dauksza—Orland Park, Illinois

On behalf of the Azalea Society of America I would like to thank all of our 25-year members for their loyalty. We appreciate their tireless contributions to the growth of the ASA and its progress over the years, and we hope that they will continue to be active members for years to come.

As a part of the 25th anniversary celebration I would like to invite all of our 25-year members to share their memories or pictures captured from past conventions, meetings and other chapter events.

These personal reminiscences will help all of us remember that since the Society's inception in 1977 we have evolved into the nationally recognized advocate for the culture, propagation, and appreciation of azaleas. Without these dedicated, determined, and talented members whose hard work is admired by all members, none of this could have been possible.

As the stories and photos come in, we will post them to

the ASA Web site and post a link to contributor's name. As we receive articles and pictures throughout the year, I hope we can feature some of the more colorful reminiscences in our great journal *The Azalean*.

The following list of 25-year members includes every member who joined the ASA on or before March 1981 and is still a member as listed in the 2005-06 roster. If you are a 25-year member and your name is not listed, my apology and please send an e-mail to me, Tadeusz Dauksza, at [iltkyao@yahoo.com](mailto:iltkyao@yahoo.com) or call me at 708-479-8130.

If you prefer to mail your photos or reminiscences, my address is: 11726 Springbrook Court, Orland Park, IL 60467.

*Tadeusz Dauksza is a member of the Lake Michigan Chapter ASA. He helped organize the 2005 Holland, Michigan, ASA national convention.*

## Azalea Society of America 25-Year Members

Allan & Shirley Anderson  
Jane Aromi  
Freda I. Barry  
William F. Bedwell  
Virginia Boudreaux  
Anne Brooks  
Dr. & Mrs. Larry Brown  
Mr. & Mrs. Roger C. Brown  
Mrs. Walter Brown  
Hugh Caldwell  
Bob Carlson  
A.M. Christopher  
Margaret Church  
William Clagett  
L. Malcolm Clark  
Dr. Joe H. Coleman  
Vee-Vee Coleman  
Lu Ann Crews  
R.A. Comunale, MD  
Mr. & Mrs. J. Harold Davis  
Emile & Jane Deckert  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald L. Droneburg  
Teresa Dunnington  
Dennis T. Dutton  
M. Patton Echols, Jr  
Dr. & Mrs. Charles H. Evans

Allison Fuqua  
Thomas Q. Garvey, III, MD  
Helene & Jerry Goodman  
Dianne Gregg  
Mr. & Mrs. Warren Groomes  
James Harris  
M.F. Haywood, Jr.  
Mrs. Graham Holland  
Donald W. Hyatt  
Charles Larus  
David Lay  
Mr. & Mrs. Philip Louer  
Kenneth & Sandra McDonald  
Lawrence and Milbrey Martin  
Mr. & Mrs. W.C. Miller III  
Mrs. Baxter H. Murphree  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Murray  
Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence Nachman  
David & Leslie Nanney  
Jane Newman  
W.T. Norris, Jr, MD  
Julia & T J O'Malley  
Ronnie D. & Donna Palmer  
Dr. & Mrs. Robert H. Patterson  
Helen Ann Patton  
Joan G. Paull

Elizabeth H. Queen  
John & Susan Rountree  
Mary L. Rutley  
David & Deborah Sauer  
Mrs. H. Roland Schroeder  
Tom & Fran Schuetz  
Earl & Verdi Sommerville  
Theodore S. Stecki  
Denise & Bob Stelloh  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Stewart  
Dr. & Mrs. Leon Swell  
Dr. George & Sue Switzer  
Frederick L. Thane  
Dr. John T. Thornton  
Ruth Turner  
Deborah Van Vechten  
Mr. & Mrs. Art Vance  
Col. & Mrs. Ronald C. Vines  
Donald H. Voss  
Dr. Philip Waldman  
John K. Weagle  
Harry Weiskittel  
Silas Williams, Jr.  
Adeline Wood



# Chapter News

## Ben Morrison Chapter

*Bob Hobbs, Newsletter Editor*

The October Chapter meeting was held at the Annapolis Library. **Bob McWhorter** made a wonderful presentation of his and Rosa's trip to New England including slides of the Sandwich Club in Massachusetts, Cape Cod, the Massachusetts Heritage Garden, Shadynook Inn and Eveline Pinkington.

