

President's Letter

Aaron Cook — Valdese, North Carolina

I can't help but feel a little sad that the 2010 convention in New Orleans, Louisiana, is behind us. Once again, the bar has been set even higher by the host chapter of an ASA National Convention. The Louisiana Chapter did a fantastic job on this convention. The weather was great. The food was incredible, and the gardens were beautiful.

As always it was great to spend time with my azalea family and catch up with what is going on in everyone's life. As usual the convention came to an end much too soon for me, and I was forced to go back to my real world job.

Thanks again to the Louisiana Chapter members for another year's worth of great memories. I am already looking forward to 2011 in Evansville, Indiana.

As much as I would like it to be otherwise, one of the reasons for having a convention is to conduct Azalea Society business. As such, every convention begins and ends with a Board of Directors meeting. I would like to publicly thank the officers and board members for their service to the Society. They are listed here on this page, and if you get the chance, please thank them for volunteering their time and effort. We have a great group of individuals working hard on everyone's behalf.

The primary focus of the Board is to ensure that the Society remains active and financially stable. Toward that end, I am happy to report that the Board is moving forward with several new proposals. A new (and as the past membership committee chair, I think I can say improved) Membership Committee has been established. **Eve Harrison** from the Northern Virginia Chapter is the chairperson. The committee had its first meeting at the convention and is already hard at work on ideas to recruit and retain more ASA members.

Other business involved looking at the by-laws to determine if a change would be required to establish business and student membership categories. In order to establish a business membership category that would include a one-time complimentary ad in *The Azalean*, we needed to look at the ad sizes, ad costs, and layout. I am happy to report that **Pam Fitch** and **Bob Stelloh** have completed most of this work and these changes should go into effect in either the Fall 2010 issue or soon after.

It is an exciting time to be a part of the Azalea Society. On every level, from local chapters on up, enthusiasm and activity is at our highest point in years. Chapters are reorganizing and becoming more active, and there is talk of starting at least two more chapters. While other plant societies are struggling to host a convention and put out a journal, we have conventions scheduled through 2013, possibly through 2015, and our publication gets better with each issue. Keep writing and submitting those articles. One of the new items that I hope to include in future issues is a short column about some of our members who work or teach in the horticulture industry. If you fall into that category, please send me a short bio.

Next spring my term as President will end and **John Migas** from the Lake Michigan Chapter will assume this office. I am happy to report that he has nominated **J. Jackson** as his Vice President. I am confident that under their leadership we will continue to grow and develop as a Society.



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 which are in the subgenera *Tsutsusi* and *Pentanthera* of the genus *Rhododendron* in the Heath family (*Ericaceae*).

Officers for 2009-2010

President — Aaron Cook
Vice President — John Migas
Secretary — Carol Flowers
Treasurer — Dan Krabill
Immediate Past President — John Brown

Directors

Terms expire 2010	Terms expire 2011
Hale Booth	Dr. Joe Coleman
Ron Hooper	Eugene Stano, Jr.
Maarten van der Giessen	Dave Nanney

Chapter presidents
serve as ex-officio directors.

Chapters

Brookside Gardens (chartered Aug. 1979) William C. Miller III, <i>Pres.</i>	Ben Morrison (chartered May 1980) Harold Belcher, <i>Pres.</i>
Northern Virginia (chartered May 1980) Eve Harrison, <i>Pres.</i>	Louisiana (chartered June 1981) Dr. Allen Owings, <i>Pres.</i>
Tri-State (chartered Oct. 1981) Greg Wedding, <i>Pres.</i>	Texas (chartered May 1989) Mike Stump, <i>Pres.</i>
Oconee (chartered Nov. 1991) Jim Thornton, <i>Pres.</i>	Vaseyi (chartered June 2001) April Sanborn, <i>Pres.</i>
Lake Michigan (chartered May 2003) Phil Lanning, <i>Pres.</i>	Alabamense (chartered May 2005)
Southern California (chartered March 2007) Jim Jaeger, <i>Pres.</i>	

Regular membership is open to all interested parties for an annual amount of \$25; life-membership for one or two persons at the same address is \$500. Members receive *The Azalean* and are eligible for participation in all activities of the Society including those of the chapter with which the member affiliates. For information and a membership application, write to Carol Flowers, Secretary, 700 New Hampshire NW, Apt. 1011, Washington, DC 20037 or visit www.azaleas.org.