

Hoosier Hospitality 2011: A Visit Along the Ohio River

ASA Convention April 28 - May 1, 2011

John Migas—Saugatuck, Michigan & Linda Lanning—Walton, Indiana

The Lake Michigan and the Tri-State chapters of the Azalea Society of America welcome all to visit Evansville, Indiana, home of the Tri-State Chapter of the ASA which was chartered in 1981. This is the first time our chapters have hosted a convention in this area. Evansville is Indiana's third largest city and is the metropolitan hub for the Tri-State area of Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky with a combined population of 350,000 people. It is situated along a horseshoe bend of the Ohio River, and one can watch the barges go by with their cargo.

We also will be visiting the gardens of neighboring Vincennes, Indiana, to the north, well known for being the birthplace of the famous comedian Red Skelton and home of our ninth president, William Henry Harrison.

Come join us at the convention for some Hoosier hospitality! The convention dates are set for Thursday, April 28, through Sunday, May 1, 2011. Our hotel is the Clarion Inn and Conference Center, 4101 US Highway 41 North, Evansville, Indiana 47711.

The hotel is conveniently located south of town near the airport. The room rates are \$79 (for up to two), including breakfast. Hotel reservations can be made by calling 812-424-6400. Mention the azalea convention when reserving your room to get the discounted group rate. The hotel offers free parking and a free shuttle from the Evansville Airport. There is also a free shuttle to the Aztar Casino overlooking the Ohio River. Restaurants and other attractions are all located nearby.

Thursday, April 28

The convention officially opens at 7 p.m.; however, registration begins at noon. The ASA board meeting is 2 p.m. and the plant sale opens at 4 p.m. You should plan to arrive early so you can be settled in for the opening meeting.

Friday, April 29—Garden Tours

We will board the buses by 8 a.m. sharp to head up to Vincennes, Indiana, for our first day of garden tours. After a short, 50-minute bus trip, we will be treated to a narrated tour of local landmarks. Vincennes' showcase of historic sites includes: George Rogers Clark National Historical Park; Grouseland, the mansion and museum of our 9th U.S. President, William Henry Harrison; the Indiana Territory Capitol; the Jefferson Academy, Indiana's first college; the Elihu Stout Print Shop, Indiana's first newspaper publishing company; and The Old Cathedral, Indiana's first church. Vincennes is also the home of comedian Red Skelton.



▲ Evansville, Indiana skyline

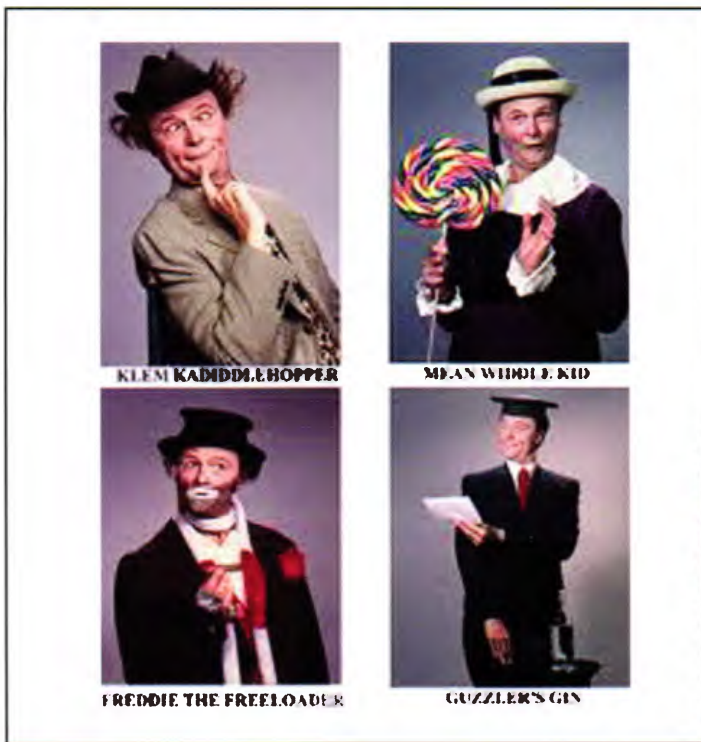
▼ George Rogers Clark Memorial



Dallas Foster Gardens

During the past 15 years, renowned southern Indiana landscape designer Dallas Foster and his wife Susan have been developing their property on the east side of Vincennes from a grassy field into a lush, private oasis.

