

Society News

Nominating Committee Report

The Nominating Committee presents the following candidates for the 2010-12 ASA Board. Please vote using the official ballot found on the wrapper of this issue. Ballots must be received by March 1, 2010.

Candidate for Secretary

Carol Flowers' interest in azaleas began 30 years ago when all the large trees surrounding her house died. When building the house, contractors had filled in around the trees, suffocating the roots.

After having all the dead trees removed, she and her husband decided to create their own mini-arboretum. She called the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C., for information. Staff at the National Arboretum referred them to the American Rhododendron Society through which they learned about propagating and caring for rhododendrons.

Eventually, she and her husband joined the ASA and have been active in the Ben Morrison Chapter for many years. Carol has served as both chapter treasurer and secretary at various times, and is our current national secretary.

Candidates for Director

Vincent Ciolino is a long time member of the Louisiana Chapter of the ASA and has served as chapter president. He frequently attends ASA national conventions and is active in numerous horticultural societies.

Jim Campbell has been a member of the ASA and an active member of the Louisiana Chapter since the 1980s. He owns and operates a nursery in Covington, Louisiana, specializing in azaleas and camellias. Jim is retired from the architectural design industry and is an accomplished artist.

J. Jackson and his wife, Lindy, operate a small container nursery, The Tennessee Rose Native Azalea Nursery, in the Blue Ridge of East Tennessee. In the beginning everything was grown in the ground, but pressure from deer browsing forced a change to container production.

The nursery specializes in growing native and hybrid deciduous azaleas. For several years, plants were grown from micropropagated (tissue culture) liners. During the last few years, however, the Jacksons made a deliberate move to growing deciduous and evergreen forms of the rhododendron species from seed.

The decision to cultivate from seed was motivated by preservation. Many rhododendron species have become endangered from the practice of collecting wild plants. The Jacksons seek out specimens in the wild (and in collections) that have superior characteristics of growth, foliage and bloom, and propagate open pollinated seeds from the plants.

The Jacksons believe one of the most enjoyable aspects of the process is exploring for and finding beautiful specimens "in bloom" or "in seed" in the wild. Digital photography is used to document the bloom and growth habit of the plants.

GPS coordinates are used to map the plant location which allows the plant to be easily relocated without having to mark or tag the specimen in any way.

Supporting the Azalea Research Foundation

First envisioned and promoted by **Dr. August E "Augie" Kehr** in 2001, the ASA Board of Directors established the Azalea Research Foundation in the spring of 2009. Augie was a renowned plant scientist and one of our more distinguished members. He had already encouraged and guided the Magnolia Society and the American Rhododendron Society into establishing similar research foundations, and he felt strongly that the ASA should also have a research foundation. Unfortunately, Augie died before that dream was realized.

The purpose of the Azalea Research Foundation is to foster increased knowledge about azaleas. It will do this by funding research into azalea classification, hybridizing, culture, and education. To do this we need money, primarily from you, and also from larger foundations organized to help this type of horticultural research. This article summarizes our early experience with the foundation, to give you ideas on how you can help in this important activity.

Although the Azalea Research Foundation was not authorized until the spring of 2009, the concept was publicized in *The Azalean* beginning in 2002. As a result of your generosity, the foundation had accumulated \$19,862 even before it became official. It is interesting to see why those unofficial funds were donated.

The largest single donation made to the foundation was \$10,000 in 2005, from the estate of **Malcolm "Mal" Clark**. He had decided to make the gift a number of years earlier, in an amount dependent on the sale of some of his property in Southern Pines, North Carolina. Including the Azalea Research Foundation in your will is an excellent way to make significant contributions to the foundation.

You can also make major donations to the foundation at any time, and you can make them in ways that guarantee you ongoing income through an annuity, or by donating appreciated items such as stocks or property to create tax savings to you that are more than the value of the gift. Your tax advisor is in the best position to explore those ideas for you.

The Oconee Chapter donated \$1,000 of proceeds from

Call for Articles

The Azalean needs articles about azaleas, their care, and their use in the landscape. Articles should be submitted as Microsoft Word documents. Illustrations are highly encouraged.

Submit articles to: Pam Fitch, Editor, *The Azalean*, P.O. Box 632537, Nacogdoches, TX 75963 or e-mail theazalean@gmail.com.

the 2003 ASA national convention in Atlanta, and the Vaseyi Chapter donated \$3,000 from the 2008 convention in Asheville, North Carolina. They set an excellent precedent. Such gifts are completely voluntary on the part of our chapters. Be sure to raise and support the idea of earmarking a part of your proceeds when your chapter hosts a convention—or to donate any other excess chapter funds to the foundation. Money sitting in a chapter treasury does little good, while it can do a lot of good in the Azalea Research Foundation.

Making a donation in honor of a loved one or friend who has died is a time-honored tradition, and helps to keep them alive in your memory and the memory of others. Twenty-one memorial gifts were made starting in 2003, first in honor of **Augie Kehr**, and then in honor of **Dick Brooks**, **Ian Donovan**, **Bob Barry**, and **Denise Stelloh**, for a total amount of \$3,450. The average amount was \$164, and the median (as many gifts were bigger as were smaller) amount was \$50. This is an excellent way for every member to participate in the foundation in a modest yet meaningful way.

When **Bob Stelloh** was treasurer, no interest payments were made to the Foundation based on its value. Instead, the money had been commingled with other ASA funds and earned interest for the ASA. When **Dan Krabill** became treasurer, he more correctly began making annual interest payments to the foundation based on its year-end value, although it was not yet officially sanctioned by the Board of Directors. Interest payments were made for 2007 and 2008 totaling \$1,502.

Eventually, as the foundation grows, we plan to make research grants only from the interest earned. Until the foundation grows enough to make that possible, the committee will fund some grants from the principal to “get the ball rolling,” even though that will delay being able to fund grants only from the interest earned. That makes it even more important for you to support the foundation now, to help it grow.

An honorarium is a token payment given to speakers as thanks for their presentation. A number of those payments were donated to the foundation by speakers, for a total of \$800. While few of us give presentations, it is an excellent precedent that so many of our more talented members have decided to make their thank you payments do double duty in this way.

Several members liked the idea of an Azalea Research Foundation even before it became official, and donated a total of \$110 to show their support for the concept of azalea research.

The Azalea Research Foundation is now a reality, thanks to the efforts of its committee and our farsighted Board of Directors. Now it is the job of each of us to support the Azalea Research Foundation with our money—to make azalea research a reality as well. If you’ve read this far, you must be interested, so mail a check today in care of Jim Thornton, 884 June Drive S.W., Conyers GA 30093. You may also contact him by phone at 770-483-1593 or by e-mail at jimpatsy@comcast.net.

New Members

Brookside

James Rieden
104 Bishop Dr.
Silver Spring, MD 20905

Tri-State

Kris Perry
3166 Valleybrook Ct
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Vaseyi

Laura Johnson
Bartlett Tree Research Lab
13768 Hamilton Road
Charlotte, NC 28278-7213

Beverly & Luther Middleton

216 Park Lane
Hendersonville, NC 28791

Thomas & Teri Hudson Wright

212 Old Hwy 20
Alexander, NC 28701

At Large

Gay Austin
405 Marion Avenue
McComb, MS 39648-2709

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Stillwater, OK 74075

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Winfred Harrell
3315 English Road
Plant City, FL 33567

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852 Conowingo Rd
Conowingo, MD 21918

M. Isabel Sprenger
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Quillota, 228000, Chile



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