Chapter President **Harold Belcher** reported that the July 16 cutting picnic was a success. There was good weather and approximately one dozen members attended the viewing of a vintage 1969 Firebird.

The nominating committee will be chaired by **Lois Duffy** with **Gabrielle Scott** and **Carol Segree** as members.

Harold recently attended the Stakeholders Meeting at the National Arboretum. There are plans for a Chinese Garden to display plants and statuary. The Chinese government is providing resources for the garden, and there are possible plans for a plant sale.

The chapter's annual holiday meeting was held at the home of Dale and Carol Flowers on December 6, 2006. The chapter regrets to report that former chapter member **Phila Belle Blackwell** passed away on November 20, 2006, and that associate member **Thais Spencer** passed away on December 25, 2006.

## Brookside Gardens Chapter

*Charlie Evans, President*

At its annual meeting in December 2006, the Brookside Gardens Chapter awarded its Frederic P. Lee Commendation to **Brian Barr**, ASA member and Director of Horticulture at Hillwood Museum and Gardens in Washington, DC, for his outstanding service over the years in extending throughout the community an appreciation for azaleas.

**Roberta** and **Gordon Hagen** spoke and gave a slide presentation during the meeting on "Magnolias in the Home Garden." The following were elected as officers of the Brookside Gardens Chapter for 2007: **Charlie Evans**, president; **Mary Rutley**, vice-president; **Dottie Murphree**, treasurer; **Roberta Hagen**, corresponding secretary; and **Dianne Gregg**, recording secretary.

## Louisiana Chapter

*Allen Owings, President*

The Louisiana Chapter held its annual Christmas party at the home of member **Margie Jenkins** in Amite on Sunday, December 3. A brief business meeting prior to the festivities included the election of new chapter officers: **Allen Owings**, president; **Tom Milner**, vice president; **Regina Bracy**, secretary; and **Margie Jenkins**, treasurer. Thanks to **Bill Bode** for completing another term as chapter president and for his leadership efforts.

Chapter members participated in an azalea workshop held at the Gulf States Horticultural Expo in Mobile, Alabama, on February 1. **Buddy Lee**, **Maarten van der Giessen**, **Gary Keever**, and **Margie Jenkins** were the presenters.

Efforts will continue over the next several years as members work with the LSU AgCenter in the continued development and expansion of the Margie Jenkins Azalea Garden at the Hammond Research Station. The initial planting includes collections of Encore® and Robin Hill cultivars.

## Northern Virginia Chapter

*Dan Krabill, President*

The Chapter has held two organizational meetings to begin planning for the 2009 ASA National Convention. The theme of the convention will be "Hybridizers of Northern Virginia."

It was decided that the best time for garden tours of azaleas in the area is around the beginning of May. Current plans call for the convention to be held from Friday through Sunday with garden tours on Saturday and Sunday and evening presentations on Friday and Saturday. The final banquet will be held on Sunday evening and plant sales will be held daily.

The following committees and positions were discussed: **Dan Krabill**, chairman; **Phyllis Rittman**, treasurer; **Rosie Field**, Secretary; **Phil and Frances Louer**, registrar/sign-in; **Larry Martin** and **Barry Sperling**, hotels/meals; and **Eve** and **Bob Harrison** and **Don Hyatt**, tours.

## Oconee Chapter

*Frank Bryan, Newsletter Editor*

Master Gardeners of the University of Georgia's Rockdale Cooperative Extension Service Office held a plant sale September 30. A large variety of plants, including some evergreen azaleas, were available for purchase.

Throughout the day a series of talks were held. **Jim Thornton** presented a 20-minute program, "Varieties of Azaleas," from the chapter's CD "Selecting and Growing Azaleas." Approximately one dozen people attended the presentation. Copies of the CD are still available for purchase.