Landscapes by Foster are well known for their natural style that reflects the personality of the home owner, and the Fosters' home is no exception. The property was developed to make it seem as if it has always existed and that the house grew up out of the landscape.



▲ Vincennes is the boyhood home of Red Skelton.

▼ Entrance to Azalea Path Arboretum & Botanical Gardens.



Many tons of natural stone have been brought in to accent the landscaping and to build the main patio and walkway surfaces around the home. You will also notice that a wide variety of antique and architectural accent pieces have been incorporated. Foster has a collection of antique hitching posts as well as antique and reclaimed hand-chiseled architectural stones that have been used as benches, tabletops and steps.

The backyard is all about entertaining and relaxing. A triple waterfall can be seen and heard from just about anywhere on the back patio area. A secluded jacuzzi creates a perfect area to unwind after a long day, and the pool is a great place to cool off on a hot summer day. The outdoor kitchen is designed to act as a serving bar for a larger party

or a small outdoor dining room when it is just Dallas and Susan. Other areas of interest in the back yard include the dog's playhouse, bog garden, and natural-style vegetable garden. The woodland is also home to many wildflower communities and Dallas' native orchid collection.

Wits End Gardens

This garden was established in 1979 by Frank and Nancy Emert. It is six acres of botanical enjoyment with one of the area's finest plant collections.

As plant collectors, Frank and Nancy have utilized Dallas Foster to help showcase the plants they have collected over the years. The gardens are transformed into a series of connected rooms, each with different theme. Vincennes University's Horticulture Department has long utilized Wits End Gardens as a teaching tool.

The predominant feature for many years has been the Japanese garden with its teahouse, overlooking a waterfall and koi pond with a curved bridge crossing the exit streambed. Other unusual features include an English woodland garden, an alpine rock garden, several native shade perennial gardens, hosta gardens, cactus beds, carnivorous plant bogs, vegetable gardens, an orchard, and container gardens. Unusual plants include zone 6 camellias, a magnolia grove, numerous species of bamboo, rose beds, daylily beds, an iris bed, and of course azaleas and rhododendrons. Azaleas and rhododendrons are displayed in virtually every room of the garden.

Azalea Path Arboretum and Botanical Gardens

We will depart Vincennes and drive to a rural area outside of Hazelton, Indiana to visit the Azalea Path Arboretum and Botanical Gardens. This lovely 50-acre garden is beautifully designed, and so relaxing to visit. Containing one of the largest collections of azaleas, it hosts many unusual and ornamental trees. Meandering pathways lead to water features and unique sculptures.

Azalea Path Arboretum and Botanical Gardens is a non-profit and privately owned facility. Started in 1979, Beverly Knight took an overgrown forest and magically created a gardener's piece of art. We will enjoy a snack here before returning to Evansville.

Saturday, April 30—Garden Tours

Mesker Zoo's Botanic Garden

On Saturday, the tours will be in Evansville. Our first stop is the Mesker Zoo's Botanic Garden. Situated on 50 scenic acres of rolling hills, the zoo is home to more than 700 animals from around the globe. While visiting, you will navigate the zoo's geographically grouped and realistically themed regions including South America, North America, Africa, Asia, and Australia. Throughout the zoo, thousands of exotic and regional botanic species adorn hillsides and animal exhibits.

Throughout the seasons many hundreds of plant varieties provide an ever-changing tapestry of beauty for guests and make the animals feel at home. From towering trees and



▲ Beverly Knight of Azalea Path Gardens shows 'Nancy Dippel' a salmon-pink double azalea. One petal has a distinct rose stripe. This is one of the Schroeder azaleas, named for his daughter.

▼ "Gladys" Sculpture at Azalea Path.



exotic tropicals to delicate spring bulbs, the plant collection reflects the dazzling diversity found in the plant kingdom.

Amazonia, Forest of Riches, is the largest and most spectacular exhibit to open in the zoo's 80-year history. As you journey through Amazonia, you will encounter dozens of rainforest residents from high in the canopy to the forest floor below. Tropical trees and palms soar to the 45-foot tall roof and create a breathtaking tropical setting. Monkeys and



▲ Flowers at at Mesker Zoo's Botanic Garden.

beautiful birds welcome you to their treetop homes. A waterfall roars and a suspension bridge beckons. Tapirs and other odd creatures greet you around each bend in the trail. Be on the lookout for the elusive and majestic jaguar! If you think this sounds like something you would experience in South America, you are right! However, you can have the same experience in Evansville, Indiana.

