This is a very brief overview of the highlights of these funding alternatives to give you a concept of how they work. Just like azaleas, everyone is different and their situations are different. If you are interested in using these planned giving tools to help support and grow the Azalea Research Foundation you should meet with your accountant or your attorney or other financial advisor who can help you customize these techniques to your situation to enable you to realize your planned living and giving goals.

Jim Thornton is chairman of the Azalea Research Foundation for the Azalea Society of America. Contributions may be mailed to: Azalea Research Foundation, Azalea Society of America, c/o Jim Thornton, 884 June Drive, Conyers, GA 30207.

The ASA Web site has been updated to include information on the newly formed Azalea Research Foundation. It provides information such as the ARF goals, areas of interest, how to apply for grants and instructions on making donations. Please visit the Web site at www.azaleas.org and click on Research under Azaleas.

Azalea Research Foundation Correction

In the Winter issue of *The Azalean*, please note that the $1,000 donation mentioned as being from the Oconee Chapter under the "Conventions" heading is in error. It should read "Joe Schild donated $1,000 of proceeds from the 2003 ASA national convention in Chattanooga, TN." Note that Joe Schild also donated $1,000 to the Tennessee Valley Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society, since they had largely put on the 2003 ASA convention for us, working under Joe's guidance. Thank you, Joe, for putting on the 2003 convention and for the generous donation.

The U.S. Post Office will not forward ***The Azalean*** nor deliver it to a bad mailing address. Please notify the Society of any errors or changes in your mailing address.

Submit address changes to:
Carol Flowers, ASA Secretary
700 New Hampshire NW, Apt. 1011
Washington, D.C. 20037

Letters to the Editor

Update on *Elliottia racemosa*, Georgia Plume

In the Summer 2009 issue of ***The Azalean*** (Vol. 31, No. 2), I published a brief article about *Elliottia racemosa*. It's an interesting enough plant, but I observed lesions on the leaves that warranted investigation and that was the main thrust of the article. To recap: I submitted a sample to the Plant Pathology Lab at the University of Maryland and Dr. Karen Rane characterized the condition as "abiotic." Turning to the Internet, I located a group at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia that had published a paper in 2002 involving *E. racemosa*, and I fired off an e-mail, with several digital images, to Jennifer Ceska, the "contact author." Jennifer's response wasn't received in time to be included in ***The Azalean*** article, so I thought it would be useful to update the information with a letter to the editor.

My first letter to Jennifer follows:

I planted *Elliottia racemosa* last fall in my Bethesda, Maryland, (zone 7) garden, and the small specimen of Georgia plume was subjected to 3 degrees F with no obvious problem. That's the good news. The bad news: I observed lesions, took photographs, and submitted a specimen to the University of Maryland for examination. They found nothing infectious. Of course, they had never seen *E. racemosa* before and had no familiarity with it.

I see that you have done research on Georgia plume (stimulating seed germination). I have attached three jpg images. Given your familiarity with the plant, can you explain the lesions. The first image is the gross appearance. The second image (166) is the lesion on the top of the leaf (through a scope). The third image (168) is the lesion as it appears on the bottom of the leaf (through a scope). Gradually, the lesions coalesce and the leaf loses all integrity (crumbles).

Jennifer's Response:

> We have seen these problems here in native Georgia populations as well. We've never observed the trees dying; they seem to tolerate the lesions. We have also submitted samples to pathology with few detailed results. I'll send your email around to some colleagues and see if they have anything further. It is a tricky specimen to grow and is declining in the wild.

So that is where the story stands, since nothing was heard from Jennifer's colleagues. The bottom line is that the lesions are not unusual, and they don't typically result in the death of the plant. Given that *E. racemosa* is declining in the wild, I am eager to see how it tolerates the strange and unpredictable weather that the mid-Atlantic region is known for.

William C. Miller III
Bethesda, Maryland