The chapter had a table outside where members discussed azaleas and their culture and answered questions. A large yellow banner adorned the front of the table, and it could be seen from across the parking lot and beyond. ASA brochures, Chapter cards and an extension-service bulletin on azaleas were also displayed and distributed.

A bulletin board containing pictures of each frame of the CD slide show was displayed behind the table. CDs were available for purchase. **Allison Fuqua**, **Jim Thornton**, **Don**

and **Barbara Bloodworth**, and **Frank Bryan** assisted at the table. **Al Penland** and **Joe Coleman** helped with the set up.

On October 21, seed pods of *Rhododendron flammeum* and *R. prunifolium* were collected at **Joan Adcock's** garden in Newnan. Fourteen members participated. Seed pod collection was easy because hundreds of plants had them. It was done without fatiguing climbs up and down hills and mountains and/or trekking along and off woodland trails. Just turn left and pick and turn right and pick and take a step or two and continue gathering.

Many of the shrubs had labels or ribbons that indicated flower color, form, or an impressive bloomer, which is better than collecting seeds from plants at random or making an advance trip during bloom time to make selections. Additionally, Joan guided many people to her favorites or to shrubs having colors of interest.

The variety of plants and the variety of flower colors and forms within such a small area was amazing. Most of those present departed with dozens of envelopes containing seed pods from different plants. They probably left with enough seeds to repopulate the region with Oconee azaleas, assuming all seeds germinated, seedlings survived, and the resulting plants were planted. After all the picking, one could not distinguish a significant reduction of seedpods from the masses of shrubs.

## Texas Chapter

*Barbara Stump, Treasurer*

Efforts to reorganize the former Dallas chapter into a Texas Chapter are continuing. The reorganization needs to be reviewed by the ASA board of directors at the annual meeting in Nacogdoches.

In the meantime, new chapter president **Bart Brechter** is leading an effort to find unique local azaleas for the 2007 convention plant sale. All proceeds from the annual plant auction will benefit the new Texas Chapter.

There is still time to register for the convention which will be held in East Texas. Tours will include sites in Nacogdoches and Tyler. On the Internet visit [www.nacogdochesazaleas.com](http://www.nacogdochesazaleas.com) to view the schedule of events and download a registration form.

## Vaseyi Chapter

*John Brown, Newsletter Editor*

The annual meeting and covered dish luncheon was held on November 12 attended by 25 members and guests. Officers were elected to two-year terms as follows: **Doley Bell**, president; **Jackson McCarter**, vice president; **John Brown**, secretary; **Bob Stelloh**, treasurer; **Leon Pace**, director 2006-08; and **Dwayne Clayburn**, director 2006-08. Note that the Directors for 2005-07 are **Ken Majer** and **Vivian Abney**. **Ed Collins** remains on the board as Past President.

The covered dish luncheon was a huge success. Three tables needed serious support to hold all the food brought mainly by the attendees. In addition, the main course was

catered barbecue. I should have taken notes on who brought what, but I could not stop eating long enough to write it all down. It was suggested that the by-laws be amended to insist that Glen be ordered to bring his cheesecake to all functions, but then there was the sweet potato pie, the beans salads, the slaws, baked and other beans, deviled eggs, and desserts galore. The group voted to make the covered dish event a regular part of our schedule.

During the course of the afternoon, the chapter obtained a new joint membership: **Jeanette** and **Bob Cannon** of Laurel Park. We welcome them and hope that they enjoy their membership as much as we enjoy having them.

## In Memory

### James Parker Holmes

November 6, 1940 – January 7, 2007

James "Jim" Parker Holmes of Flat Rock, North Carolina, passed away at the Elizabeth House in Hendersonville on Sunday morning, January 7 after a lengthy illness. He was born in Chicago, Illinois, on November 6, 1940 to Parker Manfred Holmes and Dorothy Thomas Holmes.

Jim retired to Flat Rock in June 2000, after living in both Ridgewood and Chester, New Jersey for 28 years. His career in finance and investments spanned 37 years. Jim received a Bachelor of Science in finance from Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 1962 and a Master of Business Administration in finance from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, in 1963.