Don Dilger's Garden

This garden has more than 200 varieties of Japanese maples forming a canopy over Don's collection of hostas in large black containers along carefully groomed gravel paths, making this the most eccentric but enchanting stop on our tour. Two cascading ivy "skirts" at the front entrance gate and another at the "Y" in the driveway are part of the fanciful world he has created over the past 25 or so years of grooming the property.

Dan and Janet Fuquay

Not far from the Dilger Garden is another beautiful garden, owned by Janet and Dan Fuquay. It is the former Hahn Azalea Farm. The residence, built in 2006, is on the site of Janet's father's 1960 house, which had been surrounded by azaleas and rhododendrons, many of which could not be saved. Still this property, and especially the drive leading to it, is a showplace at azalea time. Mass plantings along the drive make an incredible first impression followed by the lakefront house and its surrounding plantings which include 'Mildred Mae', 'Sham's Cascade', 'Boudoir', 'Polar Bear', 'Blaauw's Pink' and 'Formosum'. Several Encore® varieties are planted closer to the house. Janet's father, Lloyd Hahn, was a founder of the Tri-State Chapter of the ASA. He also cultivated and sold azaleas in the 1970s and 80s.

We will break for lunch in a privately owned airport hanger owned by John and Debbie Bizal. This hanger is unique, as it showcases John's private collection of several WWII airplanes, military vehicles, old cars, and military memorabilia.



Photo Linda Lanning

▲ Don Dilgers azaleas and hostas.

Fred Sievers Garden

Built in the 1960s, this ranch-style house is situated on more than 2 acres. The home has only occasionally been occupied since Fred's death in 2003, and only minimally maintained. Having been a garden writer for the *Evansville Courier and Press* and a charter member of the Tri-State Chapter of the ASA, Fred was considered an expert on azaleas, hollies, and woody shrubs, and his plantings reflect this. The diverse collection of trees and shrubs in the front and side yard is noteworthy, but the 10-foot-high wall of (mostly) Schroeder hybrids in the back yard is most dramatic.

Larry Miller Garden

Larry bought this 1905 Queen Anne residence in 1998 because it was situated nicely for gardening on a double lot with a southwest sun exposure. Since there was almost no landscaping on the property, he commissioned landscape designer Wayne Osborne to draw a plan, which in addition to plant material, included all new sidewalks, flagstone pathways, concrete masonry walls and even the distinctive garden gates.

In 1969, a previous owner built a redwood-sided modern house where the garage had been, and several purple rhododendrons surrounding its entry date from this period. Azaleas surrounding Larry's residence include Schroeder hybrids developed by local hybridizer Dr. Henry Schroeder in the 1970s and 80s, 'Girard's Crimson', 'Pleasant White', 'Purple Pride' and 'Christin Marie'. Other evergreen azaleas include 'Coral Bells', 'Elsie Lee', 'Gumpo White', 'Wakae-bisu' and Encore® Autumn Sangria™. Deciduous azaleas include 'Golden Lights', 'Orchid Lights', 'Rosy Lights', 'Formosum Lavender', 'Poukhanense' and 'Mount Saint Helens'.

We are invited in to Larry's for refreshments and a bathroom break.

Former Larry Miller Garden

Larry moved into the 1860s vintage Federal style house



Photo Courtesy Mesker Zoo

▲ ▼ Waterfall and bridge at Mesker Zoo's Botanic Garden.



Photo Courtesy Mesker Zoo



▲ Former Larry Miller Garden



▲ John Migas visiting Fred Sievers' garden.

and other woody shrubs. After her husband's death, she invited all garden enthusiasts into the back yard through a welcome sign at the Roosevelt Avenue garden gate entry. When she had to sell the house in 1977, she asked the new owners to please continue this tradition.

Joe and Linda have done a wonderful job with this garden. Don't miss the narrow path that takes you under a canopy of azaleas.

in 1971 and began planting azaleas, many of which are now more than 8 feet tall. A distinctive feature of this residence is the two-story brick carriage house/summer kitchen.

We will continue to walk, viewing other beautifully landscaped homes in the neighborhood. We will then go by bus to an older neighborhood, homes once built by the elite business people of the community. There are many lovely homes and gardens to see there, including these listed below.

Tim and Jaya Dodd Garden

This Prairie Style home, built in 1925 by former Evansville Mayor Benjamin Bosse, has been the home of local attorney Tim Dodd and his wife Jaya since 1972. Most of the 120 or so azaleas are in the back yard under a canopy of mature oaks, which provide mulch and shade and share space with wild ginger and ferns in an "urban rustic" setting.

