

President's Letter

J Jackson—Trade, Tennessee

Dear Azalea Friends,

The Autumnal Equinox has passed and the leaves are beginning to change here in the higher elevations of the Blue Ridge. Flower buds have formed on our azaleas and rhododendrons and the seed pods are almost ready to collect. This time of year we always look forward to hiking to our favorite plants growing in the wild for seed collecting.

Several of our chapters have annual seed and cutting exchanges or have plant sales to raise proceeds for chapter expenses. As our Membership Committee Chair **Chris Wetmore** reminds me, "Plant sales are not only about raising money, they are about gaining new members." The access to rare and unusual plant material surprises the general public and can increase interest in our Society. These activities are the most effective way to attract and retain members.

There is concern in several chapters due to lack of meetings and activities. Most plant societies are suffering from the same condition. Our Board of Directors is making efforts to extend assistance to chapters by seeking ways to increase interest. If we don't have active, interested members at the chapter level there is little that can be done by the Board of Directors. If we look at the active and growing chapters there is much to be learned by paying attention to how they manage their meetings. The healthy groups all coordinate interesting events to attract new members and retain the members they have. It can be discouraging to focus intently on the problem areas of our Society. Instead we must seek ways to improve what we have to offer to members.

The "Digitization Project Team" has completed the digitizing of all the past journals. Making past journal articles accessible through our ASA Web site is a huge improvement to the site's content. This is a wonderful change to our Internet presence. Other improvements to the web site are ongoing, and I believe these changes also will attract new members. Thank you to all of the members of the Team for a job well done!

I sent out a letter to the membership a few weeks back explaining the status and changes taking place with our journal. *The Azalean* has a new editing team with **Barbara Stump** as Editor and **Pam Fitch** as Layout Designer. Please be sure to support their efforts by writing something for the journal so we can keep to our quarterly schedule. Chapter news and articles are always needed to keep the journal contents interesting and entertaining and in helping suggest new ways of attracting new members.

Best regards,

J Jackson



J Jackson



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*).

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Terms expire 2016 **Terms expire 2017**

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Chapter presidents

serve as ex-officio directors.

Chapters

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(chartered May 1980)

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Northern Virginia

(chartered May 1980)

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Regular membership is open to all interested parties for an annual amount of \$30; life-membership for one or two persons at the same address is \$600. 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 Leslie Nanney, Secretary, 8646 Tuttle Road, Springfield, VA 22152 or visit www.azaleas.org.