For the last 30 years, Jim focused and devoted his spare time to the field of horticulture. He was a member of the Vaseyi Chapter of the Azalea Society of America, and chaired the committee that created the August Kehr Memorial Garden as a joint project of the Southeastern Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society and the Vaseyi Chapter.

In addition, he was a Master Gardener and the President of the Skylands Association for the Skylands Botanical Gardens in Ringwood, NJ. His love of plants included membership in the American Rhododendron Society, American Rock Garden Society, Conifer Society and the American Orchid Society. He was an active supporter of the North Carolina Arboretum in Asheville, NC.

Jim is survived by his wife, **Barbara Marshall Holmes** of Flat Rock; mother, **Dorothy Holmes** of Leesburg, Virginia; sisters, **Anita Mahood** and husband, **James** of Leesburg, Virginia; and **Jeannette Holmes** of Sacramento, California.

Their only child, **Elizabeth Katherine Holmes**, preceded him in death in 2003.

The family would appreciate memorial contributions to the North Carolina Arboretum Society, 100 Frederick Law Olmstead Way, Attn: Winnie Fisher, referencing the James P. Holmes Memorial Fund, Asheville, NC 28715, ph. 828-665-2492.



# Letters to the Editor

Congratulations on your recent appointment as Editor of *The Azalean*. I am a member of the Oconee Chapter near Atlanta, and I collect and grow many hundreds of azaleas here in White Plains.

I am acquainted with James Harris, and he has sold me many azaleas in the past from his home in Lawrenceville. I realize that many cultivars of azaleas, especially with Satsuki blood, give varied bloom presentations from year-to-year. My question regards the azalea picture on the cover of *The Azalean*, Volume 28, Number 3, Fall 2006.

I grow 'Ann Lee McPhail', and it is a pale rose, sort of salmon tipped. It is difficult to describe actually; but the magazine cover picture is almost identical to 'Fascination'. I attached an image from Long Mountain, a couple images from the gallery at the ASA and one from Camp Hill. Assuredly, they do differ somewhat maybe from camera techniques, lighting, culture etc., but they don't resemble the cover. Please advise.

I take my avocation of growing azaleas very seriously and proper identification is key as much as possible. Thank you for your time and interest to my inquiry.

**Richard E. Clifton**

1730 Eley Road, White Plains, GA 30678-1500

## Editor's Note:

According to Barbara Stump, former editor of *The Azalean*, the plant appearing on the cover of the Fall 2006 issue had a 'Ann Lee McPhail' nursery tag. The flower description in *IRRC* is light purplish pink (RHS 55C). And while weather, season and even soil can contribute to color variations, we would love to hear more about this topic from our readers. Please e-mail your responses to: [pamfitch@myway.com](mailto:pamfitch@myway.com) or mail to Pam Fitch, 10006 Homestead Ave., Lubbock, TX 79424.

## *R. Semibarbatum*

Continued from page 4.

In contrast to our experience of finding the species easy to grow, the Arnold Arboretum has never been able to permanently establish *R. semibarbatum* in their collection and University of Maine at Orono field studies indicate that the species is killed to the ground at -20°F. As far as we know, no other New England based member of the ARS Massachusetts Chapter living in Zone 6 or colder grows this species; however, since 1998 *R. semibarbatum* has grown at the Polly Hill Arboretum on Martha's Vineyard.

This species has no well-known cultivars and has not been used in hybridization. Although not difficult to propagate by cuttings, *R. semibarbatum* is usually grown from seed and is sometimes available from the Rhododendron Species Foundation. Although more of a curiosity than a horticultural gem, *R. semibarbatum* is hardy enough and easy enough to be tried by the adventurous grower who wants to add a deciduous late bloomer to their "evergreen azalea" collection even before the taxonomists



Shown are various pictures of 'Ann Lee McPhail'.

▲ Above are two photos from the ASA gallery.

▼ Below (left) is a photo from Long Mountain Nursery, and (right) a photo from the Auburn University's Piedmont Substation located at Camp Hill, Alabama.



end their debate over where this species actually belongs in the genus.