Pam and John Guthrie Garden

This Victorian house has, despite its small lot size, been beautifully and prominently landscaped with azaleas. The interior is filled with antiques and may also be toured.

Joe and Linda Scott Garden

This house was built in 1929-30 by local attorney Phillip Gould. His wife devoted 47 years to gardening with azaleas

Thursday Speakers

Gene Bush, along with his wife JoAn Riley, are owners and operators of Munchkin Nursery & Gardens located in southern Indiana. The nursery and display gardens specialize in perennial shade and woodland plants. This combination of plants forms the casual style of "wild" gardening. Gene photographs, writes articles, and lectures from personal experience based upon growing the native/non-native mix of plants in his southern Indiana garden.

Gene's garden writing and photographs can be found in recent issues of *Fine Gardening*, *The American Gardener* magazine of American Horticulture Society, *Gardening How-To*, and *The Quarterly of North American Rock Garden Society*. Monthly he writes an article on his Web site, "Garden Clippin's" at www.munchkinnursery.com. A more detailed list of credits can be found at "Garden Writer" on his Web Site.

First and foremost, Gene is a gardener having a good time in his garden!

Tom Johnson is a life-long horticulturist. He was raised on a truck farm in middle Georgia. At 16 he went to work for a local garden center and landscape company. After high school and college, Tom moved to Atlanta and went to work for Al Simpson and Company as area supervisor overseeing over a million dollars of accounts in downtown Atlanta. When President Carter built his Presidential Library in Atlanta, he asked Tom to oversee the gardens. He was able to apprentice under Kinsako Nakane, the world renowned



▲ ▼ Bizal's airport hangar and antique cars.



Japanese architect, and later under his son Shiro.

After 15 years with the Carter Presidential Center, Tom moved back home to middle Georgia to take the position as horticulturist with the American Camellia Society for the next 8 years. During this time Tom traveled the "camellia belt" lecturing and helping people grow camellias.

For several years while at the American Camellia Society, Drayton Hastie, one of the owners of Magnolia Plantation, America's oldest garden, began trying to lure Tom to Charleston. Drayton had heard of Tom's lectures and interest in not just camellias, but also the Romantic Garden style. After several years of coaxing, Tom took the position of Director of Gardens and Horticulture at Magnolia Gardens. His duties today are overseeing the restoration of America's last Romantic-style garden. Tom is charged with restoring the gardens to the vision the Reverend John Drayton had when he began designing them for his homesick bride in the mid 1800s. This includes searching around the world to locate azalea and camellia varieties that predate the 1900s.

"This is my last job" Tom boldly states. "The restoration of Magnolia will consume the rest of my life. Magnolia is a grand old lady. My job is to shine her shoes, dress her

2011 ASA Convention Schedule of Events

Hosted by the Lake Michigan and Tri-State Chapters

Thursday April 28

Registration Open	Noon - 7 p.m.
ASA Board Meeting	2 - 4 p.m.
Dinner on Your Own	
Plant Sale	4 - 7 p.m.
Reception/Cash Bar	6 - 7 p.m.
Welcome and Speakers	7 - 9 p.m.
Gene Bush— <i>Using Perennials and Shade Loving Plants</i>	
Tom Johnson— <i>The Azaleas of Magnolia Plantation: America's Romantic Garden</i>	

Friday April 29

Registration Open	7 - 8 a.m.
Breakfast at Hotel (complimentary in hotel)	
Tour Departs	8 a.m.
Vincennes Landmarks	
Dallas Foster Gardens	
Wits End Gardens	
Azalea Path Arboretum and Gardens	
Tour Returns to Hotel	4 p.m.
Dinner on Your Own	
Plant Sale	4 - 7 p.m.
Speakers	7 - 9 p.m.
Jack Brown— <i>Deciduous Trees and Conifers in Our Landscape</i>	
Paul Bouseman— <i>Botanical Curator Mesker Zoo</i>	

Saturday April 30

Breakfast at hotel (complimentary in hotel)	
Tour Departs	8 a.m.
Mesker Zoo's Botanical Gardens	
Dilger Gardens	
Hahn Gardens (Fuquay)	
Lunch at Airport Hangar	
Sievers Gardens	
Larry Miller Garden	
Tour of Roosevelt Street	
Tour Returns to Hotel	4 p.m.
Plant Sale	4 - 7 p.m.
Reception/cash bar	6 - 7 p.m.
Banquet	7 - 10 p.m.
Business Meeting	
Awards	
Andrew Whipple— <i>Tissue Culturing</i>	

Sunday, May 1

Board Meeting	8 a.m.
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in some new robes, and get her ready for the thousands of suitors that come calling each year. I can think of no better place to finish my career.”

