

We're Back—Editors Return to Create *The Azalean* Again

Barbara Stump and Pam Fitch—Nacogdoches, Texas

Let us re-introduce ourselves—**Barbara Stump**, current Vice President of the ASA who also served as the Editor of *The Azalean* from 1998 through 2007, and only gave it up to continue work at the Stephen F. Austin State University Ruby M. Mize Azalea Garden in Nacogdoches, Texas, has returned to serve as Editor of the journal.

Joining her is **Pam Fitch**, who served as Editor of *The Azalean* from 2007 through 2011. Pam will serve as Graphic Designer.

Barbara became involved in the ASA while completing her graduate degree at SFA. She designed and oversaw development of the Ruby M. Mize Azalea garden on the university's campus as a graduate student. After earning her Master's degree, she joined the staff in the College of Forestry and Agriculture serving as a Research Associate for the SFA gardens. She retired in August.

Barbara was instrumental in re-organizing the ASA Texas Chapter in 2010. She also served as the co-chairperson for the 2007 and 2015 annual ASA conventions which were held in Nacogdoches, Texas.

Pam became involved in the ASA in 2005 while working with Barbara on the development of the Nacogdoches Azalea Trail. She cheerfully works alongside Barbara to promote azaleas and the Society.

She and her husband, Alan, own two businesses closely related to SFA: Jack Backers College Bookstore and Spirit Custom Apparel, a custom screen printing and embroidery business. She is a very creative designer, as was seen in the design of the bags and badges for the 2015 ASA Convention in Nacogdoches.

The editorial team will be using the same custom printer in Texas we used before when we were editors. They provide excellent quality printing and mailing services.

The good news is that the new team is already nearly finished with the de-

sign of the Fall 2015 issue, and hope to get it to the printer before the end of September. Then, we'll immediately concentrate on the combined ARS/ASA national convention information, for which co-chairs **Rich Bauer** and **Don Hyatt** already have several articles ready.

Our goal, as has always been the goal of editors, is the highest quality quarterly journal out on a regular schedule that is of interest to a wide range of member interests.

Your double Spring/Summer issue of *The Azalean* should be headed for your mailboxes now. We all know the past few years have been difficult for two sets of editors. Health issues have been the primary personal difficulty, but not the only one. **Connie Cottingham**, **Mike Sikes** and **Lisa Kennedy** did wonderful work over the past couple of years, and we will do the same. But we cannot do it alone. This is where you come in.

The editors' main problem has always been the lack of a continuous stream of interesting articles about all phases of azaleas. If we have no articles to print, the editors and designers have nothing to produce. The way we see it, our members are a varied group, with many levels of interest. We have attracted brand new members who haven't grown or propagated anything to Ph.D. scientists who are researching the growth ranges of new azalea hybrids and commercial growers who want to produce azaleas that members would like for their gardens in nearly every growing zone.

The bottom line is that each has a desire to learn more about azaleas. Each group looks to the Azalea Society of America for information, both via the Web site www.azaleas.org and by reading the quarterly issues of *The Azalean* to keep abreast of all facets of azaleas. We encourage you to write for the journal; even if you think "I can't write," we know that's not true. We can help smooth out any confusing points or suggest which of your photos look

best in the journal. Or, get your friends to write articles and you help them to illustrate them with drawings or photos. Topics that come to mind for good articles we'd like to receive in the future are:

- How to take cuttings, propagate new azaleas from seed, how to care for them (yes, we need the reminders every year), preferably with drawings
- How to identify hybrid groups and why they're important
- Special features on the ASA Web site that can help keep azaleas alive—the AskUs page, for example
- Public azalea gardens to visit—as chapters or as just visitors—with a write-up and photos to show others what these gardens can teach the visitor on-the-ground to do that a book alone cannot
- Speakers who've provided unique insights into garden design, color combinations, hybrid combinations
- Newest azalea research—through our Azalea Research Foundation or other universities or commercial azalea nurseries

We look forward to the challenge and opportunity of bringing new material to all of the members, not just those few who "took a trip and took lots of pictures" and think others should go as well. If you tell the rest of us in *The Azalean*, we just might.

It is easy to submit articles—online at TheAzalean@gmail.com, or by postal service (if you need us to scan photos for example): Barbara Stump, Editor, *The Azalean*, 101 S. Sanders Street, Nacogdoches, Texas 75964.