Considering that DNA research also indicates the *Pentanthera* section and *R. canadense* may move to subgenus *Hymenanthus* which includes *R. maximum* and *R. catawbiense*, "azalea" growers may well need a few new azaleas to add to their garden. So why not give *R. semibarbatum* a try before your mother's favorite deciduous azalea is reclassified as merely just another large leafed rhododendron?

John and Sally Perkins live on Canobie Lake in Salem, New Hampshire, enthusiastically growing 1,500 rhododendrons and azaleas on their tiny property. They are members of the Vaseyi Chapter of the ASA and the Massachusetts Chapter of the ARS running the chapter Web site [www.rosebay.org](http://www.rosebay.org). They may be contacted by e-mail at: [sjperk@comcast.net](mailto:sjperk@comcast.net).



# Invasive Vine Treatment

Jim Thornton—Conyers, Georgia

Ever heard of *Smilax rotundifolia*? It kind of rolls off the tip of your tongue, doesn't it? Does it sound like a nice plant?

Folks, it is anything but. It is, AKA, a round leaf greenbrier or "horse briar." Get the picture?

I've seen it wind itself everywhere; Twenty, thirty feet into trees and sometimes, completely covering shrubs. It is a thorny, wiry vine with a deep-rooted knotty nodule-type root. Believe me, it is hard to get rid of!

I have tried pulling, digging, cutting, dabbing, painting, swearing and a little voodoo, but to no avail. And, when it grows up in the middle of a shrub, well ..... forget it. Until now!

This will be the third year I will have used this method and I hope to see continued successful results. It is also time to share this information with ASA members.

First, you need some "Floral Water Picks." I call them vials or capsules, but they are a florist thing. They use them to stick cut flowers in a small amount of stored water and arrange them in styrofoam, wreaths or whatever.

I purchased some from a hobby store at a cost of one dollar for a 12 pack. If you don't have a place like this, try your local florist. I am sure they will part with a few.

A hint: the picks are green plastic and can easily get lost. I spray paint mine with a bright red paint to make them easy to see.

A basket is handy for preparing the vials and for carrying them around.

Next you will need some herbicide. I have used Round-Up® in the past, but now I prefer Spectracide® Brush Killer. I am sure others will work as well. Fill the pick with undiluted herbicide. The pick holds 9 ml, but use about 5 or 6 ml. I use an old syringe from a printer ink cartridge fill kit to fill the pick. A meat or poultry injector will also do.

Okay, you are now ready to go forth and do battle. Simply

select a vine with length enough to handle outside of the shrub. Better yet, long enough to bend to the ground so you can anchor the pick. Make sure the vine has a wide girth, about the size of a "match stick" to make a tight fit in the rubber vial cap. Strip away leaves, thorns, etc. Insert the cut end of the vine into the rubber cap, down into the herbicide, making sure the vine is bent downward.

Next step: walk away! In a couple of days you will notice the results. That is it! Later you can come back, remove the pick and move on to the next war zone.

I have tried this on other vines such as honeysuckle, blackberry, kudzu, and Virginia creeper with the same great results. Wild grapes are another matter, however. It seems that they exude so much sap that it forces the herbicide out of the vial. Maybe my timing is off.

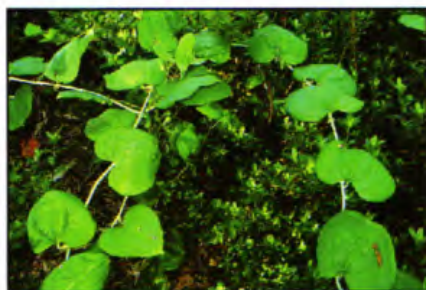
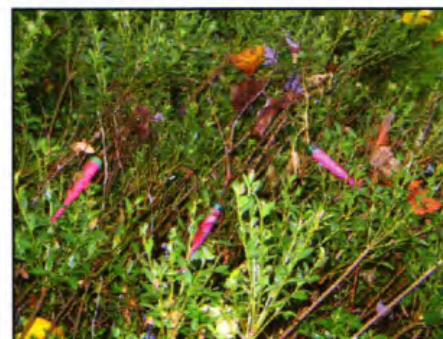
Speaking of timing, I start treatment in late spring through late fall. And, one last piece of advice; When working with any chemical read the label.