Friday Speakers

Jack Brown has been involved in the forestry industry since 1977. He graduated from Purdue University with his major in Forest Production. He has worked for the city of Evansville as an arborist, managed Christmas tree farms, and was owner of Ace Nursery. As an arborist, he currently is involved with treating and caring for trees in southwest Indiana. He has completed projects with the Mesker Park Zoo Amazonia exhibit and the New Harmony Labyrinth Restoration Project.

Jack will be speaking on using different forms of deciduous trees and conifers in our landscape. Living in the Evansville area for years, he will take us down “memory lane” on the history of the early azalea gardens and growers. He currently has been part of preserving the Sievers garden which we will be visiting on Saturday’s tour.

Paul Bouseman has worked at Mesker Park Zoo & Botanic Garden for 15 years and is currently the Botanic Curator. He graduated from the University of Southern Indiana where he earned a Bachelor of Science degree. While still a student, he began working at Mesker Zoo & Botanic Garden as a part-time groundskeeper. At that time he became interested in the practice of zoological horticulture as a way to bring together his interests in landscape design and natural history.

Paul is a member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and the Association of Zoological Horticulture, where he currently serves on the Board of Directors. He enjoys traveling with his family, visiting zoos, museums, and botanical gardens, and, of course, working in his own garden.

Saturday’s Keynote Speaker

Andrew P. Whipple, Ph.D., is a professor of Biology at Taylor University, Upland, Indiana. The deciduous azalea bug bit him hard at the 2002 ASA/ARS meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, especially upon touring **Earl Sommerville’s** garden—the colors, forms, and fragrances.

Upon returning to the clay cornfields of central Indiana, Whipple took on the task of growing these plants and quickly learned the need for well-drained acidic soil for their survival and growth. Succeeding with named, in-the-trade varieties, he returned to the memory of the Sommerville plants and acquired a few from nurseries, but came to realize that many of these, as well as unique forms in others’ gardens and in the wild, were often the only ones in existence.

“What if this one plant dies?” he found himself thinking. “These need to be propagated and shared around.” Then came the discovery that some deciduous azaleas are difficult to propagate by the usual means and that the same Earl Sommerville whose collection got him hooked was micropropagating (tissue culturing) his plants. He learned from Earl the

specifics of in vitro propagation of deciduous azaleas as a means to make more of these azaleas that might otherwise be lost to us.

Today, he is the proud papa of an azalea garden on the campus of Taylor University with about 350 azaleas. His vision is to utilize his familiarity with the laboratory world, by way of tissue culturing, to help preserve and spread around these delightful, but difficult to propagate plants.

Each day after the tours, come join us for our plant sale. We are featuring Schroeder azaleas, Buddy Lee’s Encore® azaleas, and other native azaleas. There will be some varied companion plants to choose from also.

Linda Lanning is retired from being a Logistics and Inventory Control Manager. She, along with her husband Phil, began their interest in azaleas and rhododendrons when they moved to the west coast town of Florence, Oregon. They both were involved with the Siuslaw Chapter of the ARS there, where Linda published their newsletter. While still interested in rhododendrons, since returning to Indiana their interest now includes azaleas. They are members of the Lake Michigan Chapter ASA, where Phil is currently the President and Linda the Secretary. They enjoy traveling to conventions to meet other members and trying new azaleas for their garden.

John Migas lives in southwestern Michigan off the beautiful shores of Lake Michigan. A carpenter by trade since 1978, he operates a small nursery and landscape service in the Saugatuck-Douglas-Holland area. He is currently vice president of the ASA and treasurer of the Lake Michigan Chapter. He has also served as chapter president and ASA Director. He has recently served three terms as president of the Midwest Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society.

Convention Hotel

Clarion Inn and Conference Center

4101 US Highway 41 North
Evansville, Indiana 47711

Phone: 812-424-6400 or 1-888-465-4329

Room Rate \$79 plus tax for double occupancy
Mention the Azalea Society of America
convention

Rate includes free breakfast, parking, and
shuttle from Evansville Airport.
There is also a free shuttle to the Aztar Casino.