Any questions or comments, contact me at [jimpatsy@worldnet.att.net](mailto:jimpatsy@worldnet.att.net)



▲ Anchor the pick to the ground.

▼ Within a couple of days, the vines begin to die.



▲ *Smilax rotundifolia*

▼ Helpful hint: To easily identify the picks, spray paint them a bright color.



*Jim Thornton is an occasional contributor to The Azalean. He is a co-founder and the first president of the Oconee Chapter. He has served as a director, vice president, and president of the Azalea Society of America. Jim presently is the membership and public relations chair of the Oconee Chapter.*



# Colorful Evaluation—With a Little Help From Our Friends

Barbara Stump—Nacogdoches, Texas

In a few short weeks, the national Azalea Society of America convention for 2007 is coming to East Texas. This is a great opportunity for us at the SFA Mast Arboretum Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden to show the Society the fruits of the labor of a number of their member-nurserymen.

As I mentioned in the convention article in the Fall 2006 issue of *The Azalean*, we have been fortunate to get to know masters in the breeding, growing, and selling of azaleas. Not only have they shared their knowledge, but many have also donated plants to add to our eight-acre garden.

Twenty-five percent of the garden plantings came from ASA members. We have a special section of the garden called the Cultivar Evaluation Area in which we display and evaluate the performance of 216 cultivars. Some are numbered clones that breeders never got around to naming, some are from China, some are from climatic zones that we would not have expected to succeed in our Zone 8b weather, where our winter lows are rarely below 20°F. The following three examples show some of the more unusual cultivars bred in climates extremely different from ours.



▲ 'Raspberry Parfait'

'Raspberry Parfait' was developed by ASA member Bob Carlson in New York in Zone 6a (winter lows to -10°F). It is very healthy here, and is covered in blooms that have many color variations, causing visitors to rave about the plants. This lovely selection from *R. mucronatum* came to us from Plant Development Services in Loxley, Alabama; I spotted it while on tour during the Mobile ASA convention of 1999.

The bloom of 'Yodogawa' azalea (a selection of *R. yedoense*) looks more like a chrysanthemum, but the shrub

is definitely a woody ever-green azalea. These gems also cause quite a "stir" during tours of the garden. The plants came from Ms. Margie Jenkins of Amite, Louisiana (Zone 8b, winter lows 20°F).

The garden has a number of Girard hybrids, including 'Girard Dwarf Lavender', 'Girard's Hot Shot', and 'Don's Variegated', with its white-variegated dark green foliage. Although developed in Geneva, Ohio (Zone 5, winter lows to -15°F), they have done very well for us.

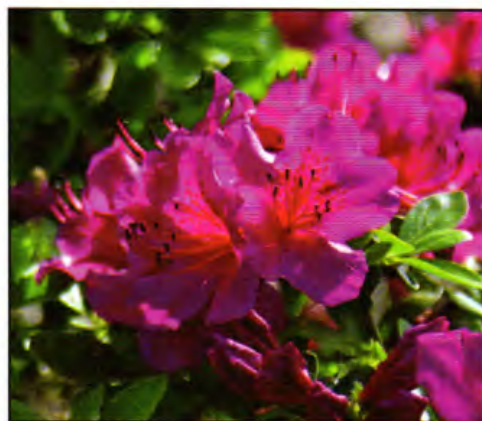
'Girard Dwarf Lavender' has even taken advantage of our long growing season with mild-to-warm fall weather and has bloomed lightly in the fall.

These are only three of the more than 520 colorful azalea cultivars you can see when you come to the convention. We invite you to send in your registration forms soon. Remember, the early-bird discount registration deadline is February 22, 2007. For more information, visit [www.nacogdochesazaleas.com](http://www.nacogdochesazaleas.com) or call Melissa Sanford, the registrar, at 1-888-OLDEST-TOWN (1-888-653-3788).



▲ 'Yodogawa'

▼ 'Girard Dwarf Lavender'



*Barbara Stump was editor of The Azalean from 1999 through the Fall 2006 issue. She is co-chairing the 2007 ASA convention and her day job is Research Associate for Development, SFA Mast Arboretum